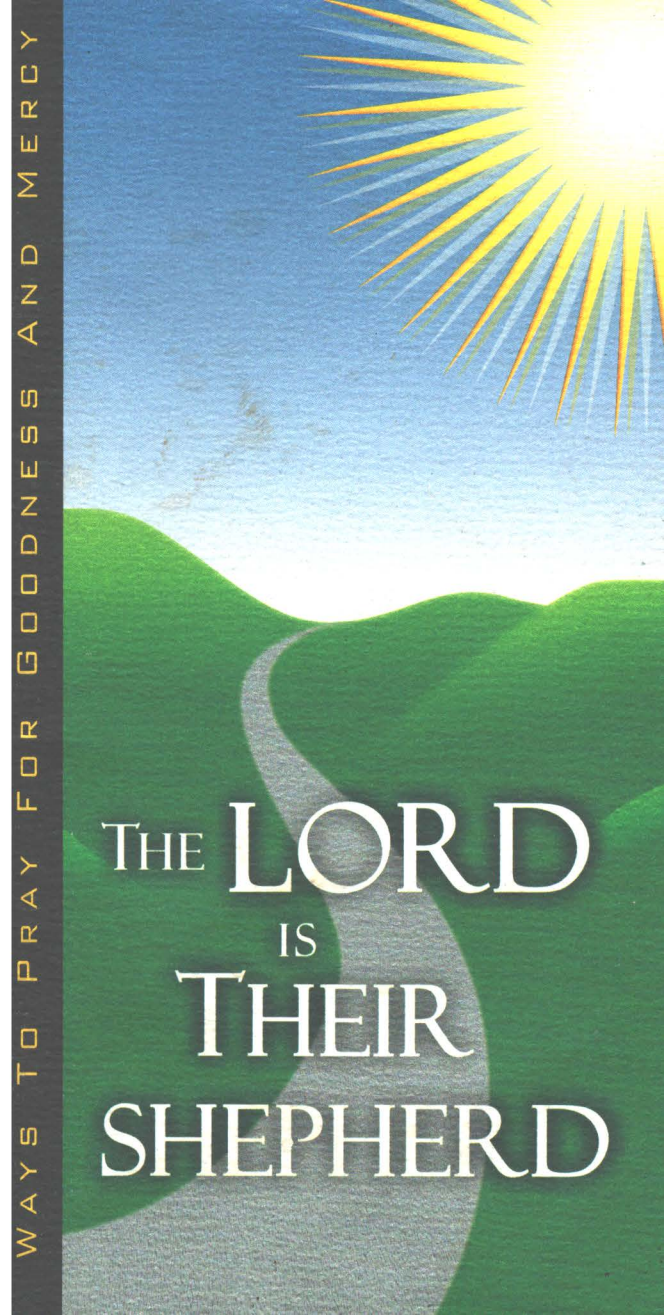


WAYS TO PRAY FOR GOODNESS AND MERCY



THE LORD  
IS  
THEIR  
SHEPHERD

## Whose Shepherd is He?

Psalms 23 is usually used as a balm for one's own hurts and difficulties. But each line tells how God yearns to bring changes in everyone's life. Without using words like "salvation," it's all about how God saves people throughout their lifetime. He guards, guides, and transforms them from the inside out so that they can live in fullness of life, at home with God. Christians have rightly treasured this Psalm as a portrayal of how Christ cares for them. But if, as Christ Himself declared, God sees and seeks after people as if they were sheep without a shepherd, then it is powerfully true that the Lord is *their* Shepherd.

