

DEFEATING DESPAIR - Part III

Misery - hopelessness - anguish - gloom - depression - dejection

23 Psalm

INTRO

- We return to the beautiful 23rd Psalm ... which contains **seven** great promises ~ thus far we looked at the first **five**: **PP Slide**
 - Promise # **1** ~ The Lord will **Provide** for us
 - *God will supply all our needs - thru Jesus* (**Phil 4:19**)
 - Promise # **2** ~ The Lord will **Pacify** us
 - *God can make things peaceful for us ...* He's most concerned about the state of our hearts and minds ~ not our circumstances
 - **AA/84:** *This peace is not the peace that comes thru conformity to the world The peace (which) Christ left His disciples is internal ... and (will forever) remain w/ His witnesses thru (all their) strife & contention.*
 - Promise # **3** ~ The Lord will **Preserve** us
 - *God works His best to bring us to the point of repentance ...*
 - It's our choice ~~ will we grow into **true disciples** ...
 - ... or are we content with just "playing church"
 - Promise # **4** ~ The Lord will **Pilot** us
 - When we **ASK** in faith ... **WAIT** on the Lord ... **LISTEN & OBEY**
 - Promise # **5** ~ The Lord will **Protect** us thru those dark valleys
 - God uses His rod and His staff to safeguard us
 - These represent the **guidance** He's shared w/ us in His Word
 - Today we'll explore the last **two** promises ... starting with:

PROMISE # 6 ~ THE LORD WILL PATCH UP OUR HURTS **PP Slide**

- **Psm 23:5** ... the scene has changed from a pasture w/ a shepherd ~ to a **supper**
 - David removed poisonous plants – provided pasture – among the wild animals

- David uses his experience to help us see: **God** is the gracious host of a supper ...
 - In the Bible ~ **having a meal** w/ someone was the ultimate act of friendship
 - A meal culminated a peace agreement ~ demo security and/or forgiveness
 - To ensure we understand this significance ~~ pls turn to: **Rev 3:20**
 - When we open our heart thru faith/repentance to Jesus – He'll come in
 - Greek Word we translate as "**sup**" describes partaking together ... the main meal of the day
- Not only does the Lord prepare this table of friendship and fellowship ... but back in **Psm 23:5** ... we're told He does so ~ in the **presence of our enemies**
 - We don't need to be concerned about seeking **revenge against** anyone
 - God attends to our hurts - in **His** time & way ... which is the **best** way
- We've all been hurt by someone ~ and revenge often quickly enters our thinking
 - Hopefully we've learned { thru experience } - revenge doesn't make things right ... nor rid us of our hurt
 - **Revenge is like pouring gas on a fire** ... it keeps the hurt alive and affords the other person a reason to retaliate ~~ a never ending circle
 - Only truly effective way to get over a hurt is to forgive: **Matt 6:12**
- Important to realize: God will forgive us ~~ **just as we forgive** those who hurt us
 - Refusing to forgive others **is sin** which separates us from God ~ **Ish 59:2**
 - When we carry a grudge it hurts all our relationships ... w/God & people
 - Because of His Love and Wisdom ~ God shared: **Col 3:12, 13**
- According to **Psm 23:5**: when we obediently give God the opportunity ... He'll prepare a table before us in the presence of our enemies
 - This means God will restore all our broken relationships ~ w/ Him and others
 - When we're hurt ~ mistreated ~ or taken advantage of ... let's remember the **Lord's Table** ... and the promise found in **Rom 8:37**

- Let's think about the phrase ~ **More than a conqueror**
 - The **Greek** literally means: *'to surpass in conquering ... to conquer gloriously'*
 - Interesting - this phrase is found **nowhere** else in the New Testament
 - Perhaps Paul used these words to describe the **excess** of **God's** blessing over our felt-needs in this area
 - A conqueror defeats their enemy ... to be **more than a conqueror** seems to describe going a step further and making those enemies ~~ our friends
 - God can do that for us ~~ if we let Him and **work** with Him
 - **CSI/ 21** ~ *We have no enemy ... we need to fear. Our great conflict is with (our) unconsecrated self. When we conquer self, we are more than conquerors through Him who has loved us.*
- When the Lord is our Shepherd ~ not only will God prepare for us a table ... but He **anoints our heads w/oil**
 - In Biblical times anointing oil was highly valued in the dry – hot desert region
 - In Palestine ... the sun shines fiercely most of the year.
 - So one's skin can easily become dry and cracked
 - Oil smooth the skin ~ especially one's face
 - This "**oil**" was made by adding costly perfumes to olive oil
 - So when the Bible says God anoints our heads with oil ... it means God soothes and heals our hurts and pains ~~ and it cost Him dearly
 - It cost the shed blood of Jesus Christ
- **Psm 147:3** gives us a precious promise to claim
 - **God binds up our wounds**
 - Healers bind (bandage) a wound because they know healing takes **time**
 - The more serious the wound ~ the more **time** it takes for healing
 - THIS IS TRUE FOR **PSYCHOLOGY** INJURIES AS WELL

