



Links Players

Wilderness Images: Part 1

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. (Psalm 23:1-3 ESV)

Along the coastal landscape in Western Israel spans the country's sole 18-hole championship golf course—Caesarea Golf Club. The lush grass is a stark contrast to the arid Judean wilderness, a short drive away.

The wilderness is hot, barren, dry, and feels endless. It is a place where survival is impossible on your own. Yet, it is in the wilderness where God makes himself known.

The Hebrew word for wilderness is midbar and can be translated as “a place of speaking.” Where God speaks, and we listen.

Metaphorically, a wilderness experience might be a serious health issue, the loss of a loved one, a personal failure, a financial crisis, or a broken relationship.

In these uncomfortable and hard seasons, we can feel exposed and alone, but if we are willing to hear, it is where God's voice becomes clearest—a place of speaking.

When we realize we can no longer survive the midbar wilderness on our own, we find a personal invitation to listen and encounter God.

There are many images found in the physical wilderness that provide lessons we need during our personal wilderness seasons. Today, we will look at the shepherd, green pastures, still waters, and paths of righteousness.

In Psalm 23, the image of the shepherd reminds us that God personally leads, feeds, protects, and stays with his people. A shepherd knows the condition of the sheep, the dangers of the land, and the safest route forward.

God knows our weakness, our need, and our name. When life feels uncertain, we are invited to trust the heart of our Shepherd and listen for him speaking.

Green pastures are not lush fairways. It is little tufts of dry weedlike grass. God gives us just enough each day for our needs. But we must be looking for it and then eat it.

Still waters are the peace God provides for weary souls. Sheep will not rest or drink when they are afraid. When a shepherd sees still waters, he knows it is safe to stop and rest from striving. Here, comfort, renewal, and deep assurance of his presence reside.

Paths of righteousness reflect God's character and lead us into a life shaped by his truth. The Shepherd does not simply rescue us; he teaches us how to walk. These paths may not always be easy, but they are good, straight, and trustworthy.

God gently redirects us when we wander off our path. Righteousness is about living in step with the One who knows the way. As we follow him, our choices, desires, and direction are gradually formed by his wisdom.

Prayer: Lord, you are the true Shepherd of our hearts. Give me just enough today, rest in my soul, and direct my path.

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