

The King of Love My Shepherd Is

(a rendition of Psalm 23)

①

The King of love my Shepherd is,
My good he makes his own;
He gives me all I truly need,
His peace, his rest, his Son.

②

Where streams of living waters run,
My thirsty heart he leads;
And where the richest pastures grow,
My hungry mind he feeds.

③

In pride and foolishness I stray,
And leave you, bold to roam;
Yet out you come to find me lost,
And gently lead me home.

④

In places where Death shadows me,
O Lord, you're by my side;
Your cross as staff, my comfort still,
The fortress where I hide.

⑤

Your table spread within their sight
My foes refuse to taste;
But sweet I feed upon the hope:
To see you face to face.

⑥

Your mercy walks me through the years,
Your goodness trails my days;
Forever in your house I dwell,
With everlasting praise!

Old Orchard Church

July 26, 2009

10:15 to 11:45 a.m.



I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them.

I the LORD have spoken.

—Ezekiel 34:22-24

Celebrating Jesus Christ, The Good Shepherd

He who calls us His sheep,
Promises to be our Shepherd.

Our Shepherd is good.
Our Shepherd is God.

The Holy One of Israel,
The One who never sleeps nor slumbers,
Will surely protect us from our foes:
Though they attack and drag us down,
They shall never ruin us.

Our Shepherd's grace and kindness will feed us;
Come, let us graze in Messiah's pasture,
Let us drink his cool water.
Safe in him, we shall flourish—
Even in a valley full of the shadows of death.
Secure in his love, we shall praise him,
And the world will see in us
The salvation of our God!

Scripture Readings

Old Testament Lesson:

Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-25, 27b-28

Gospel Reading: John 10:1-16



Sermon

“Worship and the Piercing, Burning Injustices of Life”

Psalm 73

Ron Lutjens, senior pastor, preaching

Fragile Sheep

The following was written by a Christian who was a sheep rancher for eight years.

During my own years as a keeper of sheep, perhaps some of the most poignant memories are wrapped around the commingled anxiety of keeping a count of my flock and repeatedly saving and restoring cast sheep [i.e. lost sheep]. It is not easy to convey on paper the sense of this ever present danger. Often I would go out early and merely cast my eye across the sky. If I saw the black-winged buzzards circling overhead in their long slow spirals anxiety would grip me. Leaving everything else I would immediately go out into the rough wild pastures and count the flock to make sure every one was well and fit and able to be on its feet.

This is part of the pageantry and drama depicted for us in the magnificent story of the ninety and nine sheep with one astray. There is the Shepherd's deep concern; his agonizing search; his longing to find the missing one; his delight in restoring it not only to its feet but also to the flock as well as to himself.

Again and again I would spend hours searching for a single sheep that was missing. Then more often than not I would see it at a distance, down on its back, lying helpless. At once I would start to run toward it—hurrying as fast I could—for every minute was critical. Within me there was a mingled sense of fear and joy: fear it might be too late; joy that it was found at all.

As soon as I reached the cast ewe my very first impulse was to pick it up. Tenderly I would roll the sheep over on its side. This would relieve the pressure of gases in the rumen. If she had been down for long I would have to lift her onto her feet. Then straddling the sheep with my legs I would hold her erect, rubbing her limbs to restore the circulation to her legs. This often took quite a little time. When the sheep started to walk again she often just stumbled, staggered and collapsed in a heap once more.

All the time I worked on the cast sheep I would talk to it gently, “When are you going to learn to stand on your own feet?” –“I’m so glad I found you in time—you rascal!”

And so the conversation would go. Always couched in language that combined tenderness and rebuke, compassion and correction.

Little by little the sheep would regain its equilibrium. It would start to walk steadily and surely. By and by it would dash away to rejoin the others, set free from its fears and frustrations, given another chance to live a little longer.

All of this pageantry is conveyed to my heart and mind when I repeat the simple statement, “**He restores my soul!**”

—Phillip Keller in *A Shepherd Looks At Psalm 23* (1970)

