

*The Gates of the City*

**29** “These are the allotments that will be set aside for each tribe’s exclusive possession. I, the Sovereign Lord, have spoken!

**30** “These will be the exits to the city: On the north wall, which is 1 1/2 miles long, **31** there will be three gates, each one named after a tribe of Israel. The first will be named for Reuben, the second for Judah, and the third for Levi. **32** On the east wall, also 1 1/2 miles long, the gates will be named for Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan. **33** The south wall, also 1 1/2 miles long, will have gates named for Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun. **34** And on the west wall, also 1 1/2 miles long, the gates will be named for Gad, Asher, and Naphtali.

**35** “The distance around the entire city will be 6 miles. And from that day the name of the city will be ‘The Lord Is There.’”

Ezekiel 48: 29 - 35 (NLT)

**1** The Lord is my shepherd;  
I have all that I need.

**2** He lets me rest in green meadows;  
he leads me beside peaceful streams.

**3** He renews my strength.  
He guides me along right paths,  
bringing honor to his name.

**4** Even when I walk  
through the darkest valley,  
I will not be afraid,  
for you are close beside me.

Your rod and your staff  
protect and comfort me.

Psalms 23:1 - 4 (NLT)

**Observation** (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

**Discussion/Topic Starters** (Ice Breakers)

- Have you ever had a friend that you knew would be there for you in any situation?
  - Describe the personality and the values of this friend.
- : What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

**v.29-35**

○: Psalm 23:4 states, “Even when I walk through the darkest valley...” Describe a time in your life where you felt as though you were walking through “the darkest valley.”

Follow-up: How has this impacted your life, with regards to relationships with others?

\* With your relationship with God?

I: The word *Shammah* literally means “there.” When added to the word *Jehovah* (LORD), Jehovah Shammah means, The Lord is There. Define this term in your own words (practical, in your life, in the life of the church, etc).

Follow-up: What does it mean for you to know that the Lord has always been, and will always be, with you?

Follow-up: Describe an event or events in your life where you have seen God fulfill his promise to be with you?

\* In contrast to the first question about Psalm 23, how has God’s presence with you impacted your relationship with him?

A: Has there been a time in your life where you could relate to the Israelites during their time of rebellion towards God, i.e. a time where you were not following God’s will?

Follow-up: How have you seen a difference in your life after attempting to follow God’s will?

\* Specifically, Ryan asked the question on Sunday, “How has God shown his presence in your life?”

\* Spend some time discussing this and give specific examples of these moments.

A: This next week, how can you/we make a conscious effort to take time out of your day to spend some time alone with God. Reflect upon his presence in your life.

Follow-up: If this is something that you already do, share with the group how this helps you and your relationship with God.

\* As discussed in Riverside’s HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid “go through this guide word-for-word.”