



Psalms 21-23

Psalm 21-23
Tape #7173
By Chuck Smith

Shall we turn now in our Bibles to Psalm 21 as we continue our journey through the Bible beginning tonight with the twenty-first psalm.

In Psalm 20, David offered a prayer unto the Lord. He asked the Lord to hear him in the day of trouble. To send him help. To strengthen him. To grant unto him according to God's own heart, to fulfill the counsel. And the prayer was, Lord, fulfill all of my petitions. Now it is felt that Psalm 21 was written in response to the Lord's answer to David's prayer. If Psalm 20 was a prayer out of trouble, he was needing help, crying unto the Lord. The Lord helped him and so Psalm 21 is a psalm of acknowledgment of the help of the Lord. The answer to the prayer. And thus,

The king shall joy in thy strength, O LORD; and in thy salvation (21:1)

Notice back in Psalm 20, "There are some who would trust in chariots, some in horses: but we will trust in the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen, and we stand upright. Save, LORD: let the king hear us when we call" (Psalm 20:6-9). So now God has answered and the king is rejoicing in the strength of the Lord. The hand of the Lord has delivered. In His salvation,

how greatly shall he rejoice (21:1)!

All of us have prayed in the time of trouble. It's almost a natural response when we're in trouble to call unto the Lord.

Not all of us have stopped when the Lord has answered to give thanks. You remember when there were those ten lepers that came to Jesus seeking healing and He commanded them to go show themselves to the priest which was the first step in restoration to society for the leper. They had to be examined by the priest, set in this house in the temple for a period of seven days, examined again and if there be no further evidences of the leprosy, then they would offer the sacrifices for cleansing and they could be restored to the community. They can move back home. And so they came for healing. He said, Just go show yourself to the priest and the first step in the restoration of healing process and as they were going, when one looked down and saw that he was healed, he came running back to Jesus to give thanks. And Jesus said, Were there not ten who were healed? Where are the nine (Luke 17:12-17)?

Those that pray in the time of trouble are many. Those who stop to give thanks when the Lord has answered the prayer are few. But the psalmist recognizing the hand of God in delivering, strengthening, is rejoicing in God's help.

You have given him his heart's desire, You have not withheld the request of his lips. (21:2).

The Selah there is thought to be an interlude while the psalmist acknowledging now the fact that God has answered prayer at this point took time out to offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving unto the Lord. And then the offering being completed, he continued then his praises.

For You have not withheld the blessings of goodness: You have set a crown of pure gold on his head (21:3).

It is thought that this was the time when David conquered over one of the enemies, took the crown of the king, the crown of gold, and put it on his head.

He asked life of thee, and You gave it him, even length of days for ever and ever (21:4).

This is a reference to David's progeny. The Lord had given a promise to David that there should never cease one to sit upon the throne of his seed. The promise of the Messiah, the eternal King that would come through David. And so, "I asked You for life and You've extended it." You've promised this promise that there would not cease to be one upon the throne. Length of days even forever and ever. And thus talking now of this promised Messiah,

His glory is great in thy salvation: honour and majesty have You laid on him. For You have made him

the most blessed for ever: You have made him exceeding glad with Your countenance. For the king trusteth in the LORD, and through the mercy of the most High he shall not be moved (21:5-7).

The psalmist introducing the promise of the Messiah speaks then of His glory and of the blessedness that God would bestow upon him.

Your hand shall find out all of Your enemies: Your right hand shall find out those that hate thee. You will make them as a fiery oven in the time of Your anger: the LORD will swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them (21:8,9).

There is that day of coming judgment. You can read of it in the book of Revelation when the fiery judgment of God will devour the adversaries and the psalmist looks ahead now to that day when God will judge the earth. And those that have turned the hearts against the Lord. "Like a fiery oven in the time of Your anger: the Lord will swallow them up in His wrath, fire will devour them."

Their fruit, their children, shalt thou destroy from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men (21:10).

