

THE KING'S FEAST

Part 7 of The Shepherd Psalm 2020

Psalm 23:5 **SLIDE**

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

WHERE IS THIS TABLE?

It makes a world of difference to see this verse in the right setting ...
It is the difference between seeing what God has provided for us here and now, and not seeing it.

THIS TABLE IS NOT IN HEAVEN

Many people speak of the latter part of Psalm 23 as something we will come into when we die and go to heaven.

IT'S OFTEN SUNG & QUOTED AT FUNERALS - 'The valley of the shadow of death' relating to the deceased person's journey into the afterlife ...

And therefore **the table ... the anointing oil ... the overflowing cup ... the pursuing goodness and mercy, and the house of the Lord** are all blessings reserved in Heaven for us after we die.

BUT THIS IS NOT TRUE

It is true that our believing loved ones **who have gone ahead** have entered into unimaginable blessing, BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT PSALM 23 IS TALKING ABOUT ... THIS PSALM IS TELLING US THESE GRACES OF GOD ARE OURS TO ENJOY TODAY ... RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW.

IT'S NOT FOR 'RON' – LATER RON ... IT'S FOR 'HERAN' – HERE AND NOW ...

LOOK WHERE THIS TABLE IS SET ...

Psalm 23:5 **SLIDE**

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

THIS TABLE IS SET IN THE PRESENCE OF MY ENEMIES. THERE ARE NO ENEMIES IN HEAVEN.

WE ALSO READ, IN VERSE 6, THE WORDS ... 'GOODNESS & MERCY SHALL FOLLOW ME **ALL THE DAYS OF MY LIFE**'. **THESE GRACES MANIFEST IN THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES.**

JUST AS HEAVEN DOESN'T HAVE ENEMIES, IT ALSO DOESN'T HAVE ANY DAYS OR NIGHTS ... DAYS & TIME ARE CONCEPTS OF THIS WORLD.

THIS TABLE IS SET IN THE WORLD SYSTEM.

We Saw Last Week, 'The Valley of Shadows' is this fallen world system into which we are born as sons of Adam.

GOD HAS MADE PROVISION FOR US **HERE IN THE SHADOWS** ... **HIS TABLE / HIS ANOINTING / THE OVERFLOWING CUP / THE GOODNESS & MERCY ARE ALL PRESENT BLESSINGS** PROVIDED FOR YOU AND ME TO ENJOY HERE & NOW, ALL **THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES ON THIS EARTH.**
THIS KING'S FEAST IS NOT 'PIE IN THE SKY WHEN YOU DIE'.
IT IS 'STEAK ON OUR PLATE WHILE WE WAIT'.

YET, SO MANY CHRISTIAN'S DON'T BELIEVE THESE BLESSINGS ARE FOR US
HERE & NOW ... AND MISS OUT

SLIDE **IF WE BELIEVE THERE IS NOTHING MORE TO RECEIVE IN THIS LIFE, THEN WE SHALL HAVE WHAT WE BELIEVE – NOTHING!**

We can't receive what we don't believe ... But what is the alternative?

If we don't believe God has provided these blessing for us here and now, we will believe we have to simply **endure our problems in sorrow**. One of our favorite scriptures will be - '... *He that endures to the end will be saved*' (Matthew 10:22) as opposed to having '*all things richly to enjoy*' (1 Timothy 6:17).

So we will endure the attack of the devil / the temptation of sin / the destruction of circumstance ... believing and hoping **IT'LL ALL BE OVER ONE DAY SOON**, and not ENJOYING God's blessing here and now ...

We will long for the coming of Jesus and sing songs about heaven, longing for relief ... We will see our trouble in this world ... feel the pain ... and begin to pray ... '**Come Lord Jesus**'. (NB: This is not the way to pray 'Come Lord Jesus' ... We pray 'Come Lord Jesus' because we are longing for Him ... not because we want to be rescued from this world)

PEOPLE LIKE THIS ALSO SING MELANCHOLY SONGS OF THE CROSS ... IDENTIFYING WITH CHRIST'S SUFFERING.

I used to be one and wallowed in my misery and would sing songs such as ...

'On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross;

The emblem of suffering and shame

(Is this what the cross is? An emblem of suffering and shame?)

So I'll cherish the old rugged cross ...

Till my trophies at last I lay down

I will cling to the old rugged cross...

And exchange it some day for a crown.

To the old rugged cross I will ever be true ...

It's shame and reproach gladly bear,

Then He'll call me someday

To my home far away

Where His glory forever I'll share.'

THIS IS NOT THE CROSS OF CHRIST! THIS IS CHRISTIAN SENTIMENTALITY
THE CROSS OF CHRIST WAS CHRIST'S VICTORY ... NOT HIS DEFEAT!

