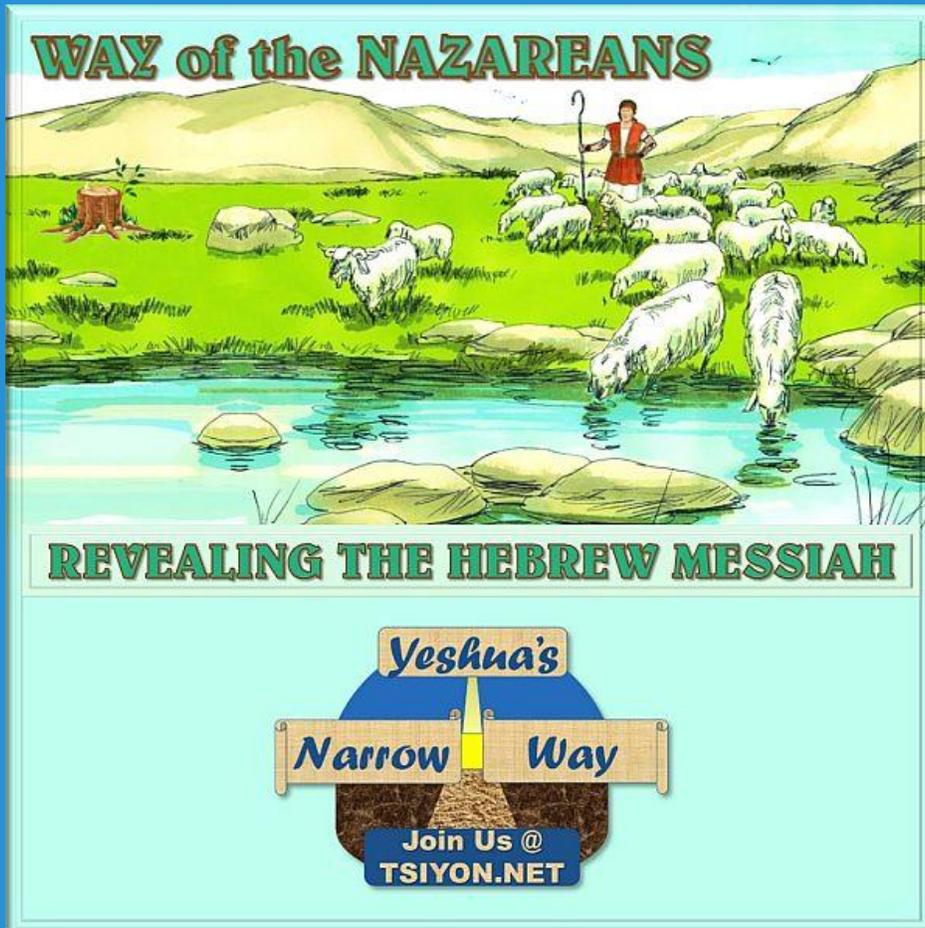


TSIYON NEWS

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From Eliyahu

Consider this:

The following verses were written by a giant-killer:

YHWH is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside quiet waters.
He restores my soul;
He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.
Surely goodness and loving-kindness will follow me all the days of my
life, And I will dwell in the house of YHWH forever.

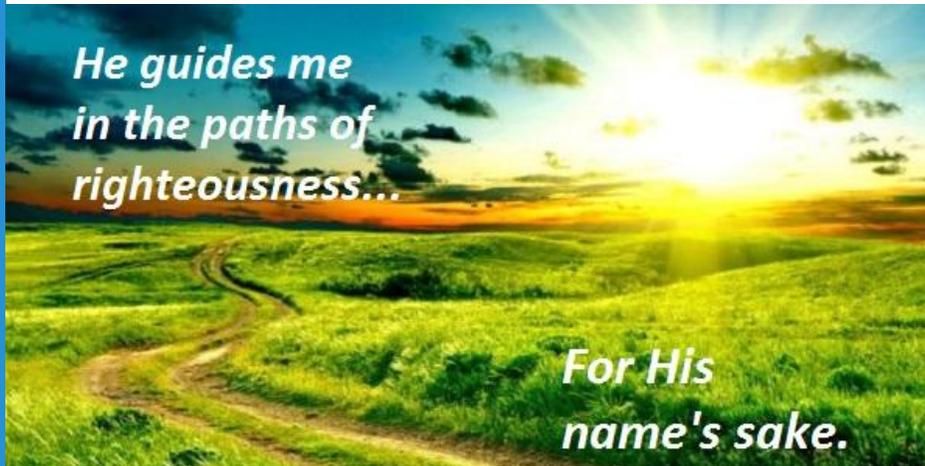
(Psalm 23:1-6)