They will be cut off. They will not be allowed to continue on into the kingdom age.

For they intended evil against You: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform (21:11).

Back to the second psalm, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? For they have gathered together against the Lord, and against His anointed, saying, Let us break his bands asunder" (Psalm 2:1-3).

Let's rebel against the rule of God. But God will deal with them in judgment. He will destroy them. "They intended evil: they imagined these mischievous devices, but they're not able to perform."

Therefore thou shalt make them turn their back, when You shall make ready your arrows upon the strings against the face of them. Be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength: so will we sing of Your praise and Your power (21:12,13).

A psalm that looks forward to the day of the Lord when the promised King will sit upon the throne, bringing the enemies of the Lord into judgment.

Psalm 22 continues as a prophetic psalm of the Messiah. The glorious coming of the Messiah. However, this deals with the Messiah's being despised and rejected. Being crucified.

The Jews had a difficult time with the prophecies concerning their Messiah because there seem to be a contradiction. Many marvellous prophecies of the glorious reign of God's King over the earth. "Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, to order it, and establish it in righteousness and in judgment from henceforth even forever" (Isaiah 9:7). And speaking of the conditions of the kingdom, how that "the lion and the lamb will lie down together; a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6). No more lame. No more blind. And the glorious conditions of the kingdom.

And yet there were those prophecies that said He would be "despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief" (Isaiah 53:3). And this twenty-second psalm with the description of His suffering, His death. The Jews could not put together in their minds these conflicting concepts. Suffering, rejected, as well as reigning in glorious power. And so what they did was spiritualize those prophecies that dealt with the suffering and death.

They only held to those prophecies that spoke about the glorious reign and the kingdom. Thus when Jesus came and when He died upon the cross, it was to the Jews a stumbling block. They stumbled over the cross. That was so inconsistent with their belief of the Messiah's eternal reign.

Of course, we understand it because we understand the two aspects of His coming. The first portion of the prophecy, some three hundred of them He fulfilled in His birth in Bethlehem by a virgin unto His resurrection from the dead and ascension unto the Father. He fulfilled some three hundred prophecies. There is probably an equal number of prophecies that deal with His reign which will be fulfilled when He comes again in power and glory. And so what they fail to see were the two aspects of the coming of the Messiah.

One to be a sacrifice for sins. One to open the door into the kingdom. And the other to reign over the kingdom. Psalm 22 is one of those difficult prophecies to the Jew because it spoke of the Messiah's suffering. And it is interesting to note how many of these prophecies dealt directly to the cross and to the

suffering of Jesus upon the cross.

Beginning of course with the “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani” in the Chaldean which Jesus cried from the cross.

My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? why are You so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but You hear not; and in the night season, and am not silent (22:1,2).

There are those who believe that this refers to the fact that when Jesus was upon the cross, you remember that the whole episode of the crucifixion, the actual crucifixion began about nine o’clock in the morning. The trial was early in the morning. Daybreak they brought Jesus to Pilate. He was sent over to Herod, back to Pilate. And it is estimated that at about nine o’clock in the morning, they nailed Jesus to the cross. After hanging there on the cross for three hours, at noon the sky turned dark. This strange darkness over the earth. And so the reference to, “I cried in the daytime, and in the night season.” And after it turned dark. That’s when, of course, the cry came forth after the darkness came over the earth. There was out of the darkness the cry, “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me? why are You so far from helping me?”

The answer to why He was forsaken of God is given in verse three.

But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel (22:3).

The Bible tells us that “all of us like sheep have gone astray; we turned every one of us to our own ways; but the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6). Jesus bore your sins there on the cross. God placed upon Him all Your iniquity. All of mine iniquity. From the beginning of the church there has been that endeavor by the Roman church to place the blame of the crucifixion on the Jews. And thus the Roman church has been guilty of active persecution of the Jews.