## Praying toward lasting changes

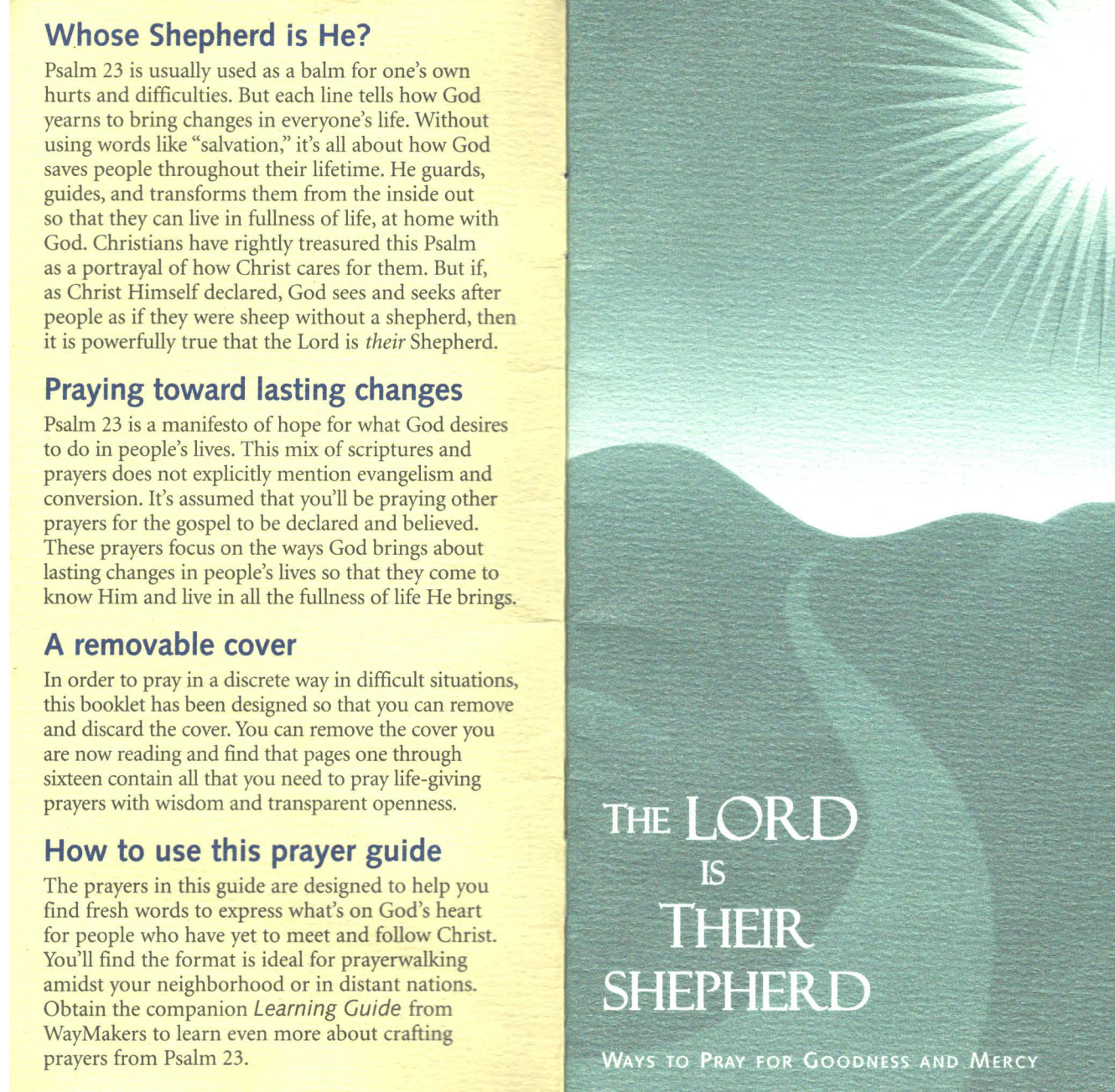
Psalms 23 is a manifesto of hope for what God desires to do in people's lives. This mix of scriptures and prayers does not explicitly mention evangelism and conversion. It's assumed that you'll be praying other prayers for the gospel to be declared and believed. These prayers focus on the ways God brings about lasting changes in people's lives so that they come to know Him and live in all the fullness of life He brings.

## A removable cover

In order to pray in a discrete way in difficult situations, this booklet has been designed so that you can remove and discard the cover. You can remove the cover you are now reading and find that pages one through sixteen contain all that you need to pray life-giving prayers with wisdom and transparent openness.

## How to use this prayer guide

The prayers in this guide are designed to help you find fresh words to express what's on God's heart for people who have yet to meet and follow Christ. You'll find the format is ideal for prayerwalking amidst your neighborhood or in distant nations. Obtain the companion *Learning Guide* from WayMakers to learn even more about crafting prayers from Psalms 23.



# THE LORD IS THEIR SHEPHERD

WAYS TO PRAY FOR GOODNESS AND MERCY

**The LORD  
is my shepherd,  
I shall not want.**

### **Praise to the Shepherd God**

Long before I knew it, You were pursuing me like a shepherd. I wandered away from You in stubborn foolishness. But You went after me. Time and again You brought good things to me. I was rarely aware and never grateful for Your kindness. But Your love prevailed and brought me home to You. I now belong to You, not because I made You my God. You have made me Your own.

### **You are their Shepherd**

We pray for those who are yet wandering. They may seem cheery and stable, or grief-stricken and stumbling, entangled in difficulties of their own making. They be blind to how lost they really are. They may have become the very evil they fear. They may be far from You. But You have kept Yourself close to them. With powerful goodness You have been protecting, healing, supplying and guiding them. They are not alone. Although they are lost, You are their Shepherd.

