

# Ritual, Relationship, and Resistance: The Praxis of Family Spirituality, Secular World-Based on the Day of Rest in Psalm 23

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## ABSTRACT

*This research paper examines the six verses of Psalm 23 using a historical-literal hermeneutic to explain their theological meaning and to evaluate their relevance to family spirituality in a socio-cultural context that is increasingly secularised. The research problem is to identify the impact of the presentation of God as Shepherd by David on the domestic domain of ceremonial practice, relational processes, and spiritual resistance. Using both close textual analysis and a survey of available scholarship, the findings suggest that Psalm 23 serves as a model of divine provision, guidance, protection, and hope, thus strengthening spiritual identity and creating resilience. The study finds that the orientation of the life of the family around the person and ministry of God, as actualised in the person of Jesus Christ, is the inescapable foundation of the maintenance of authentic spirituality within modern society.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Life requires orientation, and life practices are often disrupted by the presence of newer values. Orthodoxy versus secularization is an unavoidable reality. This polarized clash of values resonates with families and their spirituality. Abraham Kuyper famously warned that modernity has produced “a life-system which stands squarely over against Christianity, insisting that no domain of human existence is religiously neutral. This polarized clash of values resonates within the Christian home, where the worship of YHWH revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ forms the essence of true spirituality. Isaiah 60 provides a theological foundation for prioritizing genuine spirituality, calling God’s people, such as Israel and the nations, to worship and proclaim His works. The basis of this proclamation is centered on the person of God, revealed by Christ to His holy and universal people.

The fundamental framework of this textual quotation directs the reader to the obligation to recount God’s deeds, which extend from the nation of Israel to the nations (cf. John 4:24). This call addresses the consciences of Israel and the nations to experience God in their own lives. Rooted in this proclamation is the centrality of God’s person as revealed in Christ, a theme echoed by Calvin, who writes that “in the face of Christ, we behold the pure and lively image of God. Herman Bavinck similarly argues that Christian experience must be “integrated into the whole of life,”<sup>5</sup> resisting the fragmentation of modern secular culture. Despite the challenges, the positive aspect is that believers’ understanding is correctly understood when encountering external values. This represents a spiritual maturation. This article emphasizes the importance of spiritual maturity, grounded in Psalm 23. It is hoped that individuals will gain a strong foundation for personal resilience. They will stand firm, move forward, and continue to worship God. The emphasis on deep relationships is paramount in a secular world.

## II. PROBLEM

Conflicting self-values are increasingly formed within the family, and as God’s people who proclaim His wonders, believers now face worldly values that continually shift toward the devaluation, fragmentation, and isolation of the individual. This confrontation with secular pressures produces a spiritual tension within Christian households,

exposing the vulnerability of families whose identity and practices are not deeply rooted in the person of God. Thus, a clear theological problem emerges: What theological resources in Psalm 23 offer constructive spiritual formation for Christian families under secular pressures?

This reality requires intentional theological grounding, one that anchors spirituality not in cultural trends but in the covenantal presence of God. As Psalm 23 emphasizes, true formation begins with God’s shepherding care. Robert Alter (2003:230) observes that while Psalmic imagery may draw from ritual and liturgical settings, “the general character of most of the Psalms is almost undeniable,” highlighting their enduring capacity to shape the spiritual imagination of God’s people. In this sense, Psalm 23 offers more than poetic comfort; it provides a stabilizing theological framework capable of addressing the spiritual needs of modern families navigating secularization. Referring to this importance, Os Guinness mentioned the effort to reclaim the reason for the existence of the Christian family in the world, amidst the challenges of the secularization process. He stated that:

As a culture, secularization essentially involves the family’s strength being transformed into weakness, and its role from giving to judging. Constructive elements are being replaced by destructive ones. This is a fundamental concern for families. The process of change requires a spiritual, theological foundation. This aspect focuses on assurance in facing the process of change, and that assurance comes from the person of God in Christ. As emphasized in Romans 8:28 and Philippians 1:6, God’s involvement in the family is essential.