The Jews in turn have sought to exonerate themselves and say it was the Romans that crucified Him. It was the Roman soldiers that nailed Him to the cross. It was a Roman soldier that put the spear through His side. And thus since the beginning, there’s been this endeavor to blame the crucifixion of Jesus on each other. They’re both wrong.

I am responsible for the death of Jesus Christ because He was bearing my sin. It was my sin that put Him to death. And I think that we need to each of us recognize our own guilt and our own implication in the death of Jesus Christ. Not try to blame someone else. Realize he was dying for me. God placed on Him the iniquities of us all.

In the old covenant when a man would bring his sin offering to the priest, he would lay his hand upon that lamb or goat or whatever he had brought, the ox, and he would confess his sins. Transferring the guilt over to the animal. And as the sins would be laid upon the animal, then the animal would be slain. “For without the shedding of blood, there is no remission for sins” (Hebrews 9:22). And the animal died as the substitute. “For the soul that sinneth, it shall surely die” (Ezekiel 18:20). But God provided that the guilt could be transferred to the animal, the animal die in your stead.

Now Jesus became the sin offering for us and “God laid on Him the iniquities of us all.” With our iniquities being laid upon Him, there came of necessity that inevitable consequence of sin which is separation from God. God cannot be joined together in communion, in fellowship with the sinner. God is holy, God is pure. And God’s holiness and purity is. And man in his sinfulness there’s a mutual exclusion there. So that when our sins were laid upon Jesus Christ, there came then the inevitable consequence of sin. That separation from the Father and He who was one with the Father. “In the beginning was the Word, the Word was with God, the Word was God. And the same was in the beginning with God” (John 1:1,2). “He, who was in the form of God, and thought it not robbery or something to be grasped to be equal with God” (Philippians 2:6).

They who had enjoyed that eternal communion and fellowship from the beginning suddenly as the guilt and the iniquity of mankind was laid upon Jesus, He felt that estrangement, that separation that sin brings from God. “God’s hand is not short, that He cannot save; neither is His ear heavy, that He cannot hear: But your sins, the prophet said, have separated you from God” (Isaiah 59:1,2). The inevitable consequence of sin is separation from God.

Paul said to the church of Corinth, Don’t you realize that you cannot go out and be joined together with

a prostitute? Because you are Christ's and then you are making Christ or seeking to make Christ a participator in that (1 Corinthians 6:16,17). It can't be. The Lord won't join Himself to sin. Cannot be one with sin. "Thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel." Because of the holiness of God, when Jesus received our guilt and our iniquity, He was forsaken by the Father.

The psalmist goes on to say,

Our fathers trusted in thee: they trusted, and You delivered them. They cried unto You, and they were delivered: they trusted, they were not confounded. But I am a worm, and no man; I am a reproach of men, and despised of the people (22:4-6).

The prediction that Jesus would become a reproach of men. He would be despised by the people. The prediction,

All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake their heads, saying, He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delights in him (22:7,8).

As you read the account of the crucifixion in the New Testament, you read how these very things happen. They came wagging their heads, mocking Him, saying, Come on down if you are the king of Israel or the king of the Jews. The high priest said, He trusted in the Lord that He would deliver Him. Let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him (Mark 15:29-32). The very words of mockery are quoted by the psalmist a thousand years before the event. But going on, the words are attributed to Jesus,

But thou art He that took me out of the womb: You made me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts (22:9).

How early did Jesus recognize His divinity? We know that when he was twelve years old and his parents had come to Jerusalem for a feast that as they were returning to Nazareth, because they traveled in large family companies, they figured that Jesus was probably with some of his cousins or whatever and they were a whole day's journey out of Jerusalem before they missed him. They looked around and said, Where is Jesus? What happened to him? Well I thought he was with you. No, we thought he was with you. Suddenly they realized he's not in the company.

