

A Study of the Wisdom Literature

(OT Survey Lesson 214—Psalms 23-24)

Introduction: Psalm 23 is one of the most well-known of all the psalms. In it David celebrates the blessings of his life by figures drawn from his own experience as a keeper of sheep and from his associations with Jonathan in the king's palace. Psalm 24 seems to suggest a time when the ark of the covenant was being returned to its place on Mt. Zion. All are urged to prepare themselves for the Lord's return to his holy place among the people. In later times, this psalm developed a Messianic character and may find its fulfillment in Jesus Christ who has come as God to His temple.

Lesson aim: To show the blessings of the Lord's provision, protection, and presence with us.

A psalm of praise to the Lord for his provision and protection—Psalm 23:1-6

1. What figure does David use to describe the Lord? (v. 1) What did he say would result for him?
2. What things did David say the Lord (as his shepherd) did for him? (v. 2-3)
3. How did David say he would feel when he approached "the valley of the shadow of death"? (v. 4) Why?
4. How were the rod and staff used by a shepherd in ancient times? Explain David's use of these in v. 4.
5. *In v. 5 the figure changes from the pastures of Palestine to the palace.* What did David say the Lord prepared for him? (v. 5) In whose presence?
6. With what is David anointed? (v. 5) How does David describe his "cup"?

7. David's present blessings assure him that what will "follow" him all the days of his life? (v. 6) In whose house did David say he would always dwell?

A psalm of celebrating the Lord's presence among His people—Psalm 24:1-10

(Perhaps this psalm was written for and celebrates the return of the ark of the covenant to Zion after the war with the Philistines, 2 Sam. 6:12-19 or some similar occasion)

1. What does David affirm belongs to the Lord? (v. 1) Why? (v. 2)
2. Yet, the Lord had chosen to make his dwelling where? (v. 3) What question does David raise about this hill?
3. What four things were necessary for one to have association with God? (v. 4) What would such a one receive from the Lord? (v. 5)
4. These attributes that David proclaims describe the generation who does what? (v. 6)
5. What command is given to the gates and doors of the city as the Lord comes near? (v. 7) Why?
6. How is the Lord described? (v. 8)
7. How is the Lord described in the second answer to the same question? (v. 10)
8. Thought question: Now that you have studied the psalm do you regard it as Messianic? Why or why not?