

I Shall Not Want

Psalm 23

The Psalms (no. 7 in the series)

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Video and audio versions available online: <https://relentless-love.org/sermons/i-shall-not-want/>

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This document was prepared by Michael Hanna using Peter's notes and the video version of this sermon. If you encounter any significant discrepancies or errors in this document, please let Michael know. Thank you!

Message

Psalm 23

A Psalm of David.

¹ The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Now we'll pause for a message from our commercial sponsor.

Video clip: ["The Get Away Car"](#) · Volvo Ad (2017)

Volvo's description of [the ad on YouTube](#):

*You reach a point in life when you have to choose. Career over passion. Work over play.
It's when surfers turn CEOs. Photographers turn lawyers. Fly-fishers turn doctors.
Mountain climbers turn engineers.*

*It's when you put a piece of yourself on hold. And as time passes, the things you used to
love doing, start to fade away. This is a reminder to not forget what you love. All the
activities that you once embraced.*

*A message amplified by an original speech by the philosopher Alan Watts, recorded in
1959.*

This is a tribute to his legacy and the values he shared with Volvo.

*The video depicts several characters beginning their mornings. Each appears to be successful,
hard-working, and about to embark on another day in the grind. As they stare out the
window at the bright lights of a predawn metropolis, the speech reaches its pivot point and
each one makes a decision. We now see that they are preparing for a day in the great
outdoors: fly-fishing, kayaking, surfing, cycling, photography. They all escape the city, at least
for a day. Not surprisingly, each of them is driving a new Volvo.*

*The music in the ad underpins Watts's speech and builds to a strong climax during the break
before the last stanza.*

Alan Watts (voiceover):

My goodness, don't you remember
When you went

First to school.

You went to Kindergarten
And Kindergarten, the idea was to push along so that you could get to first grade.
And then push along so that you could get to second grade, third grade, and so on
going up and up.
Then you went to high school and this was a great transition in life.

And all that pressure is being put on,
You must get ahead.
You must go up the grades and finally be good enough to get to college.

And then when you get to college,
You're still going step by step, step by step up to the great moment in which you
are ready to go out into the world.
And then when you get out into this famous world, comes
The struggle for success and profession of business.

And then,
Suddenly,
When you're about forty or forty-five years old in the middle of life,
You wake up one day, and say,
Huh?
I've arrived.

And while it is of tremendous use for us to be able to look ahead and to plan,
There is no use planning for a future,
Which when you get to it and it becomes the present, you won't be there.
You will be living in some other future which hasn't yet arrived.

And so, in this way,
One is never able actually to inherit and enjoy
The fruits of one's actions.

You can't live at all,
Unless you can live fully
Now.

When I first saw that commercial, I almost barfed.

I mean it's really such a profound monologue from the philosopher Alan Watts—we are so occupied with wanting that we never have... and maybe never *are*, for we never live *now*... where I AM is. You know, He is with us in every moment on this journey.

Alan Watts is making the point that we all want to not want. And then, the advertisers are using that point to make their point: "So don't you want a Volvo? We all want to not want, so don't you want to buy a Volvo?"

They just crucified Alan Watts, or the Truth in Alan Watts. And how stupid do they think we are?

Well... pretty stupid... and they appear to be right. Because, it works and like stupid sheep we all go out and buy Volvos, Toyotas, and Buicks.

Sometimes I wonder if there has ever been a society as blatantly idolatrous as that of the United States of America. Not even a Canaanite would fall for the idea that a Volvo could make you live fully in the sanctuary of the eternal now.

Our society runs on wantonness. I want therefore I am. Or maybe I should say, “I want therefore my ego is.”ⁱ

Well, our society runs on wantonness. And by that, I don’t mean sexual desire, but basically desire for anything, wanting for anything, but God... and maybe even God.

I mean this is Psalm 23, which follows Psalm 22, and last week in Psalm 22 we saw that David desperately wanted God, “My God my God, why have you forsaken me.” He wanted God.

