

Psalm 23

The Lord Is My Shepherd



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The LORD is my shepherd

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



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his tells us how blessed we are to have the Lord as our shepherd. David knew all about being a shepherd. When he was a young boy he worked as a shepherd and kept his Father's sheep. He even fought off a wild bear and a lion by himself to keep his sheep safe. David was later promoted to being the King of Israel which was called being a shepherd over the Lord's people. So with this in mind it's wonderful that David called the Lord his shepherd. David showed great care in protecting the sheep out in the field. How much more safe are those who are watched over and protected by the Lord of glory!

Jesus is called the Good Shepherd. He knows his own sheep by name. He calls them out and they follow Him. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. The hireling who does not own the sheep runs away at

the first sign of trouble. When the wolf comes, the hireling is no more! It's only the Good Shepherd who will stand His ground and protect the sheep.

Knowing the Lord as our Shepherd gives us more security than anything else we could possibly imagine. The Lord Jesus is not just a shepherd over our bodies, but more importantly He's a shepherd over our soul as well. If we have faith in the Lord Jesus we'll hear the voice of the Good Shepherd calling our name and will one day be safe with him in the everlasting pastures above. Jesus is a shepherd over us, not just in this world but also in the world to come. Let us then boldly say with a grateful heart: the LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

Beside The Still Waters

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



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he Good Shepherd knows what's best for the sheep. The Good Shepherd doesn't just let them wander around in dry barren areas looking for food, but leads them beside still waters and makes them to lay down in green pastures.

This is the way of the Lord Jesus Christ with our souls. His sheep lie down in the green pastures of God's Word and feed on it by faith. Also He leads His sheep beside the still waters of God's Holy Spirit which flow into their soul. This is the spiritual water of which those who drink of it will never thirst again, but it will be a well of water in them "springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14).

The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest (Isaiah 57:20). How much different are the righteous who are led by the Good Shepherd beside the

still waters. Our God is a God of peace and He blesses His people with peace.

*Sometimes mid scenes of deepest gloom,
Sometimes where Eden's bowers bloom,
By waters still, over troubled sea,
Still 'tis His hand that leadeth me.*

*He leadeth me, He leadeth me
By His own hand He leadeth me,
His faithful follower I would be
For by His hand He leadeth me.*

Restoring My Soul

Psalm 23:3 He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.



Sheep are very prone to going astray and they're also not very good at finding their

way back to the right path. Also if one sheep goes astray there's many others who are likely to follow it! We are all like sheep who have gone astray, each one to our own way. The Good Shepherd knows how easily we go astray and He's well able to find us and bring us back. Jesus said He's come "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

We all get very upset about losing a few dollars. How upset would we be if our soul was lost? We all need our soul to be restored to God. The Good Shepherd restores our soul and the way He does it is by leading us in the paths of righteousness. There's not one person in the whole world that can restore their own soul to God. The Good Shepherd does the leading and the restoring. Jesus said without me you can do nothing

(John 15:5). Let's pray that the Lord would lead us in the right path and restore our soul, because He's well able to do it and it was for this reason that He came into our world.

When we're restored and led into the right path the glory is all His. He does it for His own name's sake. "Not unto us O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory" (Psalm 115:1). Let's give the Lord all the glory which is due to His wonderful and precious name. We should give thanks to our Good Shepherd who brings us back to God, leading us each step of the way until we finally reach the happy shore of heaven.

Fear No Evil

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.



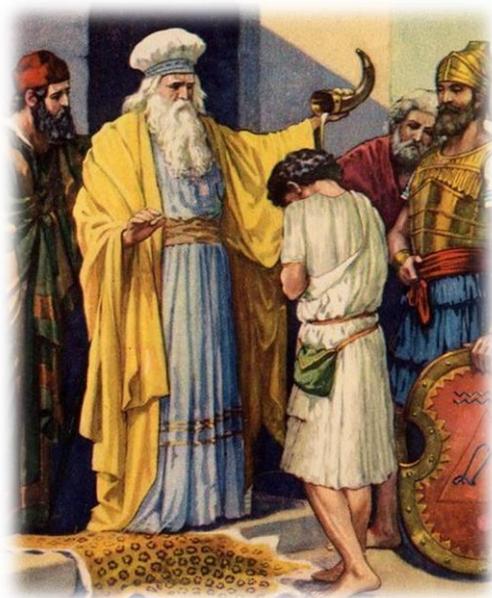
For every step we take in this world they're all in the shadow of death. Like a shadow, death stalks our every step. None of us knows if our next step will be our last one. However even in the shadow of this evil enemy the Good Shepherd is still with His sheep. Our Good Shepherd will fight off every enemy that comes against His sheep, even conquering death itself. For all those who've placed their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ there should be no fear in death because the sting has been removed. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:55-57). Our Lord Jesus Christ is the death of death.

We can be sure that we're more than conquerors through Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:37-38). As we walk through this dark valley we can say confidently with David, I will fear no evil. Not I might not, or I should not, but I *will not* fear! If our Lord has disarmed all principalities and powers and even conquered death itself, what enemy is there left that can harm us?