For a lot of people, those verses somehow feel peaceful and reassuring, even if not fully understood. For David the giant-killer, they express the essence of his inner being, and his entire reason for being, from which came the strength and wisdom to overcome every obstacle. This is David's way of righteousness.

"YHWH is my shepherd, I shall not want." This is the fountain from which all the rest of this Psalm bubbles forth. YHWH is my ever-present, ever-sufficient Shepherd, guiding me, meeting all of my needs. Because I have Him I want for nothing else. I have full and complete trust that He WILL provide every good thing for me.

"He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul." Elohim is good. He is always concerned with my best interest. Green pastures, quiet waters, abundance and peace come to me as I walk in the way He leads me. True, I may endure some afflictions from the sinful world around me, or even from my own failings. When that happens I can look to Him for restoration. In Him I am made whole.

"He guides me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake." As my Shepherd, He goes out ahead of me, to lead me. He is righteous, so always chooses the righteous path for me to walk in. His own Name, the perfect essence of Who He is, guarantees that the path He chooses for me IS the path of righteousness. I dare not choose a different path for myself, other than the path that He sets before me, because my path is not the right path. His way is always the right path, and as I walk in it I honor His Great Name.



"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me." Sometimes my Shepherd chooses a path for me that I would not prefer if choosing myself. Sometimes He leads me through a dark place, "the valley of the shadow of death." It is a complicated world, filled with sin, suffering and death. This is not His fault, but exists because of sin and rebellion against Him. Although I choose to follow Him, I cannot live in this world without encountering the sin, suffering and death that are ever-present realities all around us. While the darkness of that path is deep and terrible, I fear no evil. That's because He leads me through it.

There is no promise here that we will never have to face darkness and evil. Indeed we all must do so who live in this dark and evil world. The promise is,

when He does lead us through an otherwise terrifying path, we need not be in terror: "for You are with me." I fear no evil because You are there to walk me through it.

For His sheep there is a great comfort in His rod and staff, especially when traversing through the dark valleys of this world. *"Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me."* According to the *Ancient Hebrew Lexicon of the Bible* (AHLB) the Hebrew word here translated as rod means "A branch used as a staff, scepter, spear, writing implement, rod." I think David was seeing the rod here as a symbol of the Good Shepherd's authority and power to act. The Shepherd of our souls rules, and He has and uses His rod to defend against enemies, as well as to direct, and even correct, His sheep. By His rod He keeps us moving on the path of righteousness. Very often His rod comes to us by way of His Word and Spirit for direction and correction, which keep us under His protection.

The AHLB defines the Hebrew word here translated as staff: "As a support for walking." Unbelievers cannot see this. To them it appears like the Lord's sheep are wondering aimlessly, crazy even. They cannot see the staff of Divine Providence and support provided by the Shepherd as He leads His sheep in the specific will of Elohim for the specific follower of the Lord. Speaking to unbelievers, Yeshua explained this:

But you don't believe, because you are not of my sheep, as I told you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give eternal life to them. They will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all. No one is able to snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one." John 10:26-30

"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows." Your enemies hate this! They resent that you seem to do everything wrong (from their point of view) yet good things keep coming to you! This is the case for those like David who have been anointed with the oil of the Spirit. An eternal bond has been created bringing you into His family! As such, you share in the commonwealth of Israel! Your cup overflows with unending blessings unknown to the profane and the wicked.

"Surely goodness and loving-kindness will follow me all the days of my life, And I will dwell in the house of YHWH forever." Grace for this life as I follow Him and an eternal future before me - This is the way of righteousness and life eternal.

What we have been considering is *"The Way of the Nazareans."* Join our live stream tonight, June 17, at Tsiyon.Net at 8 PM, Central for more!

In His Name,

Eliyahu
Tsiyon.Org

