

Calm in the Chaos

Psalm 23:2

Introduction:

1) Word picture – pillow

- a. Rest is important

2) Getting good quality sleep is important

- a. Essential to your ability to learn
- b. Helps restore body's energy
- c. Helps repair muscle tissue
- d. Releases hormones that effect growth and appetite

3) If you don't get enough rest, it has serious negative effects

- a. Leaves you feeling groggy
- b. Difficulty concentrating
- c. Sleep deprivation leads to heart disease, diabetes, obesity, headaches, and even depression

4) Resting is not just vital for our physical well-being, it is also vital to our spiritual well-being

- a. We live in a world that lacks rest both externally and internally
- b. It leaves us in a continuous state of unsettledness

5) The 2nd verse of Psalm 23 is all about finding peace and rest that God provides

- a. Psalm 23:2 – READ

6) This evening we are going to be learning how to have calm in the chaos

- a. Peace in the panic
- b. Rest in the recoil

Source of Peace

1) Sheep are timid creatures

- a. They frighten easily because they lack any good means of self-defense
- b. Sheep are helpless, timid, feeble creatures whose only recourse to danger is to run

2) When a sheep spooks, it often causes other sheep to run in fear as well

- a. "It is not generally known that sheep are so timid and easily panicked that even a stray jackrabbit suddenly bounding from behind a bush can stampede a whole flock." – P. Keller

3) One thing that dispels the fear and distress is a flustered sheep is the presence of the shepherd

- a. When the shepherd is among his flock, there is a peace and calm
- b. One shepherd speaking on this topic said, "The presence of their master and owner and protector put them at ease as nothing else could."

4) David, as a shepherd, knew this truth

- a. Notice how he started off this verse on peace
 - a.i. "He"
 - a.ii. David anchors God as the object of our peace
- b. That simple word surfaces a simple but vital truth – God's presence provides peace to His flustered flock

5) All throughout Scripture we read that God is the Author and Authority of true peace

- a. Peace start with God and end in Him
- b. Peace is a hallmark of God's kingdom – Rom. 14:17
- c. Peace is one outcome of the Gospel – John 14:27

6) Psalm 23:2 reminds us that true peace is the internal presence of God which will manifest in external realities

7) If you are to have calm in the chaos, you are not to seek peace, you are to seek presence

- a. When you get the presence of God, you get the peace of God

8) Psalm 4:8

- a. True Biblical peace is not freedom from outside pressure, it is fellowship of internal presence

Stance of Peace

1) Notice V2 speaks about the sheep's posture

- a. The sheep is in a posture of rest
 - a.i. Maketh me to lie down – to cause to rest
 - a.ii. Still waters – resting place

2) The imagery of V2 is unique when you place it in the cultural context of its day

- a. Remember, this Psalm is talking about sheep in the Palestinian region
 - a.i. It was hot, dry soil, rocky, wilderness, only had 2 seasons of rain
- b. The geography of this psalm is not one that makes you think of “green pastures” or “still waters”

3) So you have a perplexing sight here in this Psalm

- a. Add on to that the fact that David is writing this
 - a.i. David doubtless had many restless nights and unsettled days
 - a.i.1. Fear of his life, his people, sin struggle, loss of children, wars, PTSD

4) Amidst all the chaos of his life, David was able to say, the LORD makes me rest

- a. Who God is and what God does brings a calm into David's chaos

5) The key that unlocks the understanding on how to have the stance of peace in this world is to understand this idea of “green pastures”

- a. Green pastures – not what we typically think it is
 - a.i. We think of lush belly-deep grass that a sheep plops down in
- b. Remember – they are in the Palestinian desert
 - b.i. Not many “green pastures” there – only if the farmer lets one glean

6) So what is the Green Pasture?

- 7) The imagery of green pastures here tells us that a good shepherd is one that leads his sheep to find the daily provisions they need**
 - a. They get the patch of grass they need and move on to the next
- 8) So to have a stance of peace, like that of resting in green pastures, means that when we face the panic of life, we rest in the daily provisions of the Good Shepherd**
 - a. Worry is dealing with tomorrow's problems in today's pastures
 - b. Rest in God's daily provision for you and let your Good Shepherd handle your tomorrow

Closing

- 1) Both of the clauses in verse 2 relate to the same thing – rest and peace**
- 2) We see in verse 2 the Source of Peace and the Stance of Peace**
- 3) Important truth – you will never experience the peace of God without first having peace with God**
 - a. The only way to lie down in the pasture of provision is to rest in the provision of the cross
 - b. Romans 5:1,2
 - b.i. Many people do not experience the peace of God because they are not at peace with God