

# IN ALL TIMES

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## THE LESSON: PSALM 23

*In all times of tribulation; in all times of prosperity; in the hour of death, and in the day of judgement,  
Good Lord, deliver us.*

About halfway through the Litany we find this wonderful petition that reminds us that life is made up of many seasons: and we need God in all of them.

Jesus, when he faced the first temptation in the wilderness, quoted from the Old Testament scriptures, saying: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). What was this passage of scripture that Jesus was calling to mind in that moment: hungry, alone in the wilderness, and confronted by the enemy? It’s found in Deuteronomy 8, in the middle of a passage in which God is calling his people to remember how he led them in the wilderness for 40 years, teaching them, feeding them with manna, disciplining them, and through this journey, bringing them to the Promised Land.

Later in his ministry, Jesus taught his disciples to pray: “Give us this day our daily bread”. He wasn’t just talking about physical needs; he was teaching us to trust God to provide for *whatever* we need. So in this final unit for the year, we’ll be reflecting on that trust we have in God to sustain us every day along the long and winding journey of life.

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Psalm 23, written by King David, is probably not new to you. It’s one of the most well known parts of the Bible, and for good reason. Imagine David, reflecting at the close of a long life during which he had known triumphs and joys, but also great sin and sorrow. Through all those twists and bends – for him and for us – there is consolation in knowing that we are in the care of the Good Shepherd.

## AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON’T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE “FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES”, WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON’T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

Spend some time praying with the phrase “**Give us today our daily bread**”. What are the needs that you have right now? Offer them to God, and ask him to help you trust him to provide for your every need. Read Philippians 4:19: “*And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*” Conclude with a time of thanksgiving.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this prayer.

*O merciful God, at whose bidding the earth withholdeth her increase, or rendereth her fruits in their season: Give us grace that we may learn, both from thy mercies and thy judgements, our entire dependence upon thee for the supply of our daily bread; and grant that we, remembering that thy blessings are for our trial as well as for our comfort, may with thankful hearts give unto thee of thine own, ministering gladly to the maintenance of thy Church, and the relief of the poor and the afflicted, the widow and the orphan, to the glory of thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.* (PRAYER FROM A FORM OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE BLESSINGS OF HARVEST, BCP PAGE 618)

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## PSALM 23: **IN HIS KEEPING**

<sup>1</sup>The Lord is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

<sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

<sup>3</sup>He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

<sup>4</sup>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.

<sup>5</sup>You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

<sup>6</sup>Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.