Hebrews 12:2 tells us - *JESUS DESPISED THE SHAME & OVERCAME THE SHAME FOR THE JOY SET BEFORE HIM.*

Colossians 2:15 **SLIDE** tells us - *Jesus disarmed all demonic powers triumphing over them by the cross.*

1Corinthians 1:18 tells us ... *THE CROSS OF CHRIST IS THE POWER OF GOD ... NOT SOME SENTIMENTAL SYMBOL ...*

THERE IS NOW PROVISION IN THE DARKNESS FOR YOU ...

THIS TABLE IS THE CELEBRATION OF THE KING'S TRIUMPH OVER HIS ENEMIES

SLIDE NB: *THE ENEMIES DIDN'T GATHER AROUND THE TABLE ...*

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN 'PLONKED' DOWN IN THE MIDDLE OF OUR ENEMIES WHO ARE TREMBLING & EVEN WEEPING AROUND ABOUT.

I NOW HAVE TO CONFESS ... THE LAST TIME I SPOKE ON THIS PSALM ... I REFERRED TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF THIS TABLE WRONGLY. **I SAID THIS TABLE WAS AFTER THE VALLEY AND UP ON A MOUNTAIN TOP ... BUT THIS IS NOT TRUE.**

THIS TABLE OF LIGHT IS SMACK-BANG IN THE MIDDLE OF THE VALLEY OF SHADOWS, SHINING OUT LIKE A BEACON THROUGH A DARK TEMPEST.

THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOWS IS THE WORLD SYSTEM WITH NEGATIVE CIRCUMSTANCES THROUGH WHICH WE TRAVEL TILL THE END OF OUR DAYS. IT IS HERE IN THIS VALLEY THAT GOD HAS MADE PROVISION FOR US.

THIS TABLE IS HERE & NOW AS WE WALK THROUGH THIS VALLEY-WORLD ...

HIS TABLE OF ABUNDANCE

If we were to start Psalm 23 from verse 5, it would read something like ...

SLIDE *'THE LORD IS **MY KING**; I HAVE MORE THAN I WANT ... HE INVITES ME TO SIT AT HIS TABLE OF ABUNDANCE ...*

We would not speak about NEED ... we would NOW talk about abundance.

THIS IS A TABLE OF ABUNDANCE, OVERFLOWING ... THIS IS WHERE WE HAVE COME ...

THERE IS NOTHING REMOTELY MELANCHOLY ABOUT THIS TABLE.

IT IS THE ETERNAL TRIUMPH & VICTORY OF CHRIST IN THE MIDST OF DARKNESS.

THIS TABLE IS FILLED WITH THE BLESSINGS OF CHRIST'S VICTORY WHICH HE GAINED UPON THE CROSS. AND HE IS HERE WAITING FOR YOU TO COME & ENJOY.

SLIDE DO YOU SEE THE TABLE OR YOUR ENEMIES

NB: DAVID *SAW THE ENEMIES* ... BUT HE ALSO SAW THIS TABLE. AND THE ENEMIES PALED INTO INSIGNIFICANCE COMPARED TO *THE GLORIOUS TABLE*.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?

MANY CHRISTIANS CAN ONLY SEE THEIR ENEMIES & NOT GOD'S PROVISION

Some are so caught up in their problems, their fingers spasm from holding onto them and their fists are clenched shut from fighting their enemies.

*They are so conscious of the darkness that surrounds them ... the evil threatening them day and night ... They hear spooky sounds ... the blood-curdling cries of the night ... **the echoes of past failures** ... the reality of present failures ...*

Satan has distracted them ... This is what he wants to do to you ... to blind you – to obfuscate (cloud) the truth.

2 Corinthians 4:4 NLT

*Satan, who is the god of this world, has **blinded the minds** of those who don't believe. **They are unable to see the glorious light** of the Good News ...*

SATAN WILL DO HIS DARNDDEST TO KEEP YOU AWAY FROM THIS TABLE OF *GOOD NEWS*.

THE DRIPPING TAP SYNDROME

Like a distant noise that gets your attention - you focus on it ... it usurps your concentration ... it starts to affect you ... getting louder and louder ... annoying you - this is how sin and Satan work on our flesh.

THE ANSWER TO YOUR PROBLEM IS NOT IN THE PROBLEM

THE ANSWERS ARE ALL HERE AT THIS TABLE OF GOOD NEWS...
SO MANY OF US ARE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT THE PROBLEM & COME UP WITH THE SOLUTION OURSELVES, HERE IN THE SHADOWS ...
We get prayer / we go for counsel / we attend a seminar that tells us to do things / we quote Scripture / we rack our brains / we strive / we fail / we try again ... But you only get a bandaid solution that way ... a temporary fix ...

STOP TRYING TO FIX YOUR PROBLEMS IN DARKNESS

- BUT YOU SAY, THESE ARE THE FACTS -

I'm about to lose my house ... my marriage is falling apart my business is collapsing ... my health is failing etc. etc.

