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29 All the "prosperous of the earth will see and
 All those who "go down to the dust will
 Him.
 Even he who "cannot keep his soul alive.
 30 "Posterity will serve Him;
 It will be told of the Lord to "the coming generation
 31 They will come and "will declare His righteousness
 To a people "who will be born, that He has performed

PSALM 23

The LORD, the Psalmist's Shepherd.
 A Psalm of David.

1 The LORD is my ^ashepherd,
 I ¹shall ^bnot want.

PSALM 23

It's not the only Psalm in Scripture

4 Even though I "walk through the "valley of the sh



The Basics of Psalms

“wisdom literature” ...

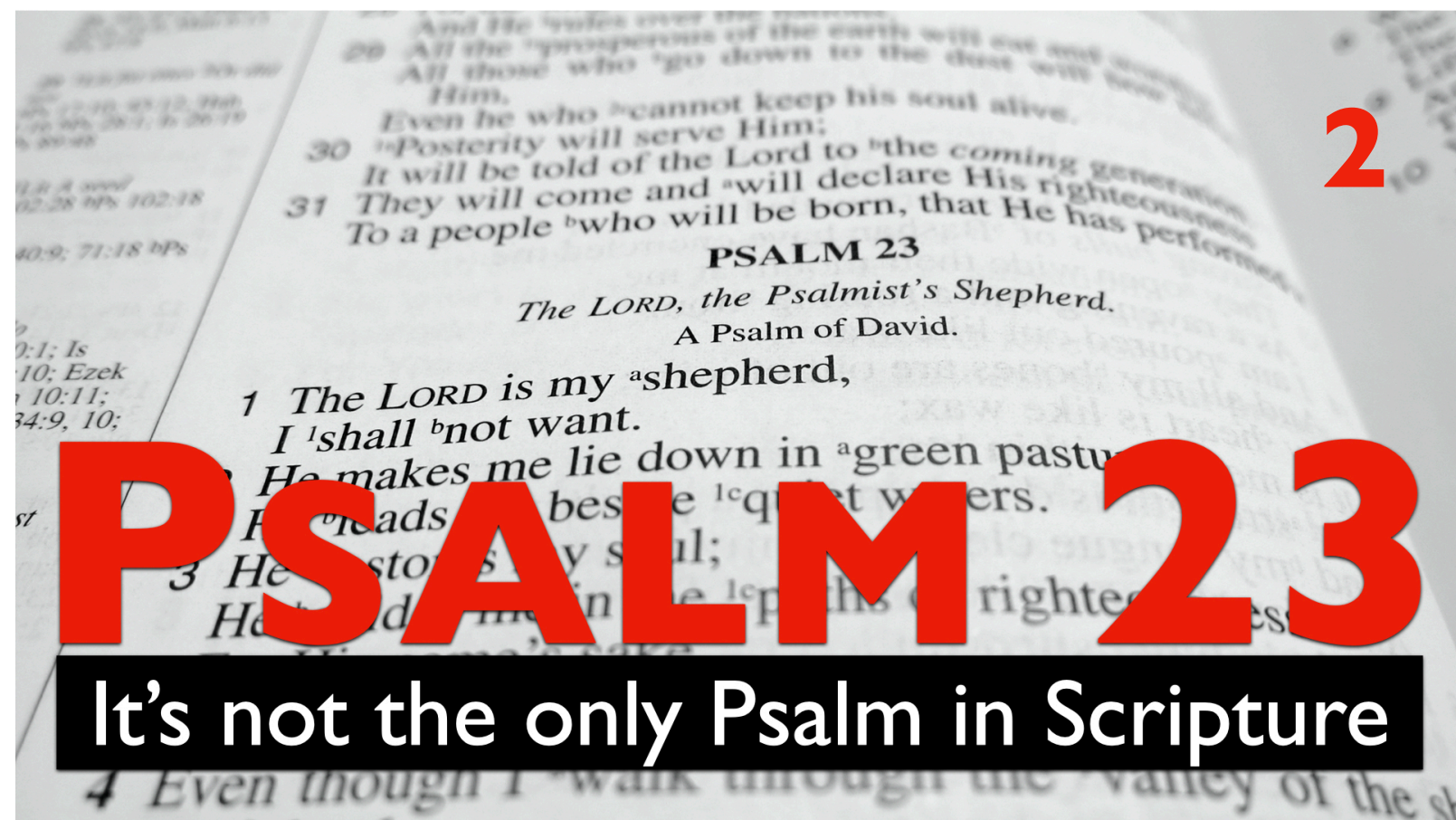
- Prompts **us** to reflect on **our** real life experiences
- Makes **us** think about the importance of **ethics** (choices) and **consequences**
- Allows “**us**” to converse/commune with God through “**our**” voices
- Forces **us** to really and fully think/reason about matters of **faith** and **life**
- Gives **us** another window/perspective to see **who** and **what** God **really** is