And so as parents would do under such circumstances, they went back to Jerusalem. And they found him in the temple talking with the doctors of law. Asking them questions that astounded them. Mary, his mother, began to rebuke him saying, Son, don't you know we were worried about you? And he said, Did you not realize that I must be about my Father's business? Now he wasn't talking about Joseph. The recognition of His divinity when twelve years old.

But here the psalmist declares that when he was nursing on his mother's breasts, You did make me to hope. The recognition, the knowledge.

I was cast upon thee from the womb: You are my God from my mother's belly (22:10).

But again the prayer,

Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help. Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and as a roaring lion (22:11-13).

And now a description of death by crucifixion.

I am poured out like water (22:14),

They ran a spear into His side. There came forth water and blood.

and all my bones are out of joint (22:14):

A typical happening at crucifixion as the muscles give way after a period of time hanging on the cross, the muscles give way and the weight of the body causes the body just to go out of joint. The hip joint slips. Knee joints and all. Excruciating pain.

my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to the roof of my jaws (22:14,15);

The tremendous, intense thirst. All of the perspiration because of the tremendous pain causes body dehydration and a horrible thirst sets in. Your mouth is dry. Your tongue sticks to the top of your mouth. You remember the cry of Jesus, I thirst.

and You have brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the

wicked have enclosed me: and they pierced my hands and my feet (22:15,16).

Interesting prophecy. It goes along with the prophecy in Zechariah where Zechariah said, "And they shall look on Him who they have pierced" (Zechariah 12:10). Again Zechariah says, "And they shall say unto Him, What are these wounds in your hands? And he will respond, These are the wounds that I received in the house of my friends" (Zechariah 13:6). Tremendously interesting prophecies concerning the Messiah that were fulfilled in Jesus.

I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture (22:17,18).

As the soldiers were dividing the goods of the prisoners, they took the clothes of Jesus, divided it into four. However, the coat was a special coat. It was without seam. They said, Let's not tear this thing up to divide it. Let's cast lots to see who gets it. A thousand years before the soldiers did this, it was prophesied that this is what would happen.

If you just take the prophecies of this psalm and you work them out with the law of compound probabilities, the chances of one person fulfilling the various prophetic aspects of this psalm, you would find that just in this psalm alone, the chances of one person fulfilling them would be one to 10¹⁷. Yet Jesus fulfilled each one.

Be not far from me, O LORD: O my strength, haste to help me. Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. Save me from the lion's mouth: for You have heard me from the horns of the unicorns (22:19-21).

The altar had these four horns where they would go and they would grab hold of the horns of the altar to pray, to beseech God.

I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation I will praise thee (22:22).

Now we move out beyond the cross. We move on out to the resurrection and unto the glorious day of the Lord and His reign.

Ye that fear the LORD, praise him; all the seed of Jacob, glorify him; and fear him, all ye the seed of Israel. For he has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither hath he hid his face from him; but when he cried unto him, he heard (22:23,24).

God heard the cry of Jesus. The promise of God to Jesus was that He would not leave His soul in hell. He would not allow His Holy One to see corruption. And so Jesus cried unto the Father and the Father heard and He did not leave His soul in hell, neither did the Holy One see corruption.

My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him. The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the LORD that seek him: your heart shall live for ever (22:25,26).

The promise of eternal life because of the death of Jesus Christ. God loved the world and gave His only begotten Son that whosoever would believe would not perish but have everlasting life. Your heart will live forever.

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD (22:27):

There is coming that glorious day when Jesus shall reign and every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord.

all of the families of the nation shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the LORD'S: and he is the governor among the nations (22:27,28).

The Lord shall come and He shall reign. God help us, these fellows who claim to be biblical scholars have gotten together again and are making more of their professed scholarly judgments about Jesus Christ and the words of Jesus Christ. And according to their scholarly evaluations and understanding, Jesus never did claim that He was going to come again to reign over the earth, to establish the kingdom upon the earth. That this is something that was made up by the disciples later and something that you find in the epistles and all but never a statement of Jesus to this effect.