## III. METHOD

The research is based on a historical-grammatical (literal) approach, which analyzes Psalm 23 in its historical context and grammatical form to determine the meaning the writer intended to convey. The methodology involves a careful exegesis of the Hebrew text, a careful study of grammar and syntax, and a mindful reflection of the pastoral and covenantal imagery of the Psalm in the wider canonical story. Further, the study relies on the exegetical traditions of Reformed theologians, including Calvin, Bavinck, and more recent Reformed studies, to explain the theological motifs in the Psalm in the light of the covenantal shepherding of God. The investigation is

based on primary materials, including the Masoretic Hebrew text, intertextual relationships in the canonical Scriptures (especially the Gospel of John), and classical Reformed theological interpretations of Psalm 23.

It also uses secondary literature, such as sociological interpretations of secularisation (Durkheim), theological discussion of the idea of modernity and eschatology (Moltmann), and cultural-theological discussions of secular pressures on Christian families (Guinness). Such a combined treatment of the Psalm allows reading it historically and theologically, following its vision of rest (v. 2) into the fulfilment in Christ, of its New Testament, and in particular in the description of Jesus as the One who gives living water which John gives (Joh 7:37; see 1993). This mixed approach, historical-grammatical analysis, canonical interpretation, and listening to the voices of both the past and the present theologians, this study tries to find out the meaning of the text and its positive application in shaping robust, harmonious and Christ-centered family spirituality in the secular age.

#### IV. THESIS STATEMENT

The proposed meaningful fact in Psalm 23 regarding 'the day of rest' is a form of true spiritual life, as alluded to in verse 2 as a whole.

This hypothesis develops what E.P. Sanders alluded to: the coherence of the hypothesis depends on the strength of theological motives (1985:99). This is stated in Psalm 23, in the statements at the beginning and end of the passage. Therefore, proof of this theological assumption is necessary.

#### V. STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT OF PSALM 2

##### 5.1 Text Setting

Although this poem has no literal setting, it does have a rich metaphorical one. The speaker imagines God as a shepherd leading his sheep to the places sheep love most: green fields and quiet streams. The reader can picture the idyllic countryside in this image, a peaceful landscape full of serenity and freshness. However, these peaceful fields are not the only place the speaker finds God. God is also present in the "valley of the shadow of death," a well-known and evocative metaphor for moments of deep and terrifying suffering that arise

in any human life. Perhaps the reader can feel the chill of that shadow.

Next, the speaker visits another metaphorical setting: a banquet table in the house of God. This is no ordinary banquet, but a holy communion, where God blesses the speaker with precious oils. This holy communion, overflowing with abundance, is a concrete representation of the inner nourishment the speaker finds through his faith. Psalm 23 was important and influential, even in its day; the idea of God as shepherd has been passed down through biblical tradition for centuries, all the way to the New Testament Book of John, where Christ famously refers to himself as the "good shepherd."

##### 5.2 Text Sound

THE LORD is my shepherd; \* therefore, can I lack nothing.

He shall feed me in a green pasture, \* and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort.

He shall convert my soul, \* and bring me forth in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; \* for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff comfort me.

Thou shalt prepare a table before me in the presence of them that trouble me; \* thou hast anointed my head with oil, and my cup shall be full.

Surely thy loving-kindness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; \* and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

##### 5.3 Text Transliteration

23:1 --Miz-MOR le-DA-vid, a-do-NAI ro-I lo ekh-SAR.

23:2 -- bin-OT de-SHE yar-bi-TSE-ni al-mei me-nu-KHOT ye-na-ha-LE-ni

23:3 -- NAF-shi y'-sho-VAYV, yan-KHE-ni b'-ma-g'-LEI tze-DEK, I'-MA-an sh'-MO.