*For He is our God, and we are  
the people of His pasture  
and the sheep of His hand. - Psalm 95:7 (NASB)*

### **With everything worth wanting**

Break the subtle, addictive habits which fill them with even more hunger. They are weary with disappointment, bored, empty and restless. Awaken yearning for the finest joys. Ignite their appetite for the things of God. Quench their deepest thirsts and surprise them with contentment as they learn to walk with You. Satisfy their souls with everything worth wanting.

### **No longer on their own**

Cause them to laugh out loud with joy when they realize they are no longer on their own. No longer lonely in the anxiety of self-reliance. Instead, they will know they belong to You. They will delight in the freedom of depending on the Shepherd God.

*...I came that they may have life, and  
have it abundantly...I am the good shepherd.  
I know my sheep and my sheep know me.*

*- John 10:10, 14 (NASB and NIV)*



He makes me lie down  
in green pastures.  
He leads me  
beside quiet waters.  
He restores my soul.

### Deliver them from distraction

Their lives are so full that they are empty. Ambitions drive them. Possessions own them. Opportunities seize them so they're always on the run. The never face themselves, nor have they known You. Slow them down. Break the patterns which pressurize their lives. Give them times of calm—when the noise is hushed and they can hear Your voice.

### Hold them still

You impart life as if it were water for the soul and food for the starving heart. Yet they'll never know how thirsty or hungry they are unless You hold them still and close and quiet. Rejuvenate their minds. Recharge their hopes. Surprise them with how wonderful You are.

*I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest.  
...I will seek the lost, bring back  
the scattered, bind up the broken  
and strengthen the sick...*

- Ezekiel 34:15-16 (NASB)

### Restore their souls

They are broken deep inside. It may have been long ago that their hearts were shattered. Or it may have been this morning that they harmed themselves or someone else. Whatever the source of their torment, heal them from the inside out. Only You can renew their minds and settle their souls to trust and love again.

### Wipe away their tears

We do not ask that their sorrows would magically disappear. We ask instead that You would touch them where they hurt, as if You were drying their tears with Your own hand. Console them in ways that only You can.

*For the Lamb at the center of the throne  
will be their shepherd. He will lead them  
to springs of living water. And God will  
wipe away every tear from their eyes.*

- Revelation 7:17



He guides me  
in paths of  
righteousness  
for His name's sake.

### **A significant life**

They scramble to make a name for themselves, ever desperate to be honored by others. Free them from the drudgery of preserving their own reputation. Redirect their passions to make Your name great. Show them how to really live. Set them on a path of high purpose: that by their life You will be known and honored.

### **Renewed to live rightly**

They may fear that You will force them to live by restrictive religious rules. Instead, give them hope that they will actually live out Your character. Reset their values. Attract them to what You find precious. Thrill them with what is good and true. Renew them to live rightly according to Your word.

*He will arise and shepherd His flock...  
in the majesty of the name of the LORD...*

*- Micah 5:4 (NASB)*

### **More than a roadmap**

Give them more than guidance. Give them Yourself as a guide. Although they may not have sworn their allegiance to follow You, lead them anyway. Get them used to hearing Your voice. Train them now to trust You and follow every step You take.

### **Make a way**

They face dilemmas with no easy answers. It seems that there is no way to do what is right. Every path they can see will make things worse. Guide them now, Shepherd God. Lift Your voice and gain their attention. Miraculously make a way through what is impossible. As they fall in step with You, clear the way for them to do what is wonderfully righteous in Your sight.

*My sheep listen to my voice.  
I know them, and they follow me.*

*- John 10:27*



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.

### Death's lingering shadow

Some have lost loved ones long ago. Even now death's long shadow looms over them. Come near those who stumble, almost paralyzed in grief. Light a candle of hope in their hearts. Inspire them to press forward courageously with the comfort of Your presence.

### Fear no evil

Conquer fears which warp and wither their lives. Rise clearly in their view. Show Yourself greater than any evil thing. Embolden them to walk straight through the fears that once terrified them.

*As a shepherd looks after His scattered flock when He is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness.*

- Ezekiel 34:12

### Guard them with Your rod

In ways they may never know, You have already defeated evils that assail them. Give them lasting liberty from entanglement with evil powers or persons. Give them a vision of Your constant vigilance, as if You were standing guard over them like a shepherd, weapon in hand, effortlessly overcoming any threat.

### Guide them with Your staff

They've not known the joy of following You. But You can still touch them with Your staff in ways that make them feel that they are not alone. Like a shepherd gently nudges a lamb forward with his staff, lead them onward.

*Seeing the people, He felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd.*

- Matthew 9:36 (NASB)



You prepare a table  
before me in the presence  
of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil.  
My cup overflows.

