

4 Things The Lord Does For Me

PSALM 23:1-3 – NKJV - The LORD the Shepherd of His People

A Psalm of David - 23 The LORD *is my shepherd*; I shall not want. ²He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness

INTRODUCTION

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD – PAST

I realize this morning that there is **nothing new** that I can say about this text.

- That is not even my desire, in fact.

But **if I can remind you of *some old and precious truths***, and also bring to your remembrance **some sweet experiences with the Lord from your past**, then we will certainly **profit** from our topic for today.

If the sentence, ***“The Lord is my shepherd,”*** **is true** of each one of us, then **this guarantees us certain privileges**.

- First and foremost, **we must recognize that the shepherd was *the guide of his flock***.

The sheep never thought of *going before him*; it would have been abnormal in nature **for the sheep to go first**, and **for the shepherd to follow**.

- They had **no need** to know the way across the **trackless desert** -
- It was enough for them that **the shepherd knew it**.
- They **didn’t need to know where the green pastures still remained** throughout the droughts of summer...
- They **did not concern themselves** with where they might find **the quiet resting places** that they might lie down.

It was sufficient for the sheep that the shepherd knew,

- All they had to do was to **patiently follow** where he led the way.

As they patiently followed their shepherd,

- The sheep had no distractions to worry about...
- They were happy that they were provided for...
- They grazed as they went along the way,
- Not knowing – and Not wanting to know – Where they were going.
- They were content because their shepherd led the way.

We need to take a moment this morning and consider how the Lord is our guide.

Look at the past,

- And note how He has guided you;
- How very little we have had to deal with it after all!

- We have struggled - We have worried - We have been discontent -
- We have had anger against the working of providence or the protective care of God.....

Certainly, as we consider all things past, we must acknowledge that there is far more of the hand of God in our life than there is of our own hand.

As we consider our personal lives up to this point, from childhood to youth to adulthood –

- We realize what strange paths some of us have taken.
- We find ourselves amazed at how we came to where we are in life.
- If we had been told years ago that we would be found here today –
- In the circumstances in which we are now found -

We could not have believed it!!!

There have been times in our past history when it has seemed as if –

- A single straw might decide our destiny.
- We were at the crossroads
- To turn to the left might have led us into endless sins and sorrows
- But we were guided in the opposite direction
- We have been made to walk beside the still waters
- To lie down in green pastures.

We can truly say that we have been divinely led until now

- **Although the journey has been like that of the children of Israel in the wilderness –**
- **In and out, backwards and forwards, progressing and retreating, and often standing still...**

Yet **the Lord has led us** the right way up to this **present moment**, and we can truthfully say:

- Still WE HAVE found that promise good
- Which **Jesus ratified** with blood;
- **Still is He faithful, wise, and just.....**

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD – PRESENT

You know, it is easy to say that **the Lord has been our Shepherd in the past**, but it may **not** be so easy to say that **He is our Shepherd in the present**, and **will be our Shepherd in the future**.

Yet we have **nothing to do with the future** except to -

Follow in the path of **humble trust in the Lord**, and of **obedience to His word**.

- It is not for me to sit down and calculate **my future wants**.
- I am bound to **live in simple dependence** upon God.

If I am in any dilemma, any difficulty, or do not know which way I should take...

- **The best thing for me to do is to go and tell my Heavenly Father**
- And **ask Him** to direct me.

I must remember that I am not my own shepherd,

- ***I am not to guide myself*** any more than the sheep is to guide itself...
- But I am to **look to my great Shepherd**,
- I am to **watch for indications of his will**
- I am to receive those indications either **from his Word**, or from **the leading of His Spirit...**

And then that **I am to follow where God leads me.....**

The Lord is my Shepherd – past, present, and future!!!!

HE MAKES ME LIE DOWN IN GREEN PASTURES

First: As my Shepherd, the first thing the Lord makes me do is to lie down in green pastures.

Literally, He makes me lie down in grassy homesteads...

- **Simply put, we are well placed.**
- We have the supports and comforts of **this life from God's** good hand
- We receive our daily needs from **Him** as our Heavenly Father.

Not only does this speak of provision and peace, it also speaks of abundance.

- It is not one piece of pasture ground that is spoken of, but pastures.

There is no scant, (barely sufficient or adequate) supply!