The Basics of Psalms

The “pictures” inside a Psalm

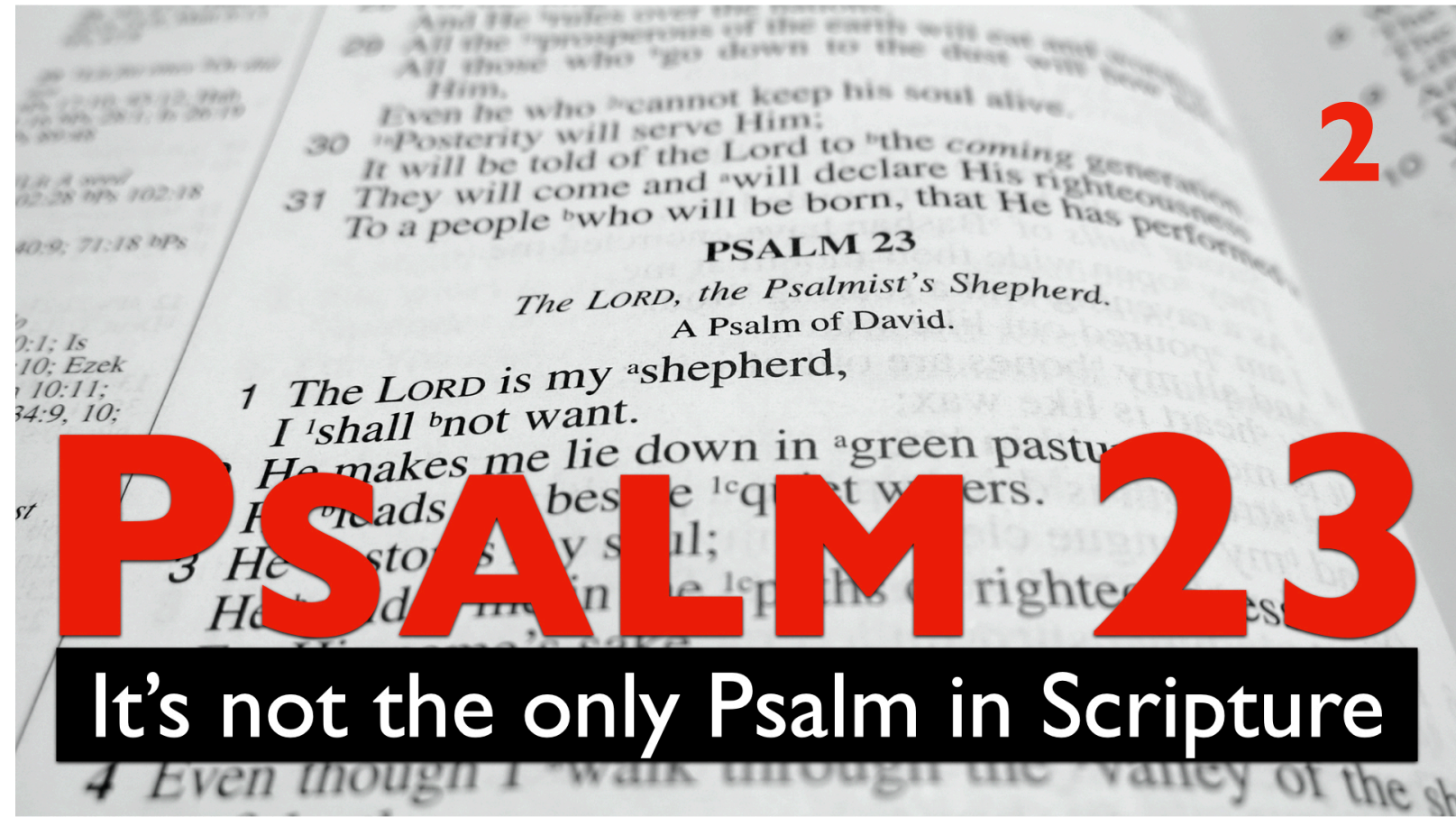
- “**Images** are the glory, perhaps the essence of poetry, the enchanted planet of the imagination, a limitless galaxy, ever alive and ever changing” (Schökel)
- “the most basic **building block** of poetry.” (Brown)
- “poetry is the **language of images**” (Ryken)
- **Pictures/images** - relate concrete actions/things (Ps 119.105, 23.2) • create associations (Ps 47.9-10) • can have multiple meanings (Ps 110.1, 138.7) • Need to be examined re target • source • source & target connection
- Prose **records** action • poetry **recreates** action (Handbook on Wisdom & Psalms)