God is the Good. God is Love. And His Word is Life.

I wonder if you could want for Life, in such a way that you could no longer live your life? I think that’s what Alan Watts is saying.

I had lunch with Andrew Trawick this week.

He told me about an American mining company somewhere in rural South America. Soon after they began operations, they were surprised to find that many of their employees were quitting after only two or three months on the job.

When they inquired as to why this was the case, these employees informed management that in just that short time, they had made enough money to supply their family’s needs for an entire year—so they stopped working for a living and just lived their lives.

It was a real problem for the mining company, until someone had the brilliant idea of passing out mail-order catalogs to all those employees. And it worked. They began to want for life. They stopped living their lives, and began working for a living.

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.

Can we want life in such a way that we can no longer live it?

Can we want the Good in such a way that we can no longer enjoy it?

Can we want Love in such a way that we can no longer know it or be known by it. That is, by Him, because God is Love?

Can we want God in such a way that we end up nailing him to a tree?

Paula D’Arcy wrote that, “God comes to us disguised as our lives.”

Last week, in Psalm 22, we certainly saw that this was freakishly true for David—he was literally the anointed, “The Messiah,” King of the Jews. And the events in David’s life shadowed the events in Jesus’ life.

Jesus’ words on the cross were David’s words from the Psalms. And Jesus said them first, although David lived a thousand years before Jesus. Jesus is the first, and the last, and the author of all space and time.ⁱⁱ

It's like Jesus says in the Revelation, "I'm the root and the offspring of David."ⁱⁱⁱ Jesus is literally the Love, the Good, and the Life, in David. We saw that He lived his life in, and with, David. But can David, and can we, want the Life in such a way that we never live it—perhaps gain the whole world and forfeit the soul?

In Psalm 22 David wanted God, thought he lost God, or was lost to God, and then, he was found by God. And now he writes:

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.

I shall not want...

Well, we seem to be almost incapable of conceiving of not wanting. But if God is actually our Shepherd, all of our wanting is rather absurd.

In the 17th century Madame Jeanne Guyon wrote:

"You must utterly believe that the circumstances of your life, that is, every minute of your life, as well as the whole course of your life—anything, yes, everything that happens—have all come to you by His will and by His permission. You must utterly believe that everything that has happened to you is from God and is exactly what you need..."^{iv}

That makes sense. "I shall not want," is more accurately translated "I do not lack." But if I do not lack, and I know that I do not lack, I naturally don't want for anything. And yet I might want to do everything, not out of an emptiness desperate to be filled but by a fullness wanting to be expressed. God is Love, and God is sovereign, and so, of course, in each, and every, moment God is giving me exactly what I need.

St. Paul writes, "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content... In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need..."^v

Paul felt needs, but he knew God was constantly supplying his every need or appearance of "need." He had faith. In the words of Jeanne Guyon, he utterly believed.

Well I need to utterly believe. I need faith... shall I want faith? Shall I worry that I don't have faith? Shall I want hope? And is hope wanting?

The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.

I *want* to not want... so how do I *not* want, to want to not want?

Words seem to fail us at this point, but fortunately God gives us pictures.^{vi} When David wrote, "The Lord is my Shepherd" every Israelite immediately had a picture. In Exodus 15, after God led the Israelites through the Red Sea they all turned and sang of how God had led them to "holy pastures."^{vii} In Psalm 78:52, we read that when the Lord led the people to the promised land, he led them like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock. Yet in the same Psalm it records what every Israelite also knew...

And that is that those ancient Israelites soon began to complain; some versions use the old word “wanton” in describing the Israelites—they had a “wanton craving.” They began to crave, what they didn’t have. Ironically, it wasn’t the promised land; it was Egypt. They began to want, because they gave up hope in God.

They began to want what they didn’t have... or what they had but didn’t know they had? I’m sure that God wanted them to hope in the Promised Land, but they didn’t trust God with the Journey.