- Here, **in God's good pastures**, you will find grace for all times.
- Here, **in God's good pastures**, you will find mercy for your mistakes!

Not only does our Good Shepherd make provision for us, He performs as much as He promises and **provides in abundance!**

HE LEADS ME BESIDE STILLWATERS

Second, as my Shepherd, **the Lord leads me beside still waters**.

This speaks of refreshment.

It is important to note that the sheep of the Lord are well guided, well led.

Those that feed on God's goodness must **follow His direction**...

- **He leads them** by His providence, by His word, and by His Spirit.

Though we may not know what tomorrow holds, **we do know Who holds tomorrow**...

- And if He is truly leading us,
- Then we can rest in the fact that He will lead us into green pastures of provision and by still waters of refreshment.

The joys of the Holy Spirit are these still waters, by which saints are led...
Streams which flow from the fountain of living waters and make glad the city of our God!

It is important to note, this morning,

- That when sheep are thirsty,
- They become restless and set out in search of water to **satisfy their thirst**.
- **If not led to the good water supplies** of clean, pure water,
- They will often **end up drinking from the polluted pot holes**
- They may pick up parasites that **cause them to become sick and weak**.

In precisely the same manner, Jesus, our Good Shepherd, made it clear

- That **thirsty souls** of men and women can only be fully satisfied
- When their capacity and thirst for spiritual life
- **Is fully quenched by drawing on Him alone.**

Matthew 5:6 – Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled[satisfied].

The difficulty in all of this is that men and women who are “thirsty” for God –

- They are **searching and seeking** to fill that void in **their lives** –
- **Often are unsure of where to look** or really **what they are looking for**.

Consequently, their inner spiritual capacity for God and divine life in their dilemma –

- They will **drink from any dirty pool** to try to **satisfy their thirst for fulfillment**.

I've got good news this morning!

- That for which **you hunger and thirst** is right here right now!
- If you are thirsty in your spirit, **Jesus is here to quench that thirst!**

HE RESTORES MY SOUL

Third, as the Good Shepherd, **the Lord restores my soul.**

In other words,

He revives it and reinvigorates it when *it is exhausted and weary*.

This statement implies the quickening and invigorations of the soul in seasons of depression and exhaustion.

Psalm 42:11 David cries out,

Why are you **cast down**, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.

It is likely that only *those who are intimately acquainted with sheep and their habits* fully understand **the significance of a “cast down” sheep**.

This is an **old English shepherd’s term** for a sheep that has turned over on its back and cannot get up again by itself.

A **“cast down” sheep is a very pathetic sight** – it is in a *completely helpless* state.

- Lying on its back, its feet in the air, it flays away frantically struggling to stand up, **without success**.
- **If the shepherd does not arrive** on the scene within a reasonably short time, **the sheep will die**.

With Christ as my Shepherd,

- **When I find myself** in a state of *depression and exhaustion*, **when I am “cast down”** and in a helpless state of mind and being,
- **He comes along and gently restores my soul.**
- **He restores my soul** when I suffer from my inherent liabilities.

He restores my soul when I am weak and weary.

- When I find myself **not trusting God**,
- **He gently restores my soul to trust Him.**
- **He restores** me when I wander.
- **He recovers** me when I am sick.
- **He revives** me when I am faint.

- Thank God there has been **revealed to us a love which is not measured by our merits**, and which our needs cannot exhaust...

A love which bears with us tenderly and patiently in the midst of all unfaithfulness
CLOSE :

HE LEADS ME IN THE PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Fourth: Finally this morning, as the Good Shepherd the fourth thing the Lord does for us is He leads us in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

He leads me in the paths of pleasantness and peace to magnify His name as a gracious and merciful God.

A path is nothing else but an open and beaten way or tract to walk in.

- There are two sorts of paths where we may walk:

There is the way of man,

- Which is a crooked path that will not lead us to heaven.

There is the way of God,

- Which is a straight path of purity of lifestyle, mind and motive –
- A path of righteousness that will lead you to heaven.
- There is comfort contained in the simple words, “He leadeth me.”

PRAISE TEAM:

There is a divine hand and purpose in all that happens to us.

- He leads in righteousness.
- He has an infinite reason for all He does.
- And note, He LEADS us,
- He does not follow us.
- He goes before and makes clear the pathway...