What about Matthew 24 as Jesus was talking about the great tribulation that was coming upon the earth and he said, "And then shall they see the sign of the Son of man: coming with clouds and great glory" (Matthew 24:30). Jesus said, "Let not your hearts be troubled: you believe in God, believe also in me. In my

Father's house there are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I'm going to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place, I'm going to come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3).

When Jesus ascended into heaven and the disciples were standing there as this cloud received Him out of their sight, there stood by the angels and they said to them, "You men of Galilee, why are you standing here just staring into heaven? this same Jesus shall come again in like manner as you have seen him go" (Acts 1:11).

I have little patience or little toleration; no, let's be honest, I have no patience or toleration for these men who, they say they are professors and I believe that. "Professing themselves to be wise, they've become fools" (Romans 1:22). Denying the scriptures. Here it is in the Old Testament, "For the kingdom is the LORD'S: He is the governor among the nations."

Jesus said we should pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). It will. The kingdom of God shall come. And I don't think it's going to be very far off.

All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: and they that go down to the dust shall bow before him (22:29):

This is the promise of the resurrection, even those whose bodies have gone back to dust will bow before Him.

and none can keep alive his own soul. A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this (22:29-31).

Here we are today fulfilling this last verse as we declare unto you God's righteousness, you people that have been born long after the psalm was written. The Lord has done this. He paid the price. He died upon the cross for your redemption. He rose again. He's coming again to establish God's kingdom upon the earth.

Psalm 23 is one of the most familiar passages of scripture in the Bible. It is beautiful as the psalmist sees the Lord as his shepherd, as his guide and as his host. That beautiful kind of intimacy recognizing,

The LORD is my shepherd (23:1);

Throughout the Bible, the figure of the shepherd and the sheep are used to illustrate the relationship of God and the people. In the Old Testament, it speaks about how that the nation of Israel would be scattered upon the mountains as sheep without a shepherd. So many times as Jesus was ministering to the people, He observed them and He saw them as sheep without a shepherd. They had no direction. They were just wandering aimlessly. No real direction or purpose in life. And there are many people today who are like sheep without a shepherd. They are just wandering aimlessly through life without purpose. But "the Lord is my shepherd," David said knowing that special relationship between the shepherd and his sheep.

I shall not want (23:1).

Others may want, not me. Because the Lord is my shepherd. I will not want for provisions because,

He makes me to lie down in green pastures (23:2):

I shall not want for refreshment for,

he leads me beside the still waters (23:2).

I shall not want for strength because,

He restores my soul (23:3):

And then he sees God as his guide.

he lead me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me (23:3,4).

The comfort, the strength from the consciousness of the presence of the Lord in the hour of death. Someone has said if you want proof of Christianity, note how the Christian dies in contrast with how the atheist dies.

Voltaire, that well-known French atheist, whose favorite saying concerning Christ was, Crush the wretch. As he died, he was screaming, More light! More light! More light! Those were his last words. His nurse coming out of the room white and shaken vowed never again to attend the death of an atheist. She said he was living in the miseries of hell before he lost his consciousness. Gertha, the German philosopher, said, I

am about to take my last journey, a great leap into the dark.

Contrast that with Paul the apostle who said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, our righteous judge, shall give to me and to all of those that do love his appearing." (2 Timothy 4:7,8). "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21).

With Stephen who said, "Lord, don't put this sin on their account. Into Your hands I commend my spirit" (Acts 7:59,60). "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me."

You may have your own philosophy of life that you feel, this is a good philosophy to live by. And there are a lot of people who are living by a certain philosophy, Eat, drink and be merry. Party it up. It may be a philosophy that you want to live by but tell me, do you want to die by that philosophy?

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me." Have you ever wondered what your response and reaction would be if you were facing death?

