**The LORD is my Shepherd**

**Psalm 23: 1**

**Review**: Psalm 23 is David's testimony of the faithfulness of God to his soul. He writes it when he is old and looking back upon a life shepherded by his God. He can testify after years of experience, “The LORD is my shepherd”

The LORD had chosen David to be His own. The LORD had given Himself to be David's substitute. He had purchased him and reconciled him to the Father in heaven.

The LORD had sought out David and found him even when David had not been seeking him. The LORD had come to David, where he was, and saved him, as he was - a sinner!

David sets forth before us the One he calls – **The LORD**. He is introduced to us so that we may come to know Him as David knew Him. He is also revealing Himself - through inspiration – so that we may know **the LORD** through this Psalm.

**The LORD** is the English translation of the Hebrew word - Jehovah – which means **the self-sufficient master of all.**

**Psalm 83:18** – “That men may know that thou, whose name alone is **JEHOVAH**, art **the most high over all the earth**.”

This is the Master of the universe - the Ruler of all things. This is the one “**Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand**”, who has “**meeted out heaven with a span**”, and who has “**weighed the mountains in a scale and the hills in a balance**” **Isaiah 40:12**.

This is the one before whom “**the nations as a drop in a bucket**” and as “**nothing**” before Him – **Isaiah 40:17**.

This is the one who has “**created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: He calleth them by names by the greatness of His might**” – **Isaiah 40:26**.

The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, yet in this Psalm **the LORD** is set before us as the Shepherd who carries His own sheep in His bosom.

David spoke of Him as “my Shepherd”.

**The One so mighty is as compassionate as He is powerful!**

He is no hireling shepherd, who flees at the first sign of danger. He is the Almighty One – the One who is mighty to save – who is also ready to shepherd his flock with compassion.

The Lord’s sheep discover that the omnipotence of God is a great comfort to their hearts. It draws them to the heart of their great Shepherd.

**1. Like David, the Lord’s sheep belong to their Shepherd – the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**First: They are His by as a gift from the Father to the Son** - **John 10:27-\*29** – “(27) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (28) And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. \*(29) My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.”

**Second: They are His by direct purchase - John10:14-18** – “(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. (17) Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. (18) No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

**Third: They are His by His own gathering and accumulating - Luke 15:3-7** – “(3) And he spake this parable unto them, saying, (4) What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? (5) And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. (6) And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. (7) I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”

**2. The Shepherd calls His sheep His Flock for several reasons.**

They are called His flock because they are separated from the rest of world and made the property of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**First: We were separated in eternity when we were chosen before the foundation of the world** -- **Ephesians 1:3-5** – “(3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: (4) **According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: (5) Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,”

**Second: We were separated when the Lord Jesus Christ purchased us on Calvary's Cross -- Hebrews 10:10-14** – “(10) By the which will we are **sanctified** (i.e. set apart for God and His purposes) through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. (11) And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: (12) But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; (13) From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. (14) For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are **sanctified** (i.e. set apart for God and His purposes).”

**Note**: The word sanctified is used in this text to declare that those for whom Jesus Christ died were set apart as LORD’s possession and for the LORD’s purposes.

**Third: We were separated by the ministry of the Holy Spirit when we were convicted and brought to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ -- II Thessalonians 2:13** – “But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation **through sanctification of the Spirit** (i.e. set apart for God and His purposes by the work of Holy Spirit) and belief of the truth:”

**Note**: These three text – **Ephesians 1:3-5, Hebrews 10:10-14**, and **II Thessalonians 2:13**, teach us that all three persons of the Godhead – the Trinity – are involved in our being part of the Lord’s Flock.

**Note**: There are many who teach that (1) God loves the whole world and wants them all saved, (2) that Jesus Christ died for the whole world and wants them all saved, but (3) the Holy Spirit is not convincing the whole world – nor is He regenerating the whole world.

This teaching reveals disunity in the Godhead with at least one of the three working in conflict with the other two.

This cannot be! All three persons of the Godhead are working together to accomplish the salvation of sinners.

**3. The LORD – the great Jehovah acts in behalf of his sheep as their Shepherd.**

In his ministry as shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ is involved in gathering, caring, comforting, leading, tenderness, and protecting His sheep.

**Ezekiel 34:11-16** – “(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. (13) And **I will bring them** out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and **will bring them** to their own land, and **feed them** upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. (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. (15) **I will feed my flock**, and **I will cause them to lie down**, saith the Lord GOD. (16) **I will seek** that which was lost, and **bring again** that which was driven away, and **will bind up** that which was broken, and **will strengthen** that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.”

**Note**: The “fat and strong” mentioned in verse 16 are false shepherds who scatter the LORD’s sheep. God will destroy them!

His love towards His sheep is displayed in His shepherding His flock.

Sinners should long to be under the watch care of the great Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ! The world can offer you nothing but dangers, wolves, devils, sin, shame, and degradation. The great Shepherd can save you to the uttermost! His care for your soul will be for eternity.

Saints should study to understand and experience the tender care that the Shepherd provides for His flock.

The Church should study to understand the nature of her Head - the nature of her Shepherd. Jesus Christ does not drive us along as cattle but will gently lead us along to green pastures in which to feed and cool springs from which we may be refreshed.

**4. The LORD – our Shepherd is revealed in the Holy Scriptures:**

**First**: The Shepherd is revealed as the **Good Shepherd** who laid down His life for the sheep –

**John 10:11** -- “**I am the good shepherd**: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.”

**Second: The Shepherd is revealed as the Great Shepherd** who rose from the grave for their justification and glorification:

**Hebrews 13:20-21** -- “(20) 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, (21) 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.”

**Third**: The Shepherd is revealed as **the Chief Shepherd** who is coming for His Sheep so that they may be where He is.

**I Peter 5:4** – “And when the **chief Shepherd** shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

**5. The Sheepfold as they are revealed in the Holy Scriptures:**

**First: The sheep were lost but now they are found -- Luke 15:4-7** – “(4) What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? (5) And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. (6) And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. (7) I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”

**Second: The sheep are small but they are secure -- Luke 12:32** – “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”

**Third: They are weak but they lack nothing -- Psalm 23:1** – “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.”