As we walk through the valley of the shadow of death our Lord's staff and rod are there not to harm us, but to comfort us. Even if His rod should bring chastisement and correction to the sheep when they go astray, even this is really a comfort because it protects them and prevents them from going down a way which would destroy them. Let's give thanks to that all wise Shepherd of our souls who's well able to lead us through the valley of the shadow of death and beyond, up into the hills of Zion!

Blessed In The Battle

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.



Imagine as you're walking along, you look up and suddenly ten thousand enemy troops start swarming down the hill. They have you in sight and they're closing fast.

You can even start to feel the ground thunder with their approach! Just as the enemy is only seconds away you hear the voice of the Good Shepherd saying to you: be not troubled, all is well, for I Am with you. You then notice a feasting table spread out with cups running over and the Good Shepherd tells you to sit down and rest. As you sit down at the table, the enemy in all his fury rushes past swinging wildly, but not a single blow hits the mark! Again and again the enemy rains down his blows, but yet you are completely unharmed and at peace in the middle of this fierce battle! The enemy screams with rage while you're calmly sitting down in

peace and feasting at the table of God's blessings, even in the very presence of your enemy, safe in the company of the Good Shepherd. Even if our enemies should destroy our body we know that they cannot touch our soul which is safe in the hands of our Good Shepherd.

Not only do we have the blessing of feasting at the Lord's table, but our head is anointed with oil as well. This is also sent to comfort us in our journey through the valley of the shadow of death. In Scripture the anointing oil is a way of showing God's seal on us. It's a real blessing to know that the Lord has set his seal on us and He knows who are truly His, as opposed to those pretend sheep who are really wolves in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15).

God gives us such blessings that our cup runs over. We're blessed to be a blessing to others. We should use God's blessings to us in such a way that as our cup runs over, it then falls into someone else's cup so that they will be blessed as well!

Goodness and Mercy

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.



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he Christian life consists of both goodness and mercy. These two travel with us on our journey through the valley of this world and lead us up to the gates of Zion. God is good in His mercy and merciful in His goodness. We wouldn't get anywhere on our journey without God's goodness and mercy.

In the Lord Jesus Christ we see both God's goodness and His mercy. God is good to us in sending His Son Jesus to die for our sins, even though we didn't deserve it. Who wouldn't want to turn from their sin knowing how good God has been to us in sending the Lord of glory to die for the sons of earth? The goodness of God leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). God also shows His mercy to us by forgiving all those who truly trust the Lord Jesus for forgiveness. Our Lord Jesus Christ became

"sin for us... that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). When we place our faith in the blood of Jesus' atoning death on the cross, there's no end to God's mercy towards us. It follows us all the days of our life and will surely lead us through the gates of heaven.

His mercy is new every morning, great is His faithfulness. Our Good Shepherd has promised to never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5), and so His goodness and mercy follows us all the days of our life. Jesus said He has gone to prepare a place for us such that where He is there we may be also. He also said He would come again and receive us to Himself (John 14:2-3). This is the fulfilment of David's request to "dwell in the house of the Lord forever". Like David we can also look forward to dwelling in the house of the Lord if we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and trust Him for salvation. Let's place our hope in the Lord Jesus Christ such that we may all gather together above to praise Him, to behold His glory which His Father has given Him, for His Father loved Him before the foundation of the world.

Psalm 130:7 Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption.

Hebrews 13:20-21 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

"Praise Him, Praise Him", by Fanny Crosby

*Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus, our blessed Redeemer!
Sing, O Earth, His wonderful love proclaim!
Hail Him! hail Him! highest archangels in glory;
Strength and honour give to His holy Name!
Like a shepherd, Jesus will guard His children,
In His arms He carries them all day long:*

*Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus, our blessed Redeemer!
For our sins He suffered, and bled, and died.
He our Rock, our hope of eternal salvation,
Hail Him! hail Him! Jesus the Crucified.
Sound His praises! Jesus who bore our sorrows,
Love unbounded, wonderful, deep and strong.*

*Praise Him! Praise Him! Jesus, our blessed Redeemer!
Heavenly portals loud with hosannas ring!
Jesus, Saviour, reigneth forever and ever.
Crown Him! Crown Him! Prophet, and Priest, and King!
Christ is coming! over the world victorious,
Power and glory unto the Lord belong.*

*Praise Him! Praise Him!
Tell of His excellent greatness.
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Ever in joyful song!*

Short Biography of Fanny Crosby

Fanny Crosby could well be one of the most prolific hymn writers in history. Although blinded by an incompetent doctor at only six weeks of age, she still wrote over 8,000 hymns. Talking about her blindness she said:

"It seemed intended by the blessed providence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dispensation. If perfect earthly sight were offered me tomorrow I would not accept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been distracted by the beautiful and interesting things about me."

During her lifetime Fanny Crosby was one of the best known women in the United States. To this day the vast majority of hymnals contain her work.

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