When my children were little, I’d sometimes come home and say something like, “Everybody in the van, we’re going to Chuck-E- Cheese or Target or whatever...”

And my three-year old, Becky, would get so excited, she’d run in circles yelling “We’re going in the van. We’re going in the van. We’re going in the van.”

After we were on our way, and everyone had quieted down, out of the silence, Becky would say “Daddy?” and I’d say “Yes, what is it Becky?”

And she’d say “Daddy... where are we going?”

I so loved that, for at that moment, I’d realize Becky had already arrived at her destination: it was just being with her Daddy in the van. Target, Chuck E. Cheese, or McDonald’s was just gravy.

The Israelites journeyed to the Promised Land and yet, as we now know, the promised land journeyed with them. It took the form of a Tabernacle, that was a Sanctuary, reminiscent of the Garden of Eden and containing the throne of God on Earth. It was the House of the Lord.

Jesus said, “Seek first the Kingdom” and “Repent the kingdom is at hand” and “Don’t look for signs, the kingdom is within you (or within y’all).”^{viii}

That almost sounds like: “Want what you already have, but don’t have, cause of all your ‘wanting.’”

Well I’ve always kind of disliked Psalm 23, because I’ve found it so confusing to try to want to not want, and, to be honest, I’ve always hated this picture...

[image: painting of Jesus, a shepherd’s crook in one hand and a lamb in the other, leading a flock of sheep alongside the banks of a stream]

And this cross-stitch pattern sold in every Bible Bookstore...

[image: similar scene but cross-stitched, with the words “The Lord Is My Shepherd”]

It looks like he’s whispering to the lamb, “If you’d like, I’ll buy you a Volvo.”

[image: another painting of the same scene]

Pictures like this, were everywhere, when I was a kid—I’m a pastor’s kid.

Well, even as a kid I’d think:

- Sheep don't look like that. They usually have crap all over them.
- Sheep don't look like that and this world usually doesn't look like that. The pain, violence and horror endemic to this world just seems to mock this picture—even as a child I sensed it, even if I couldn't verbalize it.
- Sheep, this world, and shepherds, don't look like that—my grandpa was a farmer and sure didn't look like that.
- And last of all, perhaps most important of all—I knew we got wool from sheep, but even as a kid, I'd think: "Don't shepherds eat sheep, and in particular roast lamb... Before God led Israel out of Egypt, he had them all eat a roasted lamb—the Passover lamb. Mom, we just had roasted lamb for Easter. Minor glitch: shepherds eat sheep and I don't want to be eaten."

Well we ought to keep reading. David sings:

- ¹ **The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.**
² **He makes me lie down in green pastures.**

If a sheep lies down in green pastures, that sheep is stuffed to the brim.

He leads me beside still waters.

He gives us peace.

- ³ **He restores [returns] my soul [*nephesh*].**

That's cool, except that you can't restore a soul unless it's been de-stored in the first place. You can't return it, unless it's been lost. My soul is my *nephesh*, also translated "life." It's that thing that God made by breathing into dust—the *nephesh*, *psyche*, or soul.

I think it's the thing that constantly wants to create and save itself. I think it's my *wanter*, my *craver*, my *life-taker*. I eat roast lamb to save my self, my *psyche*, my *nephesh*.

Jesus, the Great Shepherd, said, "whoever would save his *psyche* will lose it, but whoever loses his *psyche* for my sake, will find it."

- ^{3b} **He leads me in paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.**

His name is "I Am that I am," not I might be, or want to be, or could be. "I Am" is the creator who creates with His Word. His Word is named "I Am is Salvation."

- ⁴ **Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, [*tsalmaveth*]**

Many of you know Alison Schofield, who was on our board, is a professor at the University of Denver, and a leading scholar on the Dead Sea Scrolls. When she preached a while ago, she shared how amazing this word really is and that it means something like "primordial ooze." The other day she texted me saying "I like to think of it as, 'though I walk through un-creation/chaos, I will fear no evil, for you are with me...'"