### Honor in the midst of enemies

Once-trusted people have become their enemies. The relational wreckage of their past triggers fears and feelings of retaliation to this day. Rescue them from cycles of petty paybacks and vengeance. Convince them to trust You as their sole defender, leaving their anger and struggles with You. May their trust in You be the beginning of a feast of forgiveness, an oasis of peace, and a celebration of rest in Your honor.

*Save Your people and bless Your inheritance.  
Be their shepherd and carry them forever.*

*- Psalm 28:8-9*

### The hope of Your calling

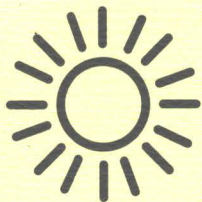
You want far more than to merely rehabilitate them. You have always planned for them to play a unique part in Your kingdom purposes. Confirm Your calling now. Infuse them with hope. Wash away feelings of worthlessness with the cleansing oil of Your Spirit. Set them free to pursue a God-ordained future with great expectations.

### An overflowing life

Of course, You want to provide what they need. But You want to give them even more than security. Give them enlarged hearts to live with generosity. Invite them to live under Your care with gladness and gratitude, so that life becomes a celebration of Your kingdom. Endow them with an overflowing abundance so that Your gifts spill out to many others.

*Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father  
has been pleased to give you the kingdom.*

*- Luke 12:32*



**Surely goodness  
and mercy  
will follow me  
all the days  
of my life.**

### **God-revealing goodness**

Bring good things to their lives. It might be a glimmer of beauty, or a word spoken truly, or a gesture of dependable friendship.

Attach Your name to these gifts of goodness. Reveal the perfect, outrageous kindness of Your heart. Surely they yearn for more than good things. Ignite their hearts with desire to become good themselves.

### **Non-random kindness**

You have fully intended every kindness they have ever known. They may have ignored You, mistakenly assuming that they have enjoyed a streak of random luck. Or they may have cursed You, blaming You for all that has gone wrong. Put a face on the kindness You have brought to them. Show them that You are the one who has loved them all along.

*...the God who has been my shepherd  
all my life to this day...* - Genesis 48:15

### **Pursuing love**

As persistent sheepdogs herd a wandering one homeward, pursue them with acts of mercy. Outflank them when they run. Gently nudge them when they stray. Lovingly hunt them when they hide. At the last they will say that Your severe mercies hemmed them in, that Your kindness kept turning them around, and that Your trustworthy goodness beckoned them homeward.

### **Holding love**

Don't let them drift. May this day be the farthest they ever find themselves from You. When they take a step closer to You, hold them. They may assume that Your kindness must be repaid, or that Your goodness should be earned. Don't let them bolt away, frightened by the impossibility of meriting Your love. Persuade them that You love them just as they are with hope for all they will become.

*I am the good shepherd.  
The good shepherd lays down His life  
for the sheep.* - John 10:11





And I will return to  
the house of the LORD  
through length of days.

### Bringing them home

Like a shepherd brings his sheep back to the fold every day, keep bringing them back to You again and again. To be welcomed to Your house is to be received for all we are and everything You have destined us to become. Draw them so near that they revel in the beauties of Your mind, exult in the splendors of Your works, explode with thanks for the wisdom of Your ways, and offer You unrestrained outpourings of praise.

### A lifestyle of loving God

Give them the best gift imaginable—a heart to know and love You. Call them daily to Your courts to honor and experience You. Make their love for You a lifestyle, lingering in Your presence and listening expectantly for Your voice.

*My eyes will watch over them for their good, and I will bring them back...I will give them a heart to know me...They will be my people, and I will be their God, for they will return to me with all their heart.* - Jeremiah 24:6-7

### Part of Your family

There are others You are now gathering to become one flock and people before You. Open their eyes to see that You haven't summoned them alone. Grant them the joy of knowing they belong to You as an honored members of Your family.

### Home everlasting

Give them confidence that You have named them into Your household. You went to extravagant cost to bring them back and give them a permanent place with You. As they experience the daily delight of worshipping You, how could there be any doubt that they'll be home with You forever?

*I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.*

- John 10:16 (NASB)



**WayMakers**  
Preparing God's Way By Prayer

## **The Lord is Their Shepherd: Ways to Pray for Goodness and Mercy**

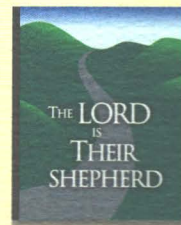
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**Remove this outer cover if you would like to be more discrete as you pray.**

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## Pray them all the way home.

Everyone yearns to be home with God.  
Psalm 23 helps you pray with God's heart

- to guide people through difficulty, brokenness, and pain
- to withstand any evil
- to satisfy their highest desires with what is truly good, and
- to show His great love

so that they can live in the joy of knowing they belong to Him.



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\$2