

THE REDTHREAD

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

THE GIFT OF SALVATION

Acknowledge to yourself and to God that you have sinned (Romans 3:23).

In sorrow for your sins, turn from them to God and ask His forgiveness (Isaiah 55:7).

By faith receive the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, believing that He died in your place on the cross (John 3:16).

BETWEEN TIMES

PSALM 23 BIBLE STUDY

Day 1—Contentment
Philippians 4:11, 12

Day 2—Rest
Hebrews 4:1-11

Day 3—Obedience
Numbers 9:20, 21

Day 4—Salvation
John 3:1-8

Day 5—Righteousness
1 Peter 2:11-16

Day 6—Fear no evil
Acts 18:9, 10

Day 7—Comfort
John 14:16-26

Day 8—Peace
Colossians 3:13-17

Day 9—Anointed
1 John 2:24-29

Day 10—Mercy
Genesis 39:21-23

WHY & HOW

THE RED THREAD exists to be an encouragement to the men and women currently separated from family and friends in correctional institutions. It is published on 2nd and 4th Wednesdays by **Crimson House Ministries** at 1616 North Robberson, Springfield, Missouri, 65803. Please send all correspondence to that address. Subscription information is available online at: <http://readingroom.crimsonhouseministries.org/>

David's 23rd Psalm is one of the most beloved and recited passages in God's word. Preached countless times in churches of every denomination it has stood as a testament of David's confidence in God. In times of trouble and grief, it serves as a spring of hope and faith.

As the daughter of a preacher, I have to admit that sometimes hearing the third sermon of the week got a little boring, so I would try and make things more interesting by turning the story or Scriptures into a movie. In my head, I saw David looking tan, fit and royal, wearing bright robes as he leisurely pens his latest song to God. It was very easy to see him sitting out in the bright sunshine, his harp within easy reach, a large bounty of food spread out before him. I could almost hear the faint sound of rushing water from the nearby stream as birds chatter in the trees. In my movie, a bright yellow butterfly dances overhead as David ponders God's goodness.

Under those circumstances, how easy it is to see God's divine guidance in everything?

How do you see David as you read this passage? Is he relaxed and comfortable, just mulling the awesomeness of God? Now, keep that picture in your mind, but I want you to add just one thing...an army of 10,000 men waiting for him over the hill ready to take his life.

The reality of David's circumstances as he wrote the famous Psalm was far different from my imaginings as a child.

David was on the run from Saul, who sought to kill him because God had anointed David the next king of Israel. His life was in jeopardy, he had no safe place to lay his head and every day was a fight.

Now go back and reread the Psalm.

How amazing these words become when illuminated against the backdrop of David's plight. What an amazing faith to be able to say, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want," in such a seemingly bleak and hopeless situation. That simple statement not only spoke of David's supreme confidence in God's power, but also

of the love that God had for him.

David describes God as his shepherd, because he knew firsthand the love and responsibility of a shepherd. The role of the

enemy, found comfort in the laws and promises of God. He knew that the same God that brought the children of Israel out of bondage, who saved Noah and his family from the flood, and fulfilled the promise to Sarah and Abraham, would also stand with him in his darkest hour.

Can you say in this point in your life that yes, my cup runs over with the love, joy and grace of God? Do you stand in your "shadow of death" with the enemy all around, not knowing who to trust, and finding no place of rest?

God is there. Even in the deepest and darkest shadows, God's love is reaching out to you wanting to give you a place of rest and refreshment. Allow him to guide you in every part of your life and you can emerge from the shadows, no longer hunted but as a child of God who can say, "Surely goodness and love shall follow me all the days of my life."

—STEPHANIE BATES



TOLA

Whether men like it or not, man by his depraved sin nature is symbolized in God's Word as a "rimmah;" a maggot. But the Lord Himself is symbolized as a "tola;" a crimson grub. In ancient times the crimson grub, a very rare worm, was actually kept, bred, and cultivated by the Jews as well as some other

nations. When several thousand of these crimson grubs were mature and fully grown, then they were crushed to death. Out of the crushed bodies of those crimson grubs would flow a deep red blood, which was used for a dye. When cloth or clothes were washed in this dye, they would be dyed a beautiful crimson red. This lovely color

never faded, and could never be washed out or removed.

In Job 25:6 both words are used, "How much less man, that is a worm [rimmah; maggot]? and the Son of man, which is a worm [tola; crimson grub]? Then in Psalm 22:6, the Lord declared of Himself, "But I am a worm [tola; crimson grub], and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people."