The Purpose/Message of Psalms

Psalms' ...

- **Purpose: Teach/instruct** - Psalm 1 (cf. Pr 1.8, Ps 78.1-3)
- **For Happiness** - Psalm 1 & “blessed” (happy, cf. Ps 112, Pr 10.28, 11.7)
- **For Holiness** - correlation of happiness/holiness (Ps 1, 94.12, 119.1, Pr 16.20)
- **Message:**
 - God rules as **king** - Ps 2.4, 29.10
 - Our ultimate future, **glory** in the presence of God the king - Ps 1-7
 - The king **returns** - Ps 72.2, 12-14; 41
 - The king, **our refuge** - Ps 104 (cf. Is 4.6, Job 24.8, king as refuge - Is 30.2)
 - The king blesses **all nations** - Ps 2.12 (cf. Gen 12.1ff), Ps 45-48 (esp 46)



Types of Psalms

The Psalms fall into several categories

- Hymns
- Laments
- Thanksgiving Songs
- Confidence Songs
- Kingship Songs - next week
- Wisdom Songs - next week
- Christ in Psalms - next week



Types of Psalms

Hymns in Psalms

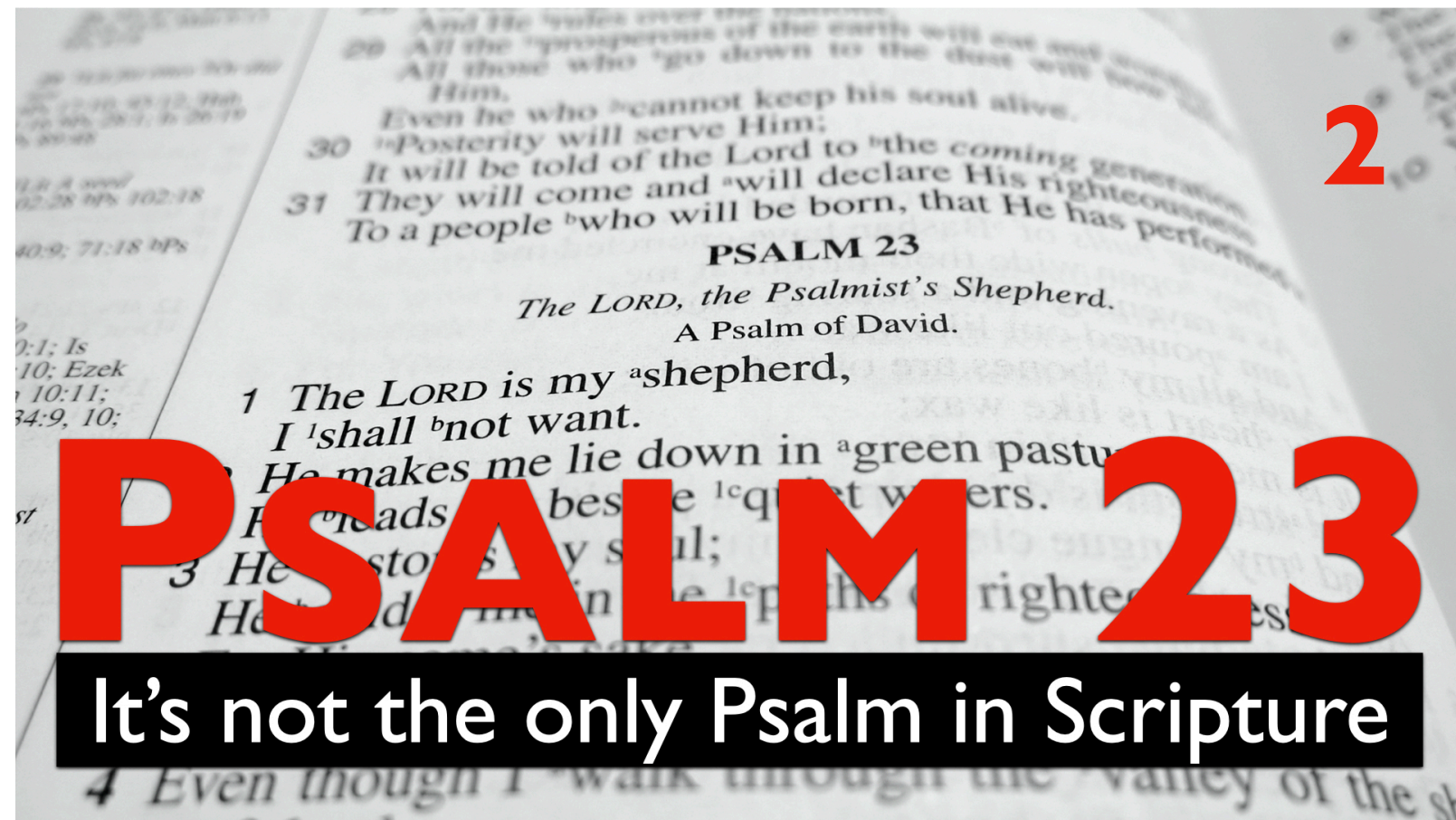
- Generally celebrate something **positive** • They reflect a time “when all is well”
- God’s work in the **physical** world • creating • sustaining • Ps 104
- God’s work in the **spiritual/redemptive** world • creating • sustaining • Ps 105
- Hymns invite participants — then & now — to a “concert of praise”
- **Individually** • Ps 103.1-2 • **Nationally** • Ps 118.1-2
- **Internationally** • Ps 117 • **Heavenly** • Ps 29 • **Creation** • Ps 148.1-6
- Hymns center on God’s **kingship** • Ps 47.1-2 • **unfailing love** • Ps 117.2