23:4 -- gam ki-e-lekh b'-gei tzal-mavet lo-i-ra ra ki-a-tah i-ma-di shiv-te-kha u-mish-a-ne-te-kha

he-ma ye-na-cha-mu-ni

23:5 -- ta-a-ROKH I'-fa-NAI shul-KHAN NE-ged tzor-RAI, di-SHAN-ta va-SHE-men ro-SHI,

ko-LIHAT r'-va-YAH

23:6 --AKH TOV va-KHE-sed yir-d'-FU-nee  
kol y'-MAY kha-YAI v'-shav-TEE b'-vayt a-do-NAI

IO-rekh ya-MEEM

#### 5.4 Text Interpretation

God's presence is not only comforting but also transforming, enabling the reader to feel secure, loved, and deeply fulfilled even in the midst of suffering.

In verses 4 and 5, the speaker addresses God with extraordinary faith and trust. Even in the "valley of the shadow of death" "times of danger and fear, the speaker is not afraid, because "You are with me." This means that the speaker feels that God is always there, even in the worst of times. By addressing God directly here, the speaker evokes the closeness they describe: they don't need to seek God to speak to Him; He is already there.

In verse 5, the speaker's appeal to God shifts from an expression of faith to an expression of praise (Revelation 3:20). Here, the speaker speaks to God about the extraordinary and unexpected goodness God has done for them, preparing a feast for them even when they are surrounded by "enemies" and providing them with holy oil. God, of course, is expected to already know that He has done this as the speaker; The use of apostrophes directly to the speaker indicates that the speaker is getting something from thanking God for their good deeds, dreaming of imagining all the blessings God has given them.

Psalm 23 opens with the foundational confession: יְהוָה רֹעִי (YHWH ro'i, "The LORD is my shepherd"). The verb that follows in verse 1—לֹא אֶחָסָר (lo' 'eḥsar, "I shall not lack") expresses complete covenantal sufficiency grounded in God's provision. In verse 2, David declares that God יְרִבְצֵנִי (yarbiṣēnî, "causes me to lie down") בְּנֵאוֹת דָּשָׁא (bin'ōt deshe', "in pastures of tender grass"), establishing the theme of Sabbath-rest as divine initiative rather than human achievement. The subsequent phrase עַל-מַי מְנוּחֹת יְנַהֲלֵנִי ('al-mē menūḥōt yenhālēnî, "He leads me beside waters of rest") introduces the motif of spiritual restoration that shapes Christian family life.

Reformed theologians highlight the theological depth of these expressions. Calvin notes that David's use of intimate pastoral imagery reveals that "our life is nowhere safe except under God's faithful care". G. C. Berkouwer similarly emphasizes that the believer's rest is grounded not

in subjective feeling but in "the unwavering reality of God's covenant faithfulness". Thus, the Hebrew text read through a historical-grammatical and Reformed lens presents Psalm 23 as a theological paradigm in which God Himself restores, guides, and secures His people, offering Christian families a counter-formation to the anxieties produced by secular culture.

#### 5.5 The Secularization Process: Changes in Content and Values

Referring to Emile Durkheim's theory of religion and society, the two are interdependent and inseparable. Durkheim further emphasized that reality and society, within the framework of the theory of religions, demonstrate that secularization in Europe was caused by economic and political revolutions. Therefore, it can further explore the past secularization of that civilization, which significantly influenced Western civilization. Abraham Kuyper famously warned that secularization is not a neutral cultural shift but "a rival life-system standing squarely over against Christianity, challenging families to recover a God-centered orientation in all of life. Herman Bavinck likewise observed that secular modernity fragments human existence by "detaching life from its source in God, producing the spiritual disintegration Psalm 23 seeks to heal.

Meanwhile, in his treatise, Jürgen Moltmann sees the secularization process as being caused by three factors: a problematic relationship between words and reality. b. an incongruent relationship between words and existence. c. experienced truth does not demonstrate correspondence, conformity, or agreement. Therefore, the process of secularization can be prevented by proclaiming eschatological revelation. God makes all things new through His Covenant with Christ.

