

# 5786 Intermission with the Shepherd

פּ Peh Vov 86

*God's rod and staff comfort me.* Psalm 23 is the theme for 5786. It will also be year to let out the tent pegs and get ready for God to expand you as you spend time with the Shepherd, feeding on lush nutritious pasture and relaxing beside the cool still water.

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*Enlarge the site of your tent, stretch out the curtains of your dwellings, do not hold back. Lengthen your ropes and drive your stakes deep.- Isaiah 54:2 BSB*

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During the year 5786 it will be important to take a pause (פּוּגָה). This is a time to make sure you aren't getting worn out. It will be a time to work on our personal connection with God. Enlarging your tent, your personal space, is about taking personal time and God time. This will be a time to sit with the Shepherd and receive much needed nourishment and sustenance to keep going. Don't get hooked into picking up responsibilities that are not yours.

Codependents (those who struggle with saying *no*) need to be alert this year to not get wrangled into picking up jobs, tasks and favors for others that take away from their own self care and personal time with God. This is *not* a time to be over committed on errands that take us away from home. This is a time to *attend to our own tent* so to speak.

Do not let efforts empowered by a fleshly need for approval and acceptance derail you. Don't let guilt drive you to do more than what you should be doing. Take time to let the Spirit of the Lord refresh and recharge your inner man. This isn't a time to be running all over the place. It's a time to pause. And this pause is one that has a home focus.

Watch out for ways the enemy is working through the subtly of persuasion, guilt you into taking on projects or enterprises that are not yours. Don't let ego get in the way of wisdom. The enemy will be using tactics to try to derail and keep the saints

from communing with God and resting. He will try to convince us that if we avoid public involvement we will lose our progress and connection with others.

This isn't about self indulgence. I am talking about making sure we jealously guard our time with God this year because the enemy is going to try to pull us out of it and get us focused outside of home. Our own self care is important. Self indulgence is not the same as self care. Self care means you are making sure that your primary needs are taken care of. Things like eating, sleeping and activity is balanced.

In order for us to be healthy sheep feeding in the Lord's pasture we need to take time to spend with Him. The religious system prevents people from communing with God. It uses guilt, condemnation and shame to coerce people to doing activities and serving the system rather than spending time with our Shepherd Jesus. The religious system wants a sacrifice. God doesn't ask us to sacrifice our health and well being in order to please Him. We please Him because we are His. 5786 will be a time when holding firm boundaries to ensure personal time with Jesus, self and family will be important.

This is a time to have a special focus on our home. This is not to say that its okay to neglect home at other times. It's just that this year is a time to not let outside activity eclipse what God is doing at home.

The expansion God is bringing will happen as we take advantage of this pause. While we spend time one on one with Christ feeding on the goodness of His nature and resting beside the still waters we will experience everything He has for us this year. We are going to need the spiritual expansion gained this year as we go forward. If we don't take the time this year to be enlarged by God, by taking an intermission, we won't be as equipped as we need to, for going forward. For those who take a break and vacation at God's river side cafe this year they will be enlarged and equipped with everything they need for the journey ahead.