

J.J.

BELOVED PSALMS Series
The Lord Is My Shepherd
Psalms 23 (Part 5)

INTRODUCTION :

Yesterday, Kuya Met drove me, Ate Nitz and Ate Amie to the hospital to visit Tatay Jess who is scheduled to undergo bypass surgery in the next couple of days. We met with Nanay Fe (wife of Tatay Jess) there but since it was the Critical Care Unit, they only allowed 2 visitors at a time. But it was good that I was able to visit. When I entered Tatay Jess' room, I saw him sitting down on his bed eating his lunch. He was smiling from ear to ear and he was pointing to me what he was eating. I didn't notice first until Ate Amie told me, he's eating "shepherd's pie". If you were here during my introduction of the first part of Psalm 23, I told the story about "shepherd's pie". In my one-on-one with Tatay Jess, he said that's the one he remembers while he was lying down on his bed.

I still remember Tatay Jess whenever I see him and invite him to go to church, he would just give me a smile. He never went to church and Nanay Fe asked us to pray about it. And now Tatay Jess is attending church with us.

Nanay Fe shared with me yesterday what Tatay Jess told him that the one thing he regrets being in the hospital is because he won't be able to go to church and hear the word of God. Tatay Jess confirmed it to me when he shared to me that after Sunday worship service, he can't wait for it to be Sunday again. It's because God's Word refreshes him.

Today, by God's grace, we will finish with Psalm 23 and I pray that you have somehow been refreshed by our Lord Jesus Christ through His word and now we come to one of the most powerful promises in the Bible which is Psalm 23:6

Psalm 23 : 1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3 he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Prayer

REVIEW :

- I. MY LORD GIVES ME SATISFACTION
- II. MY LORD GIVES ME DIRECTION
- III. MY LORD GIVES ME PROTECTION

IV. MY LORD GIVES ME RECOGNITION

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Last week, we have learned that the metaphor of our Lord changed from Shepherd to Gracious Host or Dear Friend. We have become sheep to a distinguished guest or a dear friend.

1. His anointing and favor

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows

God is saying, don't worry about your problems. Don't focus on your enemies. Focus on me.. Enjoy your blessings.

ENJOY YOUR TABLE!

To continue.....

2. His assurance forever

6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

(Show video of little girl reciting Psalm 23)

You noticed in the video that she wanted to get to the word "surely" as soon as possible. The word "surely" reminds us of our nature as people. **WE CRAVE FOR ASSURANCE.**

Illustration : We notice these even with kids. For example, they would ask their parents for something like buy them a toy or bring them to the zoo this weekend and then the mom or dad will say, "Yes", most of the time, it wouldn't be enough. They would follow up with "Promise?", then the parents would answer, "Promise." But then they would ask again, "Really, promise?" which then the parent would have to answer, "Promise" again. Even at a young age, we crave for assurance.

The word "surely" is an adverb. It's designed to add an emphasis or intensity in a statement.

Notice the difference in emphasis or intensity when you add the adverb "surely" . If someone asks "Are you going?", they can answer "Yes, I am going." But it adds the emphasis or intensity when they reply like this, "Yes, I am surely going."

GOD WANTS TO GIVE YOU ASSURANCE FOREVER AND THIS IS GOING TO BE THE BASIS OF OUR STRENGTH AND OUR HOPE TO GO ON, TO KEEP ON WORSHIPPING HIM, TO KEEP ON OBEYING HIM EVEN IF THE GOING GETS TOUGH.

What is the assurance?

goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life.

Let's talk about goodness and love first.

Etymology : Surely goodness Towb - (sure goodness)

Good things, pleasant things, excellent things, happy things, right things, bounty

This word talks about the physical, emotional, spiritual and moral good

Our common term for that is “blessings”. You’ve noticed that we always connect God’s goodness with His blessings. Let’s stop at this point because there’s another word that David mentioned that is as equally as important.

Etymology : Checed – love (lovingkindness)

KJV translated it as “mercies” God’s forgiveness. But this word “cheched” is like a diamond with so many angles, that’s why one of the translations of this word is lovingkindness. It means it’s an overflowing kind of love. It’s an abundance of love.

