

Psalm 23<sup>1</sup>

1. O god, you are my shepherd, nothing needful shall I lack or want
2. For in the meadows where you make me lie to rest, or on the paths you lead beside still waters,
3. My soul revives, refreshed again, to follow further the pathways of your name.
4. Even though the way that I must take leads through the deepest shadows I shall not fear the lurking evil there, nor death. Your presence is my rod and staff, my comfort and my guide.
5. And in those places where my foes rise up to trouble me you spread a table and make a feast; anoint my head, and fill my cup to overflowing.
6. So now I know, O Lord That all my life-long through your goodness and mercy flows and follows after me, And at the last when Journey's done your dwelling place shall be my home forever.

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<sup>1</sup> NOTE:

This is a song of ascent with identifiable stages of growth in relationship to the Shepherd.

MEDITATION

- A. As a prayer, move through the stages of spiritual ascent as they are expressed. Identify them, and then identify yourself with them
- B. Imagine that this Psalm does not refer to the world outside you, but speaks of an interior space or place within your own being. As you do, mark the shifts in relationship between yourself as a "sheep" needing guidance, and God as shepherd guiding you. Note also the changing landscape of the soul as you are led through this inner pilgrimage.
- C. At the end of the Psalm there is a very significance of the anointing? Does this take place on the head of a sheep, or some other creature? Imagine what the purpose of anointing might be.
- D. Which part of this journey holds the most significance and poignancy for you at this moment in time? Meditate on those words throughout your day. Ask yourself, "Why is this portion of the text attracting me? How do I need the care and guidance of the Shepherd at this time in my life?"