Well, death is uncreation and evil is chaos and the void. And like we've been preaching, we are still being created in the image of God. Last week we saw that David was witnessing his own creation.

The death and resurrection of Christ is the boundary between the sixth day of creation and the eternal seventh—when all is good and “it is finished.” It’s the boundary between time and eternity, outer darkness and eternal Light. It’s the boundary... and the door—as Jesus put it “I am the door of the sheep... I am the good shepherd.”^{ix}

We’re sheep, but when we pass through the door, we become something more.

**Even though I walk through the valley of *tsalmaveth*
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.^x**

A shepherd smacks his sheep with a rod, and guides them with a staff, and both are comfort. I think the most comforting thing that God ever showed me was the day he showed me that he could break my arms.

I’ve told you about my Damascus Road Experience when God pinned me to the floor and absolutely overwhelmed me with his relentless love. I’ve told you that when that happened, I felt this intense pressure in my wrists, and thought my arms were about to snap. And only later did I remember that I always used to pray, “God I can’t seem to hear you, so if I’m out of your will just break my arms...” And that was the day that I told God “I’m gonna, resign and stop preaching, because I can’t hear you.”

It’s so comforting to know that your will is not stronger than God’s will. So all the brokenness you encounter in this world does not lie outside the sovereign control of Relentless Love, but is part of the *tsalmaveth* that he has called us to walk through, on our journey to the promised land and the knowledge of who we truly are... and who I AM is.

- 5 You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.**
- 6 Surely goodness [*towb*: “the Good”] and mercy [*chesed*: “Relentless Love”] shall
follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

Some scholars seem to think that someone messed up the 23rd Psalm at this point for the image shifts from that of a shepherd, to that of a host preparing a banquet table. But I don’t think they’re thinking...

Does the Great Shepherd prepare a banquet on a table?

Before we answer that question, let me share a story...^{xi}

It happened several years ago just south of our border with Mexico.

Robert and Judith Gass were camping on a beach in Mexico with their two-year-old daughter, when Robert was suddenly awakened by the sound of four masked men banging on the windows of their van. Robert dove for the driver's seat, but before the van would start, the glass was broken, and a hand reached in. He fought back, but soon found himself pinned to the floor of the van naked with a rifle barrel in his neck. A man was shouting "Money, Money."

The four masked men found Robert's wallet and began ransacking the van while Judith and their two-year-old cowered in the back seat.

It was then that Robert says he muttered a silent prayer... and immediately and quite clearly heard, "Thou shalt prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies."

He thought, "I don't get it..." and then he had a vision. He saw an image of himself serving these bandits a feast.

He writes that while one part of him envisioned scenes of murder and rape, another part of him thought, "These too, are children of God."

He looked up and realized that the bandits were teenage boys, and he saw that their violence wasn't courage but fear, and that in their fear, they were missing all the best stuff. In what he calls a "bizarre flash of insight" he realized that the serving table was helping them do a better job of taking his stuff.

He started saying things like, "Over there under the blankets, you'll find a new Sony Walkman and some tapes..." Over time he showed them everything. The one who spoke English began to calm down...

Robert said, "Would you like something to eat?"

They let him open the refrigerator. He handed an apple to one of them, the boy paused, then smiled and took it.

Robert hoped it was over, but one of them jumped in the driver's seat, started the van and began to drive away. Robert thought they might be driving to their own execution. And then he heard this thought, "What if you were the host and these were your honored guests?"

He began to sing, and of course his two-year-old sang with him. He sang the only Spanish Language song he could think of:

Guantanamera, guajira guantanamera
Guantanamera, guajira guantanamera

I don't know if Robert knew this, but the last verse of that song translated into English means, "With the poor people of this earth, I want to share my lot."

The bandits began to smile and sing along.

Robert still thought they might be killed, but when they finally stopped, far down some forgotten dirt road, Robert realized that the bandits had driven themselves home.

They said "adios," and got out of the camper van...