HOW CAN I LET THESE ISSUES GO?

FRIEND, THESE MAY BE THE FACTS BUT THEY ARE NOT THE WHOLE TRUTH

THIS TABLE IS GOD'S GOOD NEWS WAITING FOR YOU TO FEAST ON

AS WE WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF SHADOWS ...

DO YOU SEE IT?

Begin to feast on the whole truth – His Good News.

The whole truth is here at His glorious Table of Truth prepared for you ...

EVERY WEEK WE PROVIDE GOOD NEWS FROM THE KINGS TABLE WHERE YOU WILL RECEIVE REVELATION & GRACE TO HELP IN TIME OF NEED

SLIDE JESUS ALREADY PREPARED THE FEAST.

HE HAS ASSIGNED A PASTOR - WAITER TO SET THE TABLE.

1 Peter 5:2 says, '*FEED THE FLOCK OF GOD ...*'

SIT AT THE TABLE ... DON'T JUST SAMPLE IT

SOME SEE THIS GLORIOUS TABLE, TAKE A TASTE & WALK PAST.

COME & SIT AT THE TABLE ... TURN YOUR BACK ON YOUR ENEMIES

'*BUT*', you say, '*WHAT ABOUT MY ISSUES ... WHAT ABOUT THE DEMANDS?*'

THERE IS GREAT PRESSURE IN THE DARKNESS THAT CAN CRUSH YOU.

CONSIDER MOSES AT THE RED SEA.

The Egyptians were bearing down upon them, about to kill them ...

HE DIDN'T SAY ... '*Ok, brace yourselves for the fight of your life*'.

He didn't give them a strategy to follow ...

He told them to turn their backs on a most serious situation ... **to look to the**

'Lord's salvation' in the midst of their enemies -

Exodus 14:13

'... Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord ...'

Literally, 'Stand firm and you will see the Lord's Salvation'.

(This has greater implication to us here in the New Testament ...

The Lord's Salvation is more than deliverance from a situation ...

IT IS DELIVERANCE FROM EVERY SITUATION – FROM ALL SIN & ALL SATAN'S POWER ...

IT IS THE SALVATION JESUS ACHIEVED UPON THE CROSS)

COME TO THE TABLE ...

YOU ARE INVITED

- *But you say ... I am not worthy ... I keep falling into sin ... I have walked away from God ... Surely I deserve to live in darkness ... I am unclean ... How can I come and dine with the King?*

THE PRODIGAL SON (Luke 15) WAS TAKEN FROM EATING WITH PIGS IN THE VALLEY-WORLD TO THE FEAST OF THE FATTED-CALF WITH THE FATHER ... HIS TRACK RECORD SAID HE WAS NOT WORTHY OF EATING AT THE FEAST IN THE FATHER'S HOUSE ... **HE WAS UNWORTHY ... BUT WHAT DID THE FATHER SAY –**

Luke 15:22-23 NIV **SLIDE**

... 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring (instant sonship) on his finger and sandals (instant holiness) on his feet. ²³Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate.'

THANK GOD FOR 'THE BEST ROBE' - THE FIRST THING HE RECEIVED.

THIS ROBE HAD BEEN WORN BEFORE BY A DIVINE LIFE THAT WALKED THROUGH THIS DUSTY WORLD WITHOUT SIN ...

THIS WAS THE ROBE OF CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.

IT WAS ALL THE PRODIGAL NEEDED TO BE DEEMED WORTHY TO ENTER & FEAST ...

NO FRIEND YOU COME AS YOU ARE IN HIS ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ...

In the Song of Solomon, the Shulamite loves the King but feels unworthy because of her old life in the world ... she says to Him ...

Song of Solomon 1:6 **SLIDE**

Do not look upon me because I am dark ... because the sun [of this world] has tanned [stained] me ...

But we read a few verses on, how the King sees her [as a new creation] -

Song of Solomon 1:15 **SLIDE**

Behold, you are fair my love! Behold you are fair ...

Then we read a few verses later -

Song of Solomon 2:4 **SLIDE**

He brought me to the banqueting house, and His banner over me was love.

HOW DO WE RE-FOCUS FROM THINGS THAT CONCERN US?

WE DON'T STOP LOOKING AT EVIL SO WE CAN SEE THE TABLE ...

WE FIRST HAVE TO LOOK AT THE TABLE IN ORDER TO STOP SEEING THE EVIL.

1. *Firstly, we must know there is a table of blessing*

2. *Secondly, you must know you are invited*

3. *Thirdly you must taste it ...*

This will give you the right appetite to never want anything else

This will take you away from the darkness.

NEXT WEEK WE WILL LOOK AT
WHO IS AT THE TABLE
WHAT IS ON THIS TABLE