

# The Goodness of the Valley

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Psalm 23:4

# Psalm 23:4 (NLT)

4 Even when I walk  
through the darkest valley  
I will not be afraid,  
for you are close beside me.  
Your rod and your staff  
protect and comfort me

# Matthew 4:1 (NLT)

Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil.

The Holy Spirit knows our hearts and how we are going to react, we are the ones that don't know our own heart. We need to see our hearts and where our faith lies

The Valley is the revealer of men's hearts

“Love is something more stern  
and splendid than mere  
kindness...when kindness is  
separated from the other  
elements of love, it involves a  
certain fundamental  
indifference to its object” –  
CS Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*

“Since I believe God is love, I conclude that my conception of love needs correction” –

CS Lewis

David is thanking and praising  
God for His love and blessings,  
even in the Valley.

David never blamed God for  
his valleys, in fact one thing is  
for certain, David grew in the  
valleys

“A Divine work of art,  
something God is making  
and therefore something  
with which He will not be  
satisfied until it has a  
certain character” –

CS Lewis

“We may wish we were of so little account to God that He left us alone to follow our natural impulses. That He would give over trying to train us into something so unlike our natural selves, but once again, we are asking not for more love, but for less” - CS Lewis

“Love may forgive all infirmities and love still in spite of them, but love cannot cease to will their removal” –

CS Lewis

The Valley is the place of growth, where sin and self are chipped away

We can see the valley as evil, but God sees it as useful

# Hebrews 12:5-11 (NLT)

5 And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, “My child, don’t make light of the LORD’s discipline, and don’t give up when he corrects you.

<sup>6</sup> For the LORD disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.”

<sup>7</sup> As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father?

<sup>8</sup> If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. <sup>9</sup> Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever?

<sup>10</sup> For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. <sup>11</sup> No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.

## James 1:2-4 (NLT)

<sup>2</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. <sup>3</sup> For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. <sup>4</sup> So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

There can be more power and  
blessings down in the valley  
than on the mountain top.

The mountain top is just the  
culmination of the power and  
blessings found in the valley

This is probably the  
toughest area of faith for a  
Christian to learn: God is  
there.

He is literally right there  
with you

It is in the valley that our faith  
can either be eroded or  
strengthened.

When we can believe that God  
is there, then we will believe  
He will actually take care of us  
in those moments in the valley

**Psalm 125:2** - <sup>2</sup>Just as the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people, both now and forever.

**Zechariah 2:5** - <sup>5</sup>Then I, myself, will be a protective wall of fire around Jerusalem, says the Lord. And I will be the glory inside the city!"

The staff is about  
direction and correction.

We need the nudge  
sometimes even in the  
nice paths

The staff was to help  
make sure the sheep  
and the shepherd  
stayed close together

The rod isn't for the sheep;  
here it is not an instrument  
of discipline but of death.

You mess with the sheep,  
you have to deal with the  
Shepherd

The sheep and David are  
at rest because they know  
the Shepherd not only  
had their back, but their  
front, sides, top, bottom,  
God's got every direction  
covered

**Exodus 14:14** - <sup>14</sup>The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.”

**2 Chronicles 32:8** - <sup>8</sup>He may have a great army, but they are merely men. We have the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles for us!” Hezekiah’s words greatly encouraged the people.

There will never be a  
reason to fear with God by  
your side.

The safest place you will  
ever be is in the center of  
God's will