Types of Psalms

Laments in Psalms

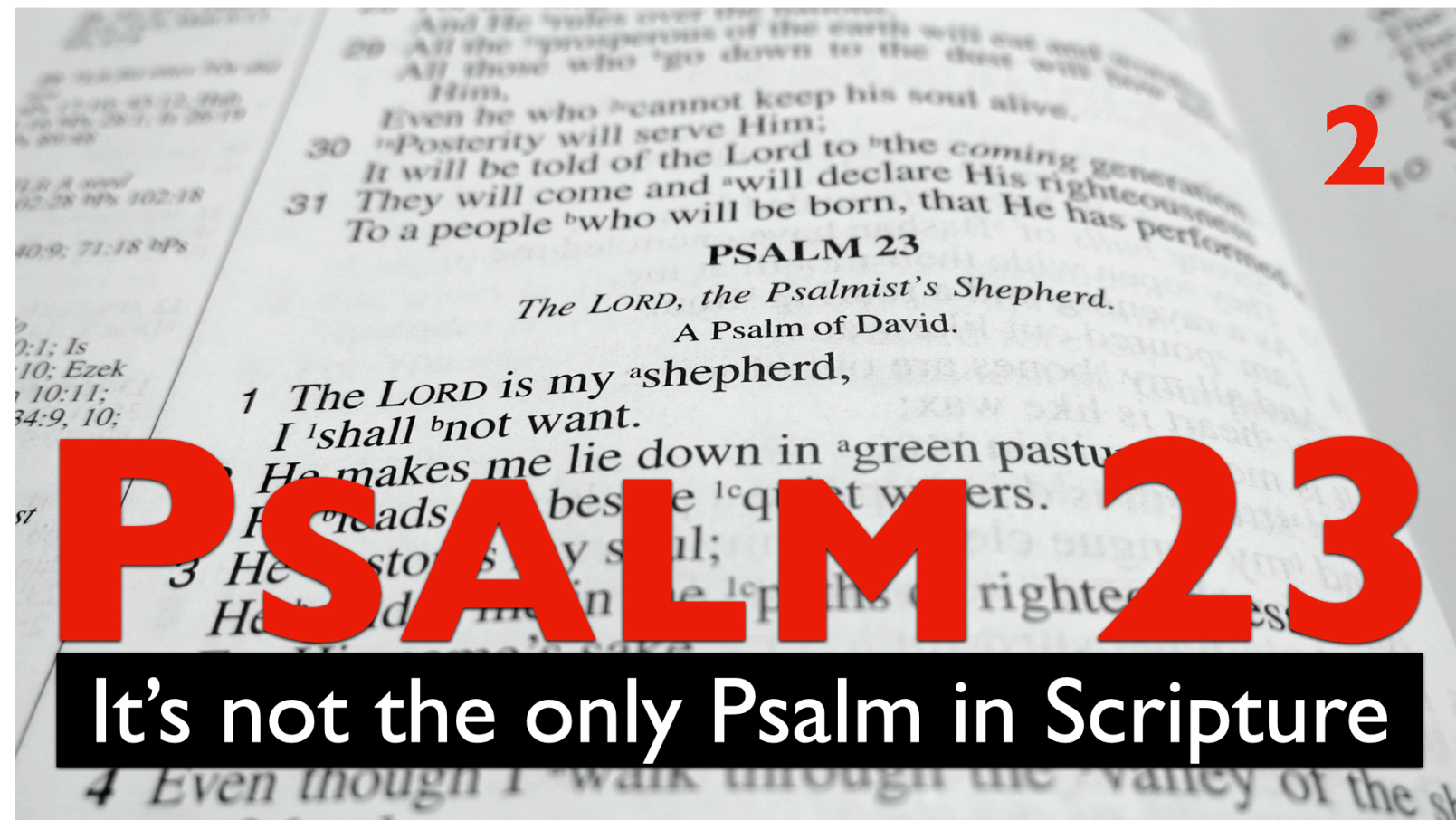
- Generally center on something **negative** • They reflect a time when all is **not** well
- “songs of disorientation” • **start** out of despair • confusion • fear • anger
- Laments **shift** from negative (despair) to positive (hope, praise)
- Laments ask **“who”** is listening • **“why”** is this happening • **“what”** resolves this
 - “who” often refers to God (Ps 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1)
 - “why” asks for the cause of trouble • often a complaint (Ps 3.1, 5.1, 10.1)
 - “what” the Psalmist asks of God • forgive (Ps 25.7, 79.9) • show mercy/heal (Ps 41.4) • proclaim innocence & defend (Ps 43.1) • deliver (Ps 31.15-16)
- Laments usually end in praise • assurance (Ps 6.9-10, 10.17)



Types of Psalms

Thanksgiving Songs in Psalms

- Thanksgiving songs celebrate God's work in redemption
- They usually do so **personally, not** generally (Ps 40.2-3)
- Thanksgiving Songs:
 - Acknowledge God's goodness & give thanks (Ps 34.1, 75.1)
 - Reflect gratitude for God's aid (Ps 116.1, 18.1)
 - Include a lament/trouble from which the Psalmist was delivered (Ps 18.4ff, 31ff)
 - Conclude with renewed thanksgiving and continued praise (now - Ps 66.20, future Ps 18.49ff) • invitation to others to praise God (Ps 118.29)



Types of Psalms

Confidence Songs in Psalms

- A middle ground between laments and songs of thanksgiving
- re lament: CS start with personal trouble, but they are **not** as intense/immediate
- re thanksgiving: CS center on God's **future** saving power
- **confidence** dominates/defines these Psalms • they **anticipate** thanksgiving
- CS express hope/faith, not victory • confidence that help **will come**
- Examples: Ps 27, 16.1, 27.1, 62.1ff, 23.1ff, 121, 125)