#### 5.6 Spiritual Paradigm of Nations

Observing the direction and values of the times and their influence to this day, Os Guinness believes that human civilization has experienced abrasion due to progress... and given birth to what is known today: a lack of awareness of the social dimension of faith. As Robert Morgan said, the religious and moral instruction, motivation, and sanctions that guide Christian faith and life (2003:115). This is caused by the emptiness of social sensitivity and its replacement with purely intellectual abilities. And in its current development in the era of intelligent machines, at least the

cognitive aspect has become a criterion for a nation's success and is also its identity. This is depicted in the flow of social change in the nation's conscience.

Specifically, citing Daniel 12:3, "Knowledge will radiate like the bright expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever." There is an intense encounter between the rise of science and knowledge, such as AI, and the proclamation of Christ's work for the forgiveness of sins. This represents the emergence of secularization versus true spirituality. Anticipating this with perseverance (determination), both in individual worship and collective efforts to reach many people into the truth, is what remains constant and the wisest way. Through this spiritual path, God's actions and vision for Israel and the nations are revealed in redemption. This is the key to the primacy of spirituality in the face of change due to secularization.

The characteristics of spirituality include faith, hope, and love within the hearts of the righteous. The author defines the paradigmatic need for spirituality in the face of secularization as related to "a space for escape". It is about escaping from the darkness of the world into the light of Christ's glory (cf. John 5:24; 2 Corinthians 4:6 and WW 3). This is similar to the Lord Jesus' commission for His disciples to go out to reach them to the ends of the earth (cf. Romans 10:6-10).

## VI. DISCUSSION

Spirituality is useful in terms of being able to work with a variety of spiritual expressions, both traditional and non-traditional, and the need to utilize a variety of theories, research, and clinical methods to capture at least some of this complex and elusive phenomenon. Furthermore, it is helpful to further our understanding of attempts to "explain spirituality" by reducing it to seemingly overriding psychological, social, or physical processes. Instead, the author's view remains that spirituality is understood and addressed as a legitimate dimension of human experience.

This reduction reflects what Cornelius Van Til identified as the fundamental flaw of secular thought: "autonomous human reason setting itself over against the revelation of God. Within such frameworks, spirituality becomes detached from divine transcendence and anchored instead in

human self-construction. Reformed theologians have consistently challenged this secularization of the soul. David Wells argues that modern psychology has contributed to a "weightless God", a God pushed to the margins of human consciousness while therapeutic categories dominate spiritual understanding. Richard Lints similarly contends that secular modernity trains individuals to interpret identity not in relation to God's covenantal presence but through "expressive selfhood," which fragments moral and spiritual coherence. Michael Horton goes further, noting that therapeutic culture replaces biblical anthropology with a "technique-driven self," assuming that human flourishing can be achieved without reconciliation to God. These critiques demonstrate how secular psychology inadvertently forms spiritual assumptions contrary to the biblical world.

Against this background, Psalm 23 offers a radically different anthropology, one grounded not in self-definition but in divine shepherding. The Psalm presents the human person as a dependent creature whose identity, wholeness, and resilience emerge only through communion with God. As the text declares, "He restores my soul" (Ps. 23:3), a statement that presupposes God's sovereign initiative in renewal rather than human self-repair. This stands in stark contrast to Freud's belief that religious faith arises from the infantile desire for protection, which he describes as an "illusion". Van Til counters this psychological reductionism by insisting that "man is at every point confronted with God and dependent on Him for interpretation of himself and the world.

In moments of crisis, alienation, and suffering, Psalm 23 provides a theological alternative to secular therapeutic categories. While modern psychology often interprets distress through frameworks of conflict, repression, or environmental conditioning, the Psalm frames human vulnerability within God's protective presence: "You are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4). Horton notes that such covenantal presence reveals a deeper truth about human life: "We are not autonomous selves seeking coping strategies, but creatures upheld by God's sustaining grace.

