

One of the best known and best loved Psalms is “The LORD is My Shepherd,” Psalm 23.

Written by King David, it reflects the faithful covenant love of God toward his people. It’s a very intimate, personal Psalm.

As you sit and hear and read this devotion, take a few moments again to hear what it means to have the Lord as your Shepherd.

Sing stanza 1 of The King of Love My Shepherd Is

**1. The King of love my shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am his
And he is mine forever.**

“The LORD is my shepherd”: You and I have a personal relationship with God. We have been bought by the blood of our Good Shepherd, Jesus, and because of that we belong to him.

Sing stanza 2

**2. Where streams of living water flow,
My ransomed soul he leadeth
And, where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.**

“I shall not want”: You and I trust our Shepherd will take care of us. In all time and circumstances, He knows what we need.

“He maketh me to lie down in green pastures”: Our Shepherd knows what it’s like to give us rest--true rest. With him watching over us, we don’t have to be afraid.

“He leadeth me beside the still waters”: With all the rushing around we do in our lives, it’s nice to take some quiet time alone with loved ones or friends. How good also to be still in the presence of God and know His care and the life giving power of His Word.

Sing stanza 3

**3. Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love he sought me,
And on his shoulder gently laid,
And home rejoicing brought me.**

“He restoreth my soul”: One of the most loving aspects of a shepherd’s work is the fact that he searches out the lost sheep and brings them home safely. How many times have you and I been lost in the temporary insanity of sin, the depths of guilt and despair, the pain of being alone, only to have our shepherd reach out to us with the loving words of the Gospel, to listen to us with the honest ears of a fellow believer, to say, *“I am here, and I love you and accept you for my own sake.”*

“He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name sake.” How gracious our God is. After we have failed Him and fallen, after we have broken His heart and our own, He shows and gives us His righteousness in Jesus our Lord. He has mercy on us not only because we need it so desperately, but so that others may learn what kind of God he is, too.

Sing stanza 4

**4. In death’s dark vale I fear no ill,
With thee, dear Lord, beside me
Thy rod and staff my comfort still;
Thy cross before to guide me.**

“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.” You and I walk through some scary places in our lives: hospital rooms, funeral parlors, gravesides, divorce courts, family squabbles, depression. What joy to know that even when we are most alone, the Lord is with us. Jesus passed through the valley of death’s shadow for us, so that he could also pass through it with us, as well.

Sing stanza 5

**5. Thou spreadst a table in my sight;
Thy unction grace bestoweth;
And, oh what transport of delight
From thy pure chalice floweth!**

“Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of my enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over.” There is a place where God desires more than anything else to feed and nurture us, to call us His own lambs, to heal our wounds and hurts from the battles of life. It’s called worship. At the communion rail we are fed the very Body and Blood of Jesus. We are reminded we are His in Holy Baptism. God has given us His promise, and that’s for keeps.

Sing stanza 6

- 6. And so, through the length of days,
Thy goodness faileth never.
Good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
Within thy house forever.**

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” Because of Jesus, we need never doubt that God’s house is our home. We are his people, forever and always. He is our Good Shepherd. For what more could we ask?

The Good Shepherd Prayer

Dearest Jesus, You are our Good Shepherd.

You promise that nothing can take us out of Your hand.

We thank you for Your great love for us, and for all people.

We thank you that you laid down Your life, so that we can know the sure hope of heaven.

Be near us, Lord Jesus, as we journey through life.

When life gets overwhelming, restore our souls through Your Word of comfort, faithfulness, and assurance.

When we grow weary, lead us to the green pastures of rest in Your promises.

Daily we ask you to speak peace to us.

Daily we ask You to lead us back to the quiet waters.

You have called us by name in the waters of Baptism.

You have washed away our sins.

You have given us to drink of Your Spirit.

Your rod protects us from our enemies.

Your staff counts us as members of Your flock. Give us comfort and hope in troubled times.

Surely You are a good and loving Shepherd.

We live, rest, and serve in Your presence, and in Your care.

We ask, dear Shepherd, that you would bless Your Word in our lives in this week to come.

We ask you to bless our witness and service in the name of Jesus, our Good Shepherd, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

We ask these things, trusting you will hear us for Your own name's sake. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

One more prayer concerning the Corona virus:

Spare you people, O Lord! Preserve us from this and every illness. Give healing and strength to those who are sick, protect those who care for them, and grant us steady minds and calm hearts in the face of fear. You have borne our infirmities in this human flesh and purchased us with Your own blood. Keep us in this faith and embolden us in love, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

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