The one who spoke a little English turned, looked at Robert and said,

“Please forgive us. My hombres and me, we are poor people. Our fathers are poor. This is what we do for making the money. I’m sorry. We didn’t know it was you...”

Who did that young Mexican man think Robert was?

He apologized again, and gave Robert his VISA and License saying, “We really can’t use these...” and then to the amazement of his hombres, he peeled off some Mexican bills and handed them to Robert saying, “Here for the gasoline.”

He then took Robert by the hand looked him in the eyes and said, “Go with God; Adios.”

The four young men vanished into the night. Robert and his family held each other and cried.

You may think, “What a stupid story. He could have gotten himself killed.”
Well... yes. It often happens just that way...

What do you think the Good Shepherd, *the Host*, is serving at His Banquet?

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

Who are my enemies?

Well... God is my enemy, I take his life on the tree every time I sin. And my neighbors are my enemy. The moment I see them as competitors, who want what I want, I make them my enemies. And of course, I am my own worst enemy, for I’m a prisoner of my wants—it’s my wants which ensure that I’m trapped and alone in the prison that is myself. I want love and yet love is the death of “me.” My self-centered, lonely old me.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

Some speculate that this refers to a shepherd clearing a high pasture of weeds and predators, and maybe that’s partly true. But David and all Israel were deeply aware of a table that God, the Great Shepherd, had prepared before them.

The word table appears 20 times in the Pentateuch and in every instance, it refers to a table in the house of the Lord, the house of the Shepherd.

To enter the house of the Lord, one would perform detailed rituals that centered around the sacrifice of sheep. You see, it’s like the Shepherd does eat sheep, or at least consume sheep.

Fire would come from heaven, and consume the sheep, goats, grain and wine. God is a consuming fire. Every worshipper was to identify with their sacrifice. And then, with the priests, they would even feast on the sacrifice... as if, God were feasting on them.

“We are like sheep led to the slaughter,” writes the Psalmist. St. Paul seems to agree, but then adds, “we are more than conquerors through him who loved us”^{xii}

You know, God can only take your life, because he first gave your life. Jesus is “the life,” not a life, but “the life.” Which means your life is actually his Life, that you thought was yours.

I can’t explain all of that to you, but between the altar and the veil before the throne, stood the table and upon it was “the bread of the presence.” No one seemed to know quite what that meant, but 1500 years later Jesus said, “I am the bread of life... and the bread that comes down from heaven.”^{xiii}

As the great shepherd led Israel to the promised land, he fed them with manna from heaven, and water that came from a rock. The New Testament teaches that Jesus is the Manna, Jesus is the Rock, and he bleeds the water—the water of life.^{xiv} The life is in the blood.

Psalm 78:19, The Israelites complain saying “Can God spread a table in the wilderness?” Next verse, the answer is yes: he provides bread from heaven and water from the rock.

But they develop a “wanton craving,” and demand meat. God gives them meat, until it comes out their nostrils, and then he kills them (v. 31), and then he atones for them and did not destroy them (v.38). Through Ezekiel God says that he will raise them from their graves and bring them all into the land. The promised land.^{xv} Jesus is the Bread, he bleeds the Life, he is the Meat. He is the Lamb. Crazy story... but maybe that’s why is God so passionate about bread, water, and meat.

John 10:11 “I am the good shepherd,” says Jesus. “The good shepherd lays his life down for the sheep.” That’s how he feeds them.

On the night he was betrayed; when we all wanted to take his life, he gave his life saying, “This is my body broken for you. Take and eat. This cup is the covenant in my blood. Take and drink.”

“In this is love,” writes John, “not that we loved God, but that he loved us and gave himself as an atoning sacrifice for our sin...,” for all our self-centered wanting.^{xvi}

See love is not wanting and taking; it’s giving and receiving.

Love is a communion of self-sacrifice, and love is life, and life is joy. The life is in the blood that circulates in the body—one body, with many members: Mexican, American, male and female, human and divine.

