

## **Names of God from the Bible**

### **6 – YHWH Roi (Shepherd)**

*Every name of God is an eternal Name, so if it was true for David it can be true for us today.*

#### **Reading: Psalm 23**

Psalm 23 is probably one of the best known and best loved Psalms of all. It is also probably one of the most recognised of all passages of Scripture and yet, tragically, many who have read it still do not really know the Shepherd of which it speaks.

Psalm 23 is often read at funerals. I find that strange. David was talking about his life, not his death. David was reflecting on his experience of God's daily provision and protection that gave him total confidence for a bright future. Yes, he did look forward to spending eternity with God forever, however, that did not diminish his trust, peace and joy in God in the present.

For me, David reveals he was already enjoying 'the Promised Land' and looking forward to his eternal rest at some distant time in the future. To David, the Lord was as real to him now, in the present, as he expected Him to be for eternity. David's eternal life was to be just an extension of his natural life.

David was boasting about Someone with whom he had an intimate relationship. He knew the Good Shepherd. Jehovah was his Shepherd. It is almost as if David was addressing a group of people and saying – *I don't know about your shepherd but let me describe to you who my Shepherd is and what He is like.*

He began by revealing his Shepherd as YHWH. Not a human boss for whom he worked, but the Creator and Sustainer of the Universe. David's Shepherd had inexhaustible supplies and would meet all of David's needs.

David was himself a shepherd and so could recognise these perfect attributes of God. Just as David, the shepherd, cared for his sheep, so the Lord cared even more for him. David's Shepherd would guide him all his life. The Lord had a good plan and route for David to take. He provided David with sustenance, refreshment and ensured his restoration from day to day.

David knew that he would be blessed following God's ways. Even though the way would be full of challenges (and David had to face far more challenges than most of us), David knew that God would protect and sustain him through them all. Had not God protected him from the lion and the bear, as well as Goliath?

David went further. He testified to the fact that not only did His Shepherd stay with him and protect him in the most extreme circumstances but, over and above them all, David sensed peace, joy and triumph. In the darkest moments, in the midst of the storms and battles, even there David sensed God's overwhelming presence, mercy, grace, love and power.

Yes, the Lord had already proved to David that He would never leave him nor forsake him. God had proved that He was able to meet every need and challenge that David would ever have to face. With that proven track record, David looked towards the future, his future on earth, with total invincible confidence. God would prove trustworthy, again and again and again, and for as long as David lived on earth.

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Then to cap it all, David recognised that after he had lived a full life on earth, when it's time to pass on, he would end up in the presence of his Great Shepherd and be with Him for eternity. What a fantastic prospect. What joy and strength were provided for David as he continued to live on earth. What a wonderful Shepherd David had, certainly one worth boasting about.

### **What does that name mean for us today**

All that David knew and experienced of God is available to us. Yes, our situations are different, our culture and society are different, but God remains the same and He longs to be our Shepherd too.

### **Prayer**

*Father, thank You for recording David's Psalm for us. Thank You that it reveals the wonderful relationship he had with You. Please help me to experience the same. Help me to trust and follow You more and more. Thank You that one day I will come and live in Your Presence for eternity. Amen.*

### **Additional Readings**

- Isaiah 40:1-11
- John 10:11-18
- 1 Peter 5:1-7
- Hebrews 13:20-21

### **Questions**

1. Is David's Shepherd your Shepherd?
2. Has God revealed Himself in this way to you? How and when?
3. How does Jesus fulfil that name?