



Old Testament Reading Ps 23

¹The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
² He makes me lie down in green pastures.
He leads me beside still waters.
³ He restores my soul.
He leads 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 mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Epistle Reading Col 3:12-15

¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. ¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Gospel Reading Mark 6:30-44

³⁰ The apostles returned to Jesus and told Him all that they had done and taught. ³¹ And He said to them, "**Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.**" For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. ³² And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. ³³ Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. ³⁴ When He went ashore he saw a great crowd, and He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And He began to teach them many things. ³⁵ And when it grew late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. ³⁶ Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat." ³⁷ But He answered them, "**You give them something to eat.**" And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?" ³⁸ And He said to them, "**How many loaves do you have? Go and see.**" And when they had found out, they said, "Five, and two fish." ³⁹ Then He commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. ⁴⁰ So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. ⁴¹ And taking the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And He divided the two fish among them all. ⁴² And they all ate and were satisfied. ⁴³ And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. ⁴⁴ And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

Introduction

•Psalm 23 asks: How do we find peace in this world?
•Answer: Through (1) one lack, (2) one characteristic and (3) one model.

Background

1. One lack: Peace in our hearts.
 - a. I shall not want ... makes more sense to say I shall not lack anything: lying down (physical rest); food/water/green pastures/safety (physical necessities).
 - b. Most of us don't lack rest & necessities but our souls are still not at peace. Most of us are a little like the rich young ruler ([Matt 10:17-31](#): "What do I still lack?").
 - c. Plight of modern life: in having so much, physically, it seems easier for us to get lost, mentally, emotionally, spiritually ... and feel lacking.
 - d. Ps 23 tells us that the something we all lack, left to ourselves, is the God of the Bible as our Shepherd.
 - e. We all have shepherds (something, someone) that we look to and expect them/it to do for us what David says the Lord does for him, but what is your shepherd like?
2. One characteristic: Meekness
 - a. Primary characteristic of God as Shepherd is meekness (absolute strength under the control of compassion for others); meekness is not weakness.
 - b. We need our God who is disparate from us (we being weak sheep). He, the meek Shepherd, can come to us, can be near to us, can provide for us and can lead us.
 - c. This view of God is unique to Christianity. No other faith speaks of God being meek, relating to us in our world and healing us through meekness.
 - 1) [Matt 5:1-13](#) ... **Blessed are the meek** ...
 - 2) [Matt 11:28-30](#) ... **for I am gentle and lowly in heart** ...
 - 3) [Matt 21:5](#) ... your king is coming to you, humble ...
 - 4) Col 3:12-15 ... (we can't have peace in our hearts without meekness)
 - d. Jesus revealed God's meekness to us; meek is how we are to be, as well. We are to be a community known for peacemaking – God came to create peace.
3. One model: Jesus, who shed His blood for us.
 - a. Mark 6 describes crowds of people suffering from significant want/lack, in a desolate place (east of Galilee), and Jesus and His disciples being weary from ministry.
 - b. The crowds were of angry men, unhappy with their condition, wanting Jesus to lead them back to Jerusalem, as their king, to overthrow the Romans.
 - c. Jesus had compassion on them, by giving them His word (teaching), having them lay down in green pastures, and giving them bread (representing life).
 - d. He taught them that Rome is not the real enemy, the real enemy is sin and death. He came to defeat sin and death by having His body broken like bread.
 - e. The crowds became convinced by His compassion, meekness, teaching and bread that His way was The way ... and they will dwell in the House of the Lord, forever.
4. Jesus came to us to have His body broken so that we can be made whole. If we can receive Him, He will give us rest & peace, make us meek and make us peacemakers.

Discuss

1. What is the enemy of having peace in our hearts?
2. How can we prevent worldly aggravations from maintaining peace in our hearts?
3. Do you struggle with seeing meekness as an attribute?
4. Today, how are you going to demonstrate meekness in your daily walk?
5. How can we be more Christ-like?

Conclusion/Application

Consider how you would have peace and meekness in your daily walk with Christ.