While men by their very depraved sin nature are symbolized as "maggots" in the Scriptures, the Lord Jesus Christ is symbolized as the rare "crimson grub" whose body was crushed for us on Calvary's cross, (cf. Genesis 3:15). When we then receive Him as our Savior, we are washed from our sin in the precious blood that flowed from His body. His blood "dyes" our very soul a beautiful red that never fades as it cleanses us from all sin (cf. 1 John 1:7).



LET'S HEAR FROM YOU...

WHO AM I IN CHRIST

I am God's child...(1 John 3:2)
 I am a new creature...(2 Corinthians 5:17)
 I am a temple of the Spirit...(1 Corinthians 6:19)
 I am complete in Christ...(Colossians 2:10)
 I am the light of the world...(Matthew 5:14)
 I am alive to God...(Romans 6:11)
 I am loved...(Jeremiah 31:3)
 I am in Jesus' hands...(John 10:28)
 Christ in me is the hope of glory!



—Inmate, Name Withheld
 Cresson, PA



LISTEN!

Why are you walking around like you ain't got no sense;
 Livin' in the shadows and refusin' to repent?

Why do you think turn the other cheek will automatically make you weak
 When these are words from the one heaven sent?

Why do you play all these games, denyin' Him and disrespectin' His name
 Loving darkness and hating the light?

Willing to die on the cross, He gave His life as the cost
 To Keep the fires of hell from your sight

You keep livin' this way, with the world's pleasures you wanna play;
 In the end you'll pay an eternal toll
 Please turn your life around before you're put into the ground
 Or the devil will lay claim to your soul!

Brothers and sisters this may be it, the last chance you're gonna get,
 Before you stand in front of that seat on Judgment Day
 I beg you, turn away from all the sin—a new life in Christ you must begin
 So I may see you in heaven, this I do pray!

—Inmate, Name Withheld
 Springfield, MO

MY GUARDIAN ANGEL



One night I had a dream,
 It left a tale to tell,
 I dreamed I saw an Angel;
 Poor thing, he was not well.
 His body was bruised and battered, his wings were ripped and torn,
 I saw that he could barely walk; he looked so tired and worn.
 I walked right up and asked, "How can this be?"
 He turned and paused a bit; these words he spoke to me:
 "I am your guardian angel, a great task, as you can see.
 You've run amuck all these years; look what you've done to me.
 These bruises are from shielding you, in times of dire ill,
 The drugs you've used so dangerously—I've paid for that bill.
 My wings, you say, are ripped and torn, a noble badge I bear,
 They've flown for you so many times, from evils unaware.
 Each mark has its own story, of deadly wounds destroyed,
 You've made me wish more times than once that I was unemployed.
 If only you could make it standing on your own,
 But don't fret or worry, you are never left alone.
 I'm here to watch over you until my powers fail,
 You've made it much easier sitting there in jail."
 I could hardly believe what I'd seen, let alone how much he cared,
 I wept on his broad shoulders and left him in despair.
 When I looked in the mirror the next morning,
 I pondered, "Why should I try?"
 Then distantly, I thought I heard a frail old angel cry.

—Author Unknown
 Submitted by Inmate Robert Langford
 Fulton, MO

*We love hearing from you and so do our readers. Please send your articles, poems, praise reports, testimonies, etc..., to **The Red Thread, Crimson House Ministries, 1616 N Robberson, Springfield, MO, 65803.***

PASTOR'S DEVOTION

Psalm 18 is David's thanksgiving for deliverance. While the shepherd king wrote this song on the day the Lord rescued him from all of his enemies, we will also sing this Psalm in faith believing the Lord will destroy our enemies in the days ahead!

In the Psalm's first three verses, David lists nine things that the Lord is to him. Here are the definitions to his descriptions:

1. **Strength**—help, strength as in having the strength *to* help;
2. **Rock**—it refers basically to a cleft in a rock, thence a rock or cliff, it often becomes a symbol of spiritual truths;
3. **Fortress**—mountain or rock fortress, i.e., a place where one resides as a hiding or defensive position;
4. **Deliverer**—save another, to make safe from danger or a very unfavorable circumstance;
5. **God**—the Almighty;
6. **Strength**—literally, *rock or cliff*; figuratively a place of security or refuge;

7. **Buckler**—a defensive weapon that protects from attack, made of a frame with a leather cover;
8. **Horn of salvation**—to have one's horns exalted by God is to gain victory and salvation;
9. **High Tower**—an inaccessible, secure place possibly up high in rim-rock where one may dwell or reside, with a focus on safety and security of the area.



As you see God in each of David's descriptions, make a list of how the Lord has done the same for you. Cite specific examples from your own history; note if there is any definition you have yet to experience and look for Him to fulfill that particular meaning in the future—for He will. Thank Him for being all that you have ever needed.



1616 NORTH ROBBERSON
 SPRINGFIELD, MO 65803