

**Prayer Needs:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Prayer Country for this week:** Czech Republic: 10.4 million people; 71% Non-Religious, 26% Orthodox/Catholic, 0.7% Evangelical (72,000). Atheism and non-religious ideas have risen sharply. Pray for STX A/G missionaries Steve & Jennifer Cuttino.

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***The Shepherd's Psalm***  
**Week 7 – “Even though I walk through the valley...”**

“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. 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. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

**Psalm 23:1-6**

**Notice the shift from “He” and “me” to “you” and “I.” What does this mean to you?**

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**“I will fear no evil, for you are with me.” What does it mean to you that God is with you?**

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**Have you been able to see how God “walked you through” the valleys in your past?**

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**The shadowy and scary experiences of life often break people. How have you relied on Christ’s presence to sustain you through painful and difficult moments?**

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**Contrary to popular opinion, the valley experiences are good for us.**

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Keller wrote, "...only those who have been through such dark valleys can console, comfort, or encourage others in similar situations. Often we pray or sing the hymn requesting God make us an inspiration to someone else. We want, instinctively, to be a channel of blessing to other lives. The simple fact is that just as water can only flow in a ditch or channel or valley, so in the Christian's career the life of God can only flow in blessing through the valleys that have been carved and cut into our lives by excruciating circumstances."

Remember: the Grand Canyon was carved, not from hammer and chisel, but by a river. We need to let God's river flow through us, carving out His own path in our lives, washing away the excess and unnecessary, and leaving only what He wants to remain.