In the New Testament, we call it “grace”. It’s the abundance of God’s love, mercy, kindness, forgiveness to men even if people don’t deserve it.

What is the difference of Christians from other religions? Grace. As Christians, we are called people of grace. God poured an abundance of grace in our lives so we pour an abundance of God’s love, mercy, kindness, forgiveness to men if they don’t deserve it just as God gave it to us.

Illustration : In our family, we have a term “by God’s grace”. For example, if a blessing comes or we are happy at that moment, or we did something like forgive an enemy, and people say, “Wow, how can you do that?” Or “Wow, God has blessed you mightily, “we say “by God’s grace.”

I got it from the last page of a book I was reading about sharing the Gospel, when the author asked a 100-year old man who is a strong Christian, what is the one thing he learned about life in general, the old man answered, “It’s all by God’s grace.”

In short, all the blessings, the privileges, the pleasure, the enjoyment of nature, the food, the forgiveness is because of the OVERFLOWING OF THE LOVE OF GOD FOR US (CHECED) even if we didn’t do anything to deserve it.

Quote : Since God controls all that happens in this world, every meal, every pleasure, every possession, every bit of sun, every night’s sleep, every moment of health and safety, everything else that sustains and enriches life is a divine gift. J.I. Packer (Knowing God)

Again, what is the proof of God's overflowing love for us? HE GAVE HIS SON JESUS CHRIST TO DIE ON THE CROSS AS PAYMENT FOR OUR SIN.

Jesus is the ultimate divine gift! And all we need to do is accept that gift and we will have eternal life. (Prayer of salvation)

Now, here is what's going to blow your mind when it comes to God's assurance to you.

- **THE PERSISTENCY OF GOD'S GOODNESS AND LOVE**

6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me

Etymology : Follow – “radaph” pursue, chase, harass (**it's a negative term** for like a dog chasing you or an enemy pursuing or harrasing you)

Illustration : I remember when one time, I brought Chicay, Zak and Bexy and their yaya into the church we were planting by God's grace, in one of the remote places in the Philippines. Zak was 8 years old then and he was chubby. He was my assistant in carrying the Bibles that were being distributed. But during our relaxation time, Zak and Bexy was with the beach with their yaya while Chicay and I were inside the house. Zak wanted to poo so he decided to leave the yaya and Bexy at the beach. But there was a nasty little dog that saw Zak and the dog began to growl and then chase him. I can just hear Zak scream out so loud and ran as fast as he can because the dog was chasing him and harassing him and he was trapped in the corner until I came out to chase the dog away.

That's the meaning of the word “radaph” (chasing, harassing, pursuing)

NOW IMAGINE THIS!!!!

God's sure goodness and love is the one pursuing us....harassing us, chasing us.

Now in order for us to really see the impact of this, let's interpret this and apply it according to context.

Remember, that at this time, David was being pursued, chased and harassed by his own son who wanted to solidify his hold on the throne he had stolen (2 Samuel 13-19). Now look at this, instead of David thinking about how he was being harassed, maltreated, chased and pursued by his own son, he was thinking of God's goodness and love chasing him.

Application : **God's blessings and grace are chasing you every day but we are missing on it. Why? We keep running away from it. How?**

- We run away from it by worrying. Instead of stopping and thinking about the goodness and love of God that is overflowing in your life right now, we tend to think of a bad future that hasn't happened yet.
- We run away from it by thinking on how you were treated unfairly by other people instead of thinking about how God has treated you unfairly by showering you with his love, forgiveness, mercy and blessings even if we don't deserve it.

When you are becoming miserable because of worrying or because of bitterness, anger or hatred, STOP AND SURRENDER AND THINK ABOUT GOD'S GOODNESS AND LOVE IN YOUR LIFE THAT IS OVERFLOWING!

Isn't that what Paul wrote about in Philippians

Philippians 4: 8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

These are the things we should be thinking about.

Illustration : Chicay and I, when we catch ourselves worrying or being bitter or angry about what somebody has done to us in the past, we call that “kaning-baboy”

The problem with us, we love to smell “kaning-baboy” and it only makes us sick, puke, frown and miserable. Our Lord is telling us to STOP AND SURRENDER TO MY GOODNESS AND LOVE...IT'S ALWAYS CHASING YOU PURSUING YOU.