If you don’t understand that, you need to listen to our sermons from the Revelation. At the start of the Revelation, John sees a lamb standing on the throne of God; The lamb is bleeding and making all things new.

This is Revelation 7:17 “... the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

You see the Great Shepherd feeds us with himself. And for our neighbors, he asks us to do the same. The Life is within you, when you want for it and take it, you kill it. When you give it and receive it, you circulate it; you circulate Him. And then you’re no longer a vessel of wrath; you’re a blood vessel in the body of the Great Shepherd. And he is our promised land.

Well the journey from self-centeredness, self-righteousness, and self-justification to the self-sacrifice that is the essence of Love and the ecstatic joy of the kingdom can be terrifying and profoundly painful. So it’s tempting to seize control and trap yourself in wantonness and fear. But if

you remember that the Great Shepherd is always with you and that he is constantly feeding you with his very self. Well then, I think it will help you to not want. For you'll begin to believe that you already have... Jesus, and with him you will surely receive all things.

Every moment is truly the best possible moment you could receive. God is making you into who you truly are and doing it with perfect precision. You're so much more than just one more sheep buying a Volvo.

That young Mexican looked at Robert Gass and said, "We didn't know it was you."
Up until that night Robert Gass didn't know it was him either. And who is he?

Well he's so much more than just one more sheep.
He's the body of the Great Shepherd.
He's man in the image and likeness of God.

Communion

The Lord has prepared a table before you.
Time to eat.

Tear off a piece of the bread and dip it in the cup.
Dark cups are wine, light cups are juice.

They are both goodness and Mercy...
And you are the house of the Lord, the body of the great shepherd.

Benediction

Was that a scary sermon? We were talking about a shepherd eating sheep and we ended up at this table. And the truth of the matter is that it is scary. But it's scary for the opposite reason that we used to think it was scary. The evil one will lie to you and tell you it's scary because God does not love you, but the truth is that it's scary because God absolutely loves you. There is someone that has all power, all knowledge, that cannot be stopped, that is madly, madly, madly in love with you. And he is not satisfied until he enters into the most intimate and passionate of communions. A communion so deep and so powerful that you'll be tempted to think "I'm losing my life." And you are. You lose your life and you find it, in the love of God. So not alone. So very, very, very not alone.

I think that's easier for me to believe than for some people. Because I had a good dad. So that picture of Jesus and the sheep I remember thinking "well, that's just kind of stupid." Because God was like my dad. And I remember my dad, I knew that he loved me. And he used to do this, to me, my sisters, my kids. He'd come into a room and he'd see me and he'd grab me and pick me up and he'd just go [nom nom nom] "I love you so much I'm just going to eat you up." And so I began to believe that's the way God is. And that is the way God is.

You are a journey on a path to communion with God. And yet at the very start of the journey he says "hey, I want you to sacrifice yourself to me, but I'll sacrifice myself to you." We love because he first loved us. And a communion of love is life, and life is absolute joy.

I wrote this, and the sermon was too long so I took it out, so I'm making it the benediction. Listen closely.

Let yourself be consumed by Love. Present yourself a living sacrifice, for God is constantly presenting himself as a living sacrifice to you.

Love God without caution, without boundaries, without concern for dignity, rights or privilege, without any concern for yourself.

Lose yourself in Love and you will find yourself thoroughly loved.

It's our flesh that always wants, and so always seeks to take, and so keeps us in bondage to death. But within you is a Spirit that constantly gives, that Spirit is love and love is life eternal. You must lose the flesh to find yourself, lost in love.

You don't lack, so may you not want.

In Jesus' name, believe the Gospel. Amen.

Endnotes

ⁱ "I want therefore I am," is what the ego believes. The snake tempted Eve with a desire or a want to be "like God." Perhaps the ego is that want, or the construction of that want. It's so ironic that the ego wants to be, what a person already is or is guaranteed to be, by God, "Let us make man in our own image and likeness."

ⁱⁱ As we saw in our message last week:

Jesus pays the Bride Price, by circumcising more than just 200 Philistines, but all humanity. David was to some degree living Jesus life.

