

Title: The LORD, my Shepherd

Text: Psalm 23

Date: November 9, 2009

Place: SGBC, Princeton, NJ

Psalm 23: 1: <<A Psalm of David.>> The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

I. The LORD, Jehovah the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ is the Shepherd Who Provides All For His Sheep

A. By God's grace, the Father has given ONE SHEPHERD over his people. (Ez 34) In Ezekiel, David is a type our Lord Jesus Christ. But as we see from our text, the Lord Jesus was David's shepherd.

Ezekiel 34:23: And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, *even* my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. 24: And David my servant *shall be* king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.

1. One shepherd over them--set up by God the Father.
2. One shepherd to feed his people.
3. One shepherd who is king over his people.
4. One shepherd who walked in the judgments of God, observed his statutes and did them as the representative of his people. And by whose Spirit, we are made willing to walk.

B. The Lord Jesus Christ is *God's* Shepherd.

Zechariah 13:7: Awake, O sword, against MY SHEPHERD against the man *that is* my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

1. God's shepherd who manifest the righteousness of God--declaring God just and the Justifier of all who are given faith in his great name.

2. The LORD of hosts, said, "Awake, O sword"--the sword of God's offended justice.

- God plunged his sword into his Shepherd that his sheep to free his sheep from the law
- There was none to help, none eye pitied thee, he was alone as He felt the piercing sword of God his Father
- He satisfied justice, propitiated God, for all whom he represented
- Now the LORD of hosts says that he will receive his little lambs--"I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."

C. The Lord Jesus Christ is the *Great* Shepherd of the sheep (Heb 13: 20.)

1. The Great Shepherd of the sheep because according to the everlasting covenant, God the Father hath raised him from the dead.

2. Great Shepherd of the sheep because he is a Man touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

3. Great Shepherd of the sheep because the Man, Christ Jesus, is God's fellow, equal with God, he is God and our Saviour.
4. The Great Shepherd of the sheep because as the GodMan he has perfect knowledge of all our needs and all power to protect and defend his sheep.
6. The Great Shepherd of the sheep because out of his fullness of grace he strengthens, guides, teaches and diligently keeps each of us, who are his sheep.

D. The Lord Jesus Christ is the *Good* Shepherd.

John 10: 11: I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12: But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13: The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. 14: I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. 15: As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16: And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

E. The Lord Jesus Christ is the *Chief* Shepherd (I Pet 5: 4.)

1. Called the Chief Shepherd in regards to his undershepherds--gospel preachers--which in providing our needs, the Chief Shepherd sends forth to:

I Peter 5: 2: Feed the flock of God...[Who] take the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3: Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

1 Peter 2:25: For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Can you say what David says?

Psalm 23: 1: <<A Psalm of David.>> The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.

II. OUR LORD MAKES US TO REST IN GREEN PASTURES

Psalm 23: 2: He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

A. The fullness of grace in Christ is our green pasture.

John 10:9: I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

1. He is our rest, where we lie down in safety.
 - No more oppressed into attempts at keeping the law--we have kept it by faith in him.
 - No more being tormented by the law for our sin--sin shall not have dominion over you, you are not under the law but under grace.

- No more being the slaves of sin--but servants of the Lord our Righteousness

Romans 6: 17: But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18: Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

B. His church is green pasture.

Ezekiel 34:14: I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and *in* a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel.

C. Notice that HE--the SHEPHERD--does all this for his sheep:

1. He MAKETH his sheep to lie down in his pasture

Ezekiel 34: 11: For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, *even* I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. 12: As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep *that are* scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

- Makes us willing in the day of his power to rest in him;
- He makes his sheep to lie down together in his church

- Knit us together in love in communion with our Shepherd and one another.
- Makes us rest in peace from wolves and bears.
- We have spiritual rest, ease, and safety.
- His pasture is "green"--fat pastures.

2. He LEADETH--continually--leadeth me beside the still waters. (The waters of his gospel.)

- Sheep are afraid to drink by loud, running, rapids. Those are the waters of this world's gospel. Shallow. Full of rocks. Full of water falls. Dangerous, noisy waters. Forceful waters. Sometimes shallow waters run violently and sometimes they dry up.

But remember Isaiah's gospel to Ahaz--"God will save in Immanuel"--he delivered that gospel beside the pool of Shiloah--the Lord called his gospel "the waters of Shiloah that go softly." Still waters run deep. There is no end to this water. It is always full.

- Our Shepherd leads--doesn't drive--you lead sheep, you drive goats.
Isaiah 40:11: He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.

