

Pursued By Goodness And Mercy

Ponder: Are goodness and mercy chasing you?

Scripture: “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever” (Psalm 23:6, NKJV).

King David began this psalm picturing himself as a sheep in the Lord’s flock; later, he transitioned to being a guest at the Lord’s banquet table. In both cases, God graciously and abundantly provided everything he needed. Now, as he concludes, David expresses complete confidence that the Lord will continue to bless him as He has in the past.

Countless people spend their lives seeking happiness, which seems invariably to elude them. Even the Declaration of Independence affirmed every person’s God-given right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” In an interesting twist, David says that he is sure that goodness and mercy (i.e. “loving kindness”) will continue following him.

“Follow” is the same Hebrew word elsewhere translated “persecute”! David certainly knew what it was like to be followed (chased, pursued) in this negative sense. King Saul had relentlessly chased David, as had many other enemies. But because the Lord was his Shepherd and his Host, David would enjoy an entire lifetime of being pursued by His rich blessings. What a contrast!

David’s earthly life would end, as will yours and mine. What then? David was certain that he would continue to be blessed. Dwelling in the “house of the Lord” cannot mean any earthly dwelling. The Temple was not built until after David’s death, but David could not have dwelt there anyway; he was neither a priest nor a Levite. He would have been prohibited from dwelling in the Tabernacle for the same reason. So, the “house of the Lord” must refer to living with God in Heaven. Have you have ever been told that Old Testament folks had no concept of eternal life? This passage alone shows the bankruptcy of that notion!

Christians have the same assurance David had that God will supply all of our needs (Philippians 4:19). And Jesus said in His Father’s house were many mansions (i.e. rooms), and that He was going to prepare a place for us, and would come and receive us to Himself so that we could be where He is (John 14:2, 3). Truly, we are pursued by goodness and mercy!