Jesus is the Son of David that dies for David's sin with Bathsheba and the Son of David that is born of David's sin... through Solomon, Prince of Peace. Jesus died and rose somehow in David.

Jesus is the Word of God the Father weeping through David for his lost children and even writing to his lost children in the form of Scripture like we're reading today.

ⁱⁱⁱ Revelation 22:16

^{iv} Jeanne Guyon, Experiencing the Depths of Jesus, p. 32

^v Philippians 4:10-11

^{vi} Numbers 11:13-35 describes how the Israelites were dissatisfied with the bread and water and demanded meat. It also describes God's confusing reaction—which, to me, is a fascinating picture of a Father's conflicting passions as he sacrifices his first-born for the good of all. His first-born from the dead, and first-born of all creation, is our bread and water and meat (He is our Passover Lamb).

Exodus 16:18 describes how those that gathered little manna had no lack (*chacer*). *Chacer* is the Hebrew word translated "want" in our Psalm. Clearly the Hebrews had no lack, yet they thought they did lack, and so wanted "meat." We all thought we lacked, and so crucified the Messiah, body broken (meat) and blood shed.

Psalm 78:14-31 describes the same events as that of Numbers 11, but the Psalm says that the people asked, "Can God set a table in the Wilderness?" It then describes how he did so with water from the rock and manna from heaven, and how the people developed a "craving" (*tah-aw-vah*) for meat.

Psalm 106:6-14 describes the same events. In verse 14 we read in the ESV "they had a wanton craving (*aw-vah*) in the wilderness."

God paints a picture with manna, water, and meat, for the Israelites in the desert. And God paints a picture for all of us with Jesus and a tree in a garden on Mt. Calvary. I think it's all the same picture. We don't trust, and God is causing us to trust—it is His passion.

vii Exodus 15:13 Many versions translate this as “holy abode” or “holy habitation,” but it’s literally “holy pastures.”

viii Matthew 4:17, 6:33, Luke 17:20-21

ix John 10:7,11

x It's important to understand that in the languages of the Bible and in biblical thought a shepherd is a shepherd to all four-footed domestic animals. Often the Greek or Hebrew word translated as “sheep” in English, refers to both sheep and goats. The Passover lamb, for instance, could be taken from the sheep or the goats (Exodus 12:5). A shepherd loved both his sheep and goats, but would shepherd them differently. Sheep tend to simply follow the shepherd's voice, while goats need to be driven and disciplined with a stick or rod. To separate sheep from goats a shepherd simply needs to move; the sheep will follow and the goats tend to do whatever they please. I think that the Lord's description of judgment in Matthew 25 clearly indicates that each of us are a bit sheep and a bit goat. The Lord will separate each of us with his voice and his voice is the presence of “eternal fire.” This is all pictured in the temple rituals and sacrifices. Sin offerings were normally goats and burnt offerings (offerings of praise) were normally sheep. Jesus our Passover lamb bears our sin to destruction, like the sin offering, and he is our praise to God, like the burnt offering. My sin is that which must be driven, and my righteousness is that that freely follows in peace and joy. The Lord is my Shepherd. For more see our recent sermon [How to Judge Yourself, the World, and Everyone in it](https://relentless-love.org/sermons/how-to-judge-yourself-the-world-and-everyone-in-it/), <https://relentless-love.org/sermons/how-to-judge-yourself-the-world-and-everyone-in-it/>

xi [A 3rd Serving of Chicken Soup for the Soul](#), Jack Canfield and Mark Victor Hansen (“Guests in the Night” by Robert Gass) Health Communications Inc., Deerfield Beach, FL. 1996, pp. 53-60

xii Psalm 44:22, Romans 8:36

xiii John 6:32-43

xiv 1 Corinthians 10:1-5, John 4:10-11, Revelation 7:17, 22:1,17

xv Ezekiel 37:11-14

xvi 1 John 4:10 NIV