- I like this. He is our Shepherd. But being a Man, touched with the feeling of our infirmities, he is the Lamb, one with his Sheep and knows exactly how to lead us.

Revelation 7:17: For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Psalm 3: He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

3. He RESTORETH-- my soul.

- We were ruined, undone, depraved, unwilling, unable, God-haters, and through the Holy Spirit he restored our souls when he created us anew in the new birth, stored us with faith and repentance, a new spirit that longs to follow after that which is good and right. And even now, when our soul grows sorrowful he revives it; when it is sinful he sanctifies it; when it is weak he strengthens it.

Illustration: Spurgeon--Sheep are dumb animals--they stray, they wander. There was a man who was a shepherd to sheep on his father's farm, later God called him to be a pastor. The man said of the two kinds of sheep, he found believer's to be far more sheepish.

O to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrained to be
Let Thy goodness like a fetter
Bind my wandering heart to thee
Prone to wonder, Lord I feel it
Prone to leave the God I love,
Here's my heart, O take and seal it
Seal it for thy courts above

- He RESTORETH my soul, HE LEADETH in paths of righteousness. THE SHEPHERD DOES IT! It is through the Great Shepherd that the God of peace makes the believer: Hebrews 13: 21...perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight,

4. FOR HIS NAME'S SAKE

What a word of comfort! The Lord is so zealous for his name's sake that he honors his name for all those to whom he gives his name. And for the glory of his great name he restores our soul and leads us in right paths. That is guaranteed assurance to every believer.

III. OUR LORD WILL NEVER ALLOW US TO PERISH

NOT IN THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH

Psalm 23: 4: 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 they comfort me.

B. Sometimes scripture refers to the "shadow of death" as troublous times in this life.

Psalm 107: 14: He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder.

1. Outside of Christ all is death and all are dead--Ezekiel's valley of dry bones.
2. We are compassed about on every side by the shadow of death--evil itself.
3. We often pass through the dark valley of the shadow of death in many trials.

Illustration: I think of the disciples as the Lord told them that he was about to depart from them and go to the cross. Peter was about to come into a dark valley of trial. Our Great Shepherd turned to them all and said:

John 14: 1: Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2: In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3: And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

C. When we think of the "valley of the shadow of death" we most often think of that hour to which God has appointed all men to die.

1. But those who have Christ for their Shepherd have no reason to fear.

Hebrews 2: 14: Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15: And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

I Corinthians 15: 51: Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52: In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53: For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. 54: So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying

that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. 55: O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? 56: The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. 57: But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Psalm 23: 4: 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--shepherds tools--the rod of thy word--the rod of Christ's strength and the staff of thy promises and provisions--They comfort me. THOU ART WITH ME!

Spurgeon--Some one has said that when there is a shadow there must be light somewhere, and so there is. Death stands by the side of the highway in which we have to travel, and the light of heaven shining upon him throws a shadow across our path; let us then rejoice that there is a light beyond.

CHRIST IS OUR LIGHT EVEN THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH. AND HE WONT' ALLOW US TO PERISH IN THE MIDST OF OUR ENEMIES

Psalm 23: 5: Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

A. In the wilderness--

Psalm 78:19: Yea, they spake against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness? 20: Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? can he provide flesh for his people? 24:...[He] rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. 25: Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

1. Their clothes never wore out and their feet didn't swell for forty years
2. He led them by a pillar of fire at night and a cloud by day.
3. He delivered them from all their enemies right into the promised land.

B. THOU PREPAREST A TABLE BEFORE ME.

1. Christ is that Smitten Rock from whom flows the Water of Life.
 2. Christ is that Bread of which a man eats and lives forever.
 3. His righteousness is our garments.
 4. His gospel protects our feet.
 5. He sends forth the Holy Spirit to guide us by day and by night into all truth.
 6. He covers our head in the oil of gladness.
 7. Our cup continually runs over with all spiritual blessings.
- HE SPREADS THIS FEAST OF FAT THINGS, OF WINE ON THE LEES, IN THIS WORLD RIGHT IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL OUR ENEMIES.

C. WHAT DO WE SAY TO THESE THINGS?

Psalm 23: 6: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way
When sorrows like sea-billows roll
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say
It is well, it is well with my soul!

Tho Satan should buffet
Tho trials should come
Let this blest assurance control
MY SHEPHERD hath regarded my helpless estate
And hath shed his own blood for my soul!

IT IS WELL, IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL!

AMEN!