In feelings of loss and emptiness, in questions of meaning and purpose, in feelings of alienation and abandonment, and in cries of injustice and neglect. Spirituality, in short, is another dimension of life. A remarkable dimension, but an essential part of everyday life and the purpose of being

human. Individuals are more than just psychological, social, and physical beings, but also spiritual beings.

When people go about their daily work, they don't leave their spirituality behind. They bring with them beliefs, practices, experiences, values, relationships, and spiritual struggles. Implicitly or explicitly, this complex of spiritual factors often enters into a process of searching for healing. In the Old Testament Psalms, this is how everyday life requires reframing (cf. Psalm or Zabur 23: "He restores my soul.")

In the emerging field of artificial intelligence (AI), religion began to be seen as an obstacle to the scientific quest for enlightenment and a barrier to rational self-fulfillment. The goal was to improve the human condition. Commenting on this transition, David Wulff (1997) wrote, "Only the new social sciences, working in concert with the physical and biological sciences, could hope to free humanity from fear and suffering. This was the very foundation that, some say, inspired the first prayers and mantras. Psychology began to attract young people dissatisfied with their religion; they were "enlightened fundamentalists" who firmly believed that religious belief would follow the path of other superstitions as scientific knowledge advanced. Religion and revelation were dismissed as myths. To this day, the neglect of religion is becoming increasingly apparent.

From this context emerged models of personality and psychotherapy that portrayed spirituality in oversimplified and stereotypical terms. Consider behaviorism and psychoanalysis, two major psychological paradigms of the 20th century. B. F. Skinner, the founder of behaviorism, was himself a product of the fundamentalist religion he later rejected. "God," he wrote, "is the archetype of an explanatory fiction" (1971, p. 201). He believed that religion maintains this fiction by attempting to control behavior, primarily through the use of aversive means, including punitive laws, fear of hell and damnation, and religious practices that discourage sinful behavior.

Similarly, Sigmund Freud was raised in a moderate Jewish family, but he eventually rejected traditional Jewish beliefs and practices, although he continued to identify himself as Jewish, culturally and ethnically. Freud (1927/1961) argued that religion is rooted in the child's sense of powerlessness in a world filled with dangerous forces. Early in life, he theorized, the child is able to find comfort and security in the presence of his father. As the child

grows older, he discovers his father's limitations, but the child must continue to reckon with the forces of nature, powerful others in the world around him, and the powerful conflicts within himself. From the child's deep desire for safety and protection from hostile, external forces, a psychic transformation occurs; the natural becomes supernatural, the uncontrollable becomes flexible, and as a result, "we can breathe freely, can take comfort in the unseen, and can overcome our unreasonable anxieties by psychic means."

The human rights-based transgender ideology, initiated by Silicon Valley and activists in many countries, is actually damaging the younger generation. The uncertainty that often occurs among young people is not surprising, and it is growing rapidly. They understand spirituality through freedom and choose science as the basis for justifying their actions. Their actions demonstrate their conviction. Although they reject religion, they apparently need space for spirituality itself. Reflecting on this reality, we understand the importance of spirituality based on God's existence and His presence. This is because therapists themselves have little access to spiritual education based on God's revelation.

The theological-sociological boundaries regarding the secular world are formulated in such a way, referring to universal human experiences: our search for safety, our need for guidance through difficulty, our confrontation with mortality, and our desire for a life of contentment and belonging. These boundaries contain four human needs in the world: a. a sense of security, b. guidance in difficult times, c. confrontation with the transience of life, and d. the desire for a fulfilling life and a sense of belonging. In short, modern humans require internal motivation to carry out daily tasks and responsibilities.

