

Psalm 23 – *Walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death*

The Hebrew words used here contain no reference to death as such but do refer to all dark and bitter experiences, one of which may be death. So in the common use of the passage the thought of death need not be excluded, but the reference is certainly much broader.

“Valley of the Shadow of Death” may be translated “the darkest valley.” This verse may, therefore, refer to all the dangers a Christian faces, not only death. Valley of darkness is a figurative expression for seasons of trials and afflictions. The Lord often leads His believers into dark valleys of suffering, want, (lack of basic necessities or comforts of life), affecting both body and soul. Outward suffering often brings on inward darkness and gloom. The last dark valley for the believer to cross is the valley of death which is also the last evil to be expected.”

A “very deep shadow of death” is another way to say it. Even in life’s most frightening situation, we can be confident of God’s guiding presence. Indeed, when God is with us, the valley of the shadow of death is one of the “paths of righteousness.”

Even death itself is only a shadow. Our circumstances may look dark and fearsome, and yet we need fear no evil. Our Good Shepherd – the one who walked into death in our place on the cross and who emerged victorious from it – this Shepherd always walks beside us. Here the emphasis lies on the fact that the Lord leads and guides us His own on the way of life. He always leads us the right way.

Job was certainly a man of many sorrows. Some have said that only Jesus endured greater suffering. In the middle of his many problems Job was confident and says “*He reveals the deep things of darkness and brings utter darkness into the light.*” (Job 12:22) Think about this verse as you experience dark times.

Prayer:

Dear Lord, be with me when all around me things are falling apart. Give me the comfort that you are with me when disasters, illness and even death are a part of my life. Let my faith never waver but only grow stronger during those times. Amen.