Several years ago when we were living in Huntington Beach, this fellow who was a veteran from the Korean war and having a lot of mental problems, came by the house. His family attended our church. We knew him, we knew the mental problems that he had. He came up to the door and Kay looked on and said, Chuck, it's him and she said, Don't answer the door. I said, You got to answer the door. He knows we're here. And she said, Well, be careful, be careful, he's crazy. He's out to pull a gun on you. He's crazy. And so I opened the door and he says, Chuck, I want you to come out to the car. And Kay was behind the door saying, Don't go, don't go. He's crazy. He'll pull a gun. He'll shoot you. Don't go. But I have sort of a philosophy of humoring the feeble-minded. You don't want them to get into a rage. A lot of times if you go along with them, they'll stay calm. It's only if you cross them where they flip out.

So I went out to the car and he opened the car and he says, Get in, sit down. Got in and sat down. Kay was standing in the door. He went around to the driver's side and pulled out a .45. I could see the shells in the chamber, pointed it at my stomach and pulled the trigger twice. The thought that went through my mind, of course, you're looking now at eternity, you know, and the thought that went through my mind was, I'm married to a prophetess. But there was no fear of death. I figured I had it. What had happened, of course, is that he then began to laugh. He said, You talk about death and all and being with the Lord and he said, I just wanted to see how you would react if you were really facing death. And he said, I filed off the firing pins so it wouldn't go off. But he said, You passed.

But it was interesting to me. I was always curious as to what my reaction would be if I were facing death. And the interesting thing to me was that there was no fear knowing that the Lord is with me. My life is in His hands. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

The rod was the instrument the shepherd used to keep the sheep in line. It's a comfort to know that God is watching over me. That the Lord loves me, chastening me. God is a host.

He prepares a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: He anoints my head with oil; my cup runneth over (23:5).

What a gracious host. As God not only fills our life but overflows our life. The overflowing cup, what a beautiful apt description of the Christian life. Not just peace, peace that passes human understanding. Not just joy, joy indescribable and full of glory. My cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life (23:6):

And when they've come to an end, when God says your days have been numbered and finished, *then I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for ever (23:6).*

Paul said "we know that when this earthly tent is dissolved, our body, that we have a building of God that is not made with hands, that is eternal in the heavens. So then we who are in these bodies do often groan, earnestly desiring to move out of them. Not to be an unembodied spirit, but to be clothed upon, with that body which is from heaven. Knowing that as long as we are in these bodies, we are absent from the Lord. But choosing rather to be absent from these bodies, and to be present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:1-6,8).

A building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Jesus said, In my Father's house are many mansions. I'm going to prepare a place for you. And if I go, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am, there ye may be also. I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

What will it be like? What kind of a body will I have? What will be the capacities? What will be the feelings? What will be the duties? I don't know. It's interesting that the Lord just doesn't give us very much insight into those kind of things. And I think the reason why He doesn't is that we just couldn't handle it.

Paul the apostle had a short little visit up there. He said, "There was a man in Christ about fourteen years ago, whether in the body or out of the body I don't know. But I was caught up to the third heaven and there I heard things so glorious it would be a crime to try to describe them in human language. And because of the abundance of this revelation that was given unto me, there was also given to me a thorn in the flesh lest I be exalted above measure. To just keep me on the ground. So it's glorious beyond description. The things that God has in store for His sheep, those who love Him. Those who have come under the tender care of the shepherd. Beautiful 23rd psalm.

We'll start with Psalm 24, they're not chapters, they're a whole psalm, we'll start with Psalm 24 next Sunday.

I pray that the Lord will give you a beautiful week. A week of spiritual stretching as He brings you into that closeness with Himself. Into that intimacy of fellowship and love. May you be strengthened by His Spirit in your inner man. May you come to a deeper comprehension of His love and His grace towards you. May you abound in all things in Christ Jesus. And may you find His grace, His strength and the sufficiency of that grace to carry you through. To give you strength in the time of testing and trial that you might have a life of victory as you learn to trust in Him and you receive His strength. In Jesus' name.