Modernity is characterized by exploitation and alienation. Due to the power of capital, people work for wages, not intrinsic motivation. Bowles and Gintis's (1976) study of 237 high school students in New York concluded that work has a significant impact on school. This means that work itself fosters hope for a better future. Hannah Arendt, a philosopher and sociologist of the last century, saw the human journey in three phases. In these phases, each individual moves from the past to the present to move towards the future. However, there is one moment in human life that can thwart their journey towards the future: their rebellious nature (Hannah

Arendt, 1958/1998). This logical and precise description, linked to the spirituality of Psalm 23, is a primary need for modern humans in the 21st century. This description depicts the person of God as the shepherd of Israel and the Christian family in Jesus Christ. This sublimation of spiritual theology refers to God's providence, rest with Him, His authority and sovereignty, His redemption, His anointing, His mercy, and even eternal residence in God's house.

But Psalm 23 presents a distinct statement and attitude of faith. Based on the Hebrew text on the human journey, King David provides spiritual guidance while navigating life in uncertainty and metaphysical uprooting. Using what Hannah Arendt (1958/1998) alluded to with the term "complete unanimity," King David interprets this as a formulation of spirituality based on complete belief/faith. The formation of spirituality is as follows: a. Lectio (read), b. Meditate (meditation), c. Pray (oration), d. Contemplate (contemplation). Psalm 23 provides transformative spirituality for modern man today.

The outcome, in the form of spiritual attainment, of Psalm 23 directs the reader to a reorientation toward spirituality itself (God exists using the word "batach"), then a transformation of identity (God loves), a reframing of reality itself (facing challenging situations, but God is also present when they occur), and a growing sense of gratitude and satisfaction (trusting in God's provision). The focus is on Jesus, the good shepherd (cf. John 10:10 b). Rest with Jesus is the

key to family and individual spirituality.

In contemporary times, perhaps influenced by the surrounding culture and religious communities, this psalm is often included at funerals and in Yizkor (memorial) ceremonies. The metaphor of God's presence "in the valley of the shadow of death" (b'gey tzalmavet) is so lyrically compelling and fresh to contemporary ears that various end-of-life liturgies feel like a natural context.

Perhaps even more compelling is the Psalms' summary of the third Shabbat meal, se'udah shelishit, sung alongside other poems that guide individuals toward divinity not in philosophical reflection or covenant commandments, but in love and longing. In this context, the critical metaphor is "You have anointed my head with flowing oil," which suggests the fusion of physical and spiritual pleasures on Shabbat, and its final words, "and I will dwell in the Temple forever."

The grammar of our psalm reflects (anticipates) the profound shift between description and encounter that we also find in the structure of the blessing and in the poem. Its opening speaks of God in the third person, "The Lord is my Shepherd"; but in times of challenge, "in the valley of the shadow of death," the psalmist speaks not of God, but to God: "Atah imadi" (You are with me). This may be a more challenging poem than we first think. It is certainly lyrical, certainly about faith, but it is born of dark times in a challenging world. In fact, it is a very contemporary teaching from an ancient book. See the figure.1.