- Because the Lord:
 - (1) prepares a **table** in the presence of our enemies and
 - (2) anoints our heads with **oil**
 - We can say with the Psalmist: *my cup runs over* ... my heart overflows with gratitude
 - Let's recall what God said in - **Jeremiah 31:25**
- God **will** heal our hurts ~ but it often takes time ... no immediate gratification
 - When we hurt ~ let's remember that the **Lord's Table** and **Oil** will make our cup run over ...
 - ... because the **Lord will Patch-up our Hurts**

PROMISE # 7 ~ LORD WILL PERPETUATE OUR PLEASURES **PP Slide**

- **Psm 23:6** - *some of the older NT manuscripts read: 'return and dwell'*
- "goodness" ... Hebrew literally means good things which are pleasant and delightful
 - **Psm 34:10** says: " those who seek the Lord **shall not** lack any good thing "
 - Let me be clear: in **neither** of these Psalms is David saying ONLY good things will happen to God's people
 - **Rather** ... good things will always come from whatever happens
 - **Rom 8:28**
 - **Nothing** can touch a Child of God except by the Lord's consent ~ and **all things** which are permitted -- ca work for good when we love God
 - **With Jesus as our Shepherd** ... good things come out of problems
- Not only goodness ... but "**MERCY**" shall follow us all the days of our lives
 - Mercy means we don't get what we should ~ sometimes **we all** need mercy
 - When we need of God's limitless mercy ... let's read **Psm 28:6, 7**

- Because the Lord is our shepherd ~ goodness and mercy **shall** follow us all the days of our lives
 - Our lives can be confusing ... hard, and even unfair
 - BUT ~ when this life is over and we get to Heaven ... we'll look back and realize goodness and mercy indeed followed us all the days of our lives
 - When we die ~ things will just get better ... because: *we will dwell in the house of the Lord forever*
 - **2 Corth 5:1** { **tent** = our human body }
- **In an earlier church I pastored** ~ I overheard a young child ask their Mother: **"What happens when you die?"**
 - Mother replies something like: *Remember the other night when you fell asleep on the couch in the living room ... and you woke up in your bed?*
 - *After you were asleep - your dad picked you up and carried you to your room*
 - *You went to sleep in our place ~~ but found yourself in another*
 - ***This happens when a Christian dies*** ... they go to sleep in one place and then **Jesus** takes them to Heaven
- A good theological explanation of ~ **Rev 7:17** { **them** = God's children }
 - Jesus ... **our Good Shepherd** ... will lead us to living fountains of water
 - And then God – Himself – will wipe every tear from our eyes
- Saints: this life is just a journey to our final destination ~~ the House of the Lord
 - God doesn't make the journey smooth because this life is a test ... **Jam 1:3**
 - I find it helpful to recall this verse when the path gets to be a challenge
 - **Jesus** told us – *In this world you shall have tribulation*
 - Based on this observation ... seems logical the road to our final destination will have speed-bumps and pot-holes
 - This "journey" is for our development -- **Ish 48:10**

CONCLUSION

- **USAF** turned **72** this past week
 - Read an article written by Commanding General for US Air Forces - Europe
 - He shared an African proverb - which spoke to me:
 - *"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."*
- Am sure we all want to get to Heaven ~ to me at times ... it seems a far way off
 - We need to travel with Jesus to get there ~~ maybe our journey with the Good Shepherd should start here and now
 - When we choose to do that ... the **23 Psalm** reminds us of some of the benefits
 - Key one for me is ~ **Defeating Despair**
- Defeating despair requires believing the promises found in the 23rd Psalm:

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|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| • Promise # 1 | <i>The Lord will</i> | <i>Provide</i> | <i>for us</i> |
| • Promise # 2 | <i>The Lord will</i> | <i>Pacify</i> | <i>us</i> |
| • Promise # 3 | <i>The Lord will</i> | <i>Preserve</i> | <i>us</i> |
| • Promise # 4 | <i>The Lord will</i> | <i>Pilot</i> | <i>us</i> |
| • Promise # 5 | <i>The Lord will</i> | <i>Protect</i> | <i>us</i> |
| • Promise # 6 | <i>The Lord will</i> | <i>Patch-up</i> | <i>our hurts</i> |
| • Promise # 7 | <i>The Lord will</i> | <i>Perpetuate</i> | <i>our pleasures</i> |

Hymn # XXX