What's the promise of God when you think about God's goodness and love instead of kaning-baboy and start following Jesus.

9.... And the God of peace will be with you.

Here's the truth. We are talking about the Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd, and we're talking about the sheep following the Shepherd or it's us following the Lord but at the end of it all...**it's our Lord and His goodness and His love who is following us! That's an assurance.**

When you think about that, you remember earlier that Zak was shouting in sheer terror because a dog was chasing him. But when you just think about it that God is chasing you with His goodness and love, then instead of terror, we will be shouting with shrieks of delight.

Illustration : Dads always do these to their kids when he will be pretending to be chasing their children around the house and saying “Ayan na si Dad” and the kids will just be running around in excitement and laughter and then the Dad will then get the child when he or she stops, carry him or her or tickle her and they will just be laughing.

THAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP WITH OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN AS HE CHASES US WITH HIS GOODNESS AND LOVE.

As Christians, we should be the ones so much excited about life, our laughs should be the heartiest because we know our Father in heaven is chasing us with His goodness and love.

Which now brings us to...

- **THE PERMANENCY OF GOD'S GOODNESS AND LOVE**

6 Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

The goodness and love of God **is always there AVAILABLE FOR YOU.**

Etymology : All the days - "yowm" in a temporal sense, the 24 hour period

It means, do you want God's goodness and love? It's there on a 24-hour period, 7 days a week

all the days of my life

Now that's an antidote for worry. Why?

What's wrong with worry? You think negatively about the future, about what's going to happen in the next few days or the next month or the next year.

But what's the promise of God? He says, "Don't worry about the future, the next day, the following days because *Surely ... goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life*

In short, why are you worried about tomorrow, when God's goodness and love is there to meet you, chasing after you?

Story : I remember when we bought our first townhouse here in Canada. I was the only breadwinner and my salary was so small. Chicay already saw the house she wanted, she just needed my approval but she had to fly to Sweden together with my kids to visit my sister-in-law. They paid for everything. Chicay told me if I like the house then just close it with Bro. Butch and negotiate for it. I liked the house and then negotiated and signed, little did I know that I still have to fork out around another \$2,000, if not, I can't get the house. I did not have the \$2k and did not know where to get it. Chicay and I talked on the phone and Chicay said don't worry. I did the contrary and I was awake the whole night and my heart was beating fast and was so worried. In the morning when my wife called, she asked me "How am I?" Please note, Sweden's time is 7 hours ahead of Canada. So it was 7 a.m. here and 2 p.m. there. I told her I wasn't able to sleep worrying would I get the money. My wife said, "Ano ka ba?" And she said that my brother-in-law would give us the \$2k "pay when able".

How did that happen? Well after my call with Chicay, my sister-in-law asked her “How’s Jerry?” And she was so excited to tell her, we got the house but we need to pay another \$2k to close the transaction. Little did she know that my sister-in-law and her husband talked about it and they said, they’ll give the 2k. Remember, it was 7 hours ahead. In short, this was happening in the middle of the night while I was so worried, I can’t breathe and I can’t sleep while God has already provided the solution. I was so mad at myself and said, there’s really no use to worrying.

Quote : Don’t worry about tomorrow. God is already there.

And the best part is this....

and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Context : You have to remember again that David was being pursued and he knows the possibility that he can be killed.

He wasn’t afraid of it because

1. He said to the Lord, “*for you are with me.*” I don’t worry about a thing.
 2. And even if Absalom succeeds in his plans, David still comes out as the winner.
- Why? He will *dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

In short, David has assurance that

- God’s goodness and love is after him, following him 24 hours a day, 7 days a week while he is here on earth.
- And even if he leaves this earth, he will be with God forever.

That’s why to a Christian, I’ve always emphasized in this church, if you follow Christ, you can truly say,

“THE BEST IS YET TO COME.” Why?

Let’s recite this together again.

Psalm 23 : 1 The LORD is my _____, I shall not be in _____ 2 He makes me lie down in green _____, he leads me beside _____ waters, 3 he restores my _____. He guides me in paths of _____ for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the _____ of death, I will fear no evil, _____; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my _____. You anoint my head with oil; my cup _____. 6 Surely goodness and love will _____ me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord _____.

S.G.D.