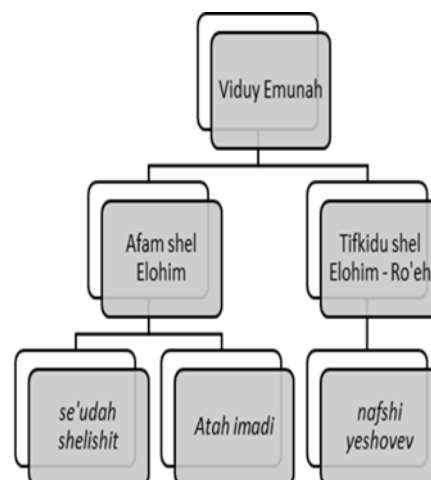


Figure 1: True Spirituality

The final hours of Shabbat look to the messianic future, to a time when all will be one. In the 'Amidah for the evening rest, the text speaks of the most profound serenity, evoking the deep and universal peace we long for in a busy and troubled world. The phrase "nafshi yeshovev" (You restored my soul) hangs enigmatically between the power of the weekly Shabbat to restore our spiritual life and the hope/promise of ultimate restoration in the messianic future. See Fig 1. David's initial depiction of the shepherd God is captured in Genesis 49:24. Jacob began his personal creed that God is the Shepherd and the solid Rock of Israel. Further development is seen in Jesus' own words, "Whoever hears My words is like one who builds his house on a solid rock." This imaginative and personal creed focuses on the person of God as the only Shepherd (cf. John 10:1; 10 b; 11; 14). Thus, for Jacob and David, God is the central figure in their life journeys. Furthermore, in Hebrews 13:2, Christ, the Great Shepherd of His people, provides a powerful perspective on how He Himself was raised from the dead by God through the blood of the new covenant, and that blood is eternal blood.

It is an important and fundamental basis for today's families to maintain a strong determination for God's presence in the midst of the family (cf. Jer 3:15), because Christ's redemption is for all and once for all (Hebrews 10:10). The theological basis is very emphasized amidst threats and agitation to abandon the essence of belief, namely the eternal blood atonement of Jesus for God's people. The protection of the blood is so historical and doctrinal that the family's journey can survive and move towards the finish line (cf. Hebrews 12:1). Families need to preserve the primacy of the Lord's Supper for all family members (cf. 1 Cor 10:23-26), both in the communal sense and in the nuclear family sense.

Next, God's role in the family. Judging from verses 2 and 3 of Psalm 23, David's use of the third-person pronoun reflects God's protection to its ultimate end. In this case, as God's family and His possession (Psalm 5:8, Proverbs 6:22; Proverbs 11:3; Psalm 67:4; Psalm 31:3). God loves and cares for the family to the point of guiding or leading it to a restored life. The goal is for the family to find true rest, and in this rest, the soul finds refreshment. Therefore, it can be said that verses 2 and 3 are an implementation of verse 1 and are a spiritual practice so that families experience restoration towards the right path. Because many families go astray due to anxiety and depressed souls, and

ultimately step on the wrong path. Verse 1 is the basis of covenant theology through the creed that God is the only shepherd, and verses 2-3 emphasize its pastoral aspect. Today's families need pastoral care to return to the right path for the sake of God's name, not any other name. In fact, the name of God was revealed by Jesus himself, and the name of God is called Father by the family.

In contrast, the name YHWH for the Israelites was so sacred and far from personal intimacy. The name YHWH (tetragrammaton in verse 1) seemed at the beginning of Israel's journey to have a distinction between God and His people. David, in his prophetic imagination, directed to the person of Christ to bridge the distinction by calling God the Father. Our Father who is in heaven. Thus, the implication is that God's role in creation and care is now fulfilled by Jesus as the shepherd of the people of the whole world (cf. John 10:16). And Jesus emphasized in John 10:17 that He and the Father are one and Jesus is always willing to give His life for God's flock and make God's name known to them (cf. John 17:1-3). An important aspect of the meaning of shepherding is the Shepherd's willingness to fulfill God's interests and His name.

Meanwhile, verse 4 itself specifically emphasizes God's presence amidst anxiety. This can occur because uncertainty and the phenomenon of change seem to threaten the lives we live. David describes this in light of the use of "Your rod and Your staff" as a comforting force for families today. Families need strengthening and comfort in areas that truly threaten their lives. And that domain lies in God's authority, while also providing resilience to withstand threats. Spiritual resilience is sourced in God's authority. While verses 1 discuss its theological basis, verses 2 and 3 address the pastoral or stewardship aspect, and verse 4 discusses God using his authority to protect his people. God is present in the metaphorical Valley of the Shadow of Darkness through his rod and staff, bringing true comfort.

In verse 5 itself, God's provision for the family is not interrupted but continuous. God reveals this provision before the enemies of believers. This is an area of real-life witness. And its purpose is to distinguish between those who worship and know God and those who do not. It is repeated with the phrase "God anoints with oil and fills the cup." These two affirmations come from God. His provision is accompanied by the anointing with oil and the filling of the cup, namely, the spiritual needs

of the family. God provides all of this for the believing family.

