

# GOD'S PROTECTION

## WHAT WE WILL LEARN IN THIS SERIES:

1. We are like sheep, and therefore unable to provide for ourselves, protect ourselves or save ourselves.
2. God is like a shepherd who knows us individually, loves us perfectly, and cares for our every need.

## IN VERSE 4, SOME THINGS CHANGE...

1. The mood changes to one of exception. — *“Even though”*

גַּם כִּי־אֵלֶיךָ בִּנְיָא צַלְמוֹת לֹא־אִירָא רָע <sup>4</sup>  
 כִּי־אֵתָה עֲמוּדֵי שְׁבֻטֶיךָ וּמִשְׁעֵנֶיךָ הַמָּוֶה יִנְחַמְנִי:

2. The subject changes to me. — *“I walk”*
  - Some say I am walking ahead of the shepherd.
  - Others say that the shepherd is leading.
3. The location changes. — *“the valley of the shadow of death”*
  - Some say that this is a literal valley near Jerusalem.
  - Others suggest that this is a term for a “valley of dense darkness” or a difficult time in one’s life.  
*“...have you seen the gates of the shadow of death?”* - Job 38:17  
*“The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.”* - Isaiah 9:2
  - Even if this valley is a literal one, then this is easily a reference to difficult times as depression, sorrow, loss, or suffering.
  - Even though this Psalm, and particularly this verse, are read at funerals, it is not really talking of death specifically!
4. The verb tense changes. — *“I will fear no evil”*
  - This suggests that I have learned to trust the shepherd.
  - Trust takes time, so this sheep knows the shepherd.
5. The reference to the shepherd changes. — *“for you are with me.”*
  - When life is good (typical) we can refer to God in the third person (He), but when times get tough, “He” becomes “you”.
  - In tough times, we speak to the Lord instead of about the Lord.

## IN VERSE 4, SOME THINGS STAY THE SAME...

1. It is the same shepherd. — *“you are”*
2. It is the same relationship. — *“with me”*

## IN VERSE 4, SOME NEW THINGS ARE INTRODUCED...

1. The Tools of the Shepherd.

— *“Your Rod”*



- It was for protection (a weapon!)
  - It was for discipline.  
*“I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I will punish him with the rod of men...”* - 2 Samuel 7:14
- It was for counting.  
*“The entire tithe of the herd and flock – every tenth animal that passes under the shepherd’s rod – will be holy to the LORD?”* - Leviticus 27:32

— *“Your Staff”*

- It was an identity.  
*“See if you recognize whose seal and cord and staff these are.”* - Genesis 38:25
  - It was for guiding the sheep in the right way.
    - It was a picture of authority and power.  
*“Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh, and it will become a snake.”* - Exodus 7:9
    - It was a reminder of tireless presence.  
*“By faith Jacob, when he was dying blessed each of Joseph’s sons, and worshipped as he leaned on the top of his staff..”* - Hebrews 11:21
    - It was for rescuing a sheep that was in trouble.
2. The Value of Those Tools. — *“...they comfort me.”* - HOW?

*I believe...*

- ...that Your protection is perfect.
- ...that Your discipline is for my good.  
*“Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word?”* - Psalm 119:67
- ...that You have counted me as one of Yours.
- ...that You have identified Yourself as God.
- ...that You guide me in Your way.
- ...that You have all authority and power.
- ...that You will never leave me or forsake me
- ...that You are able to save me.



## THE ROD AND THE STAFF TODAY?

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- ...that You will \_\_\_\_\_ leave me or forsake me
- ...that You are able to \_\_\_\_\_ me.

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