

# Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

By Ken Woodley

Life so often discomforts us. It just really does on some days. There is so much discombobulation all around, and periodically in our own lives. There's no getting away from it.

Thank goodness, then, for comfort food.

No, not meat loaf and mashed potatoes. That sort of comfort food offers but a brief respite. We enjoy the meal but its comforting effect soon wears off. Clouds re-gather to cover that spoonful of mental sunshine.

Thankfully, the Bible offers comfort food that provides transcendent sustenance to help us on our journey.

I've marked my New International Version Bible with yellow highlights throughout its pages, helping me find my spiritual comfort food right away. Bright yellow, like the sun shining through on a dark day. Like the persevering beam from a lighthouse above the rocky, wave-crashing shoal. Like a candle left burning on a window sill for a midnight traveler.

I've got these words highlighted in the first chapter of Joshua:

*“Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

Of course, Psalm 23 is there, highlighted in its entirety. And all of Psalm 121, as well:

*“The Lord watches over you—the Lord is your shade at your right hand;  
the sun will not harm you by day,  
nor the moon at night.*

*The Lord will keep you from all harm—  
he will watch over your life;  
the Lord will watch over your coming  
and going  
both now and forevermore.”*

I love the word “forevermore.” The thought of the Lord watching over me for more than forever provides great comfort. I feel that right now as I type the words.

The entire 35th chapter of Isaiah is brightly lit in my bible, too:

*“The burning sand will become a pool,  
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.*

*In the haunts where jackals once lay,  
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.  
And a highway will be there;  
it will be called the Way of Holiness...  
...Gladness and joy will overtake them,  
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.”*  
And this from the 66th chapter:  
*“As a mother comforts her child,  
so I will comfort you.”*

I could eat all of the comfort food from every grocery store and not feel half as much comfort as those words provide me.

The New Testament, obviously, is also fully stocked with tremendous spiritual comfort food.

*“Do not let your hearts be troubled,”* Jesus tells us at the outset of the 14th chapter of the Gospel of John, *“Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.”*

Jesus knows all about our human needs because he felt them deeply. That’s why, in his own hour of desperate suffering, he taught us to break bread and drink wine in remembrance of him.

Finally, I find it beautifully compelling that the last resurrection appearance account in John’s Gospel describes Jesus cooking breakfast on the beach for his disciples—unbeknownst to them—while they were out night fishing. The disciples, still feeling lost without Jesus, undoubtedly received even greater sustenance from his actual presence when they returned to shore.

Comfort food for them, but also for us today. The comfort of his presence. All we can eat. To our soul’s content.