And in verse 6 is the aspect of life to come together with those who have become God's family. It is a joy to be able to meet with other family members in the house of God and worship the Lord together. The orientation of God's presence in the past in the lives of the fathers of faith is now present in the lives of believers, so that the future is a necessity. Verse 1 is the basis for justification for the true creed, verses 2 and 3 emphasize the pastoral side, verse 4 is God's certainty in the struggle in the midst of confirming that He has authority over life on this earth where the family lives, then verse 5 is devoted to providing God and His involvement in the lives of believers. By providing at least an area of life, testimony becomes real to outsiders through God's role in the communion, in the anointing of oil, and the filling of the cup to the brim. And ending in verse 6 is the eschatological side. The hope of living together in the dwelling of God's house forever.

The thematic scheme demonstrates the crucial role of the family in achieving its ultimate goals in the future. The components in the third row contain at least three sublime elements: first, prayer; second, spiritual formation; and third, the theology of spirituality for the family. By prioritizing these three elements, such as faith in prayer and confession, God's presence in the family, and spiritual recovery, the end result is salvation, survival, and a sense of security. And it is indicated that these three elements of spirituality implementation in the family are complementary movements towards joyful intensification (Robert Alter, 2003:231). The text of Psalm 23 is an important basis for looking at the person of Jesus in the Gospels, especially the Gospel of John. The emphasis on water, bread, life, and the good shepherd are strong image rooted in Psalm 23.

## VII. CONCLUSION

These findings indicate that Psalm 23 offers a consistent theological outline based on divine shepherding, care in the covenant, and hope in the eschaton, which can enable Christian families to withstand the eroding influence of secularization. Unlike cultural factors that disintegrate identity and undermine spiritual devotion, the Psalm underpins believers in the healing, directing, and cushioning presence of God. An important finding of the study is that, by focusing on a

historical-grammatical-Reformed Theological perspective of Psalm 23, one can identify a 3-fold process of spiritual growth: rest (v. 2), renewal (v. 3), and resilience (v. 4–6). This trend explains the ways in which family spirituality can be cultivated not only in habit but also in an enhanced consciousness of covenantal activity by God. It is also demonstrated in the paper that this divine shepherding is satisfied and enacted through the figure and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose redemptive mission on Calvary—once for all (Heb.S 10:10) is the source of Christian spiritual identity. It is this synthesis of the reading that makes up the original contribution of the article, as the Psalm 23 pastoral theology is intertwined with the family formation in a secular, pressured situation.

The concerns of Psalm 23 with Daniel 12 and its fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ. The connection between the instruments of well-being, the instruments of communication, and the metaphysical instruments lies in the conscience. Many aspects of information theory about God and the formation of the spirituality of a people/race/nation. Its description of knowledge of God's glory and wonders and the purification of nations extends ties over great geographical distances. Jesus' vision of the Gospel to the Nations (Matthew 20:16–20; Mark 16; Acts 1:8) is crucial for building a future community.

Thus, Psalm 23 and its fulfillment in the Canonical Gospels serve not only for individual restoration but also for the purification of a broader people. Correction of secularization's interference in the spirituality of God's people only occurs through correction of errors and purification. This results in the attainment of oneness with God for eternity. This means living in the light of the Gospel of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ (Wanamaker, 182). Psalm 23 leads the nations to the light of Christ, both in His birth in the midst of the family, in His incarnational life, suffering until His death, and resurrection as Lord and King of kings (Acts 2:3–35; Revelation 4 and Revelation 5). The metaphysical dilemma alluded to by Francis Schaeffer has been resolved by Jesus on Calvary (Romans 3:23 ~ Romans 6:23). Not only metaphysical matters but also the existential problems of individuals, families, and nations are resolved.

The key is whether there is a recognition and willingness to rest with God and a belief in the future return of Christ as King. This is crucial considering that, with the passage of time, the

secularization of the modern world will eventually lead to its end. And who truly is the one who guarantees that final day?

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