

Psalm 23:
The Good Shepherd
Who Restores My Soul



“There is something intensely personal, intensely tender, intensely endearing, yet intensely fraught with danger in the picture. On the one hand there is the sheep so helpless, so utterly immobilized though otherwise strong, healthy, and flourishing; while on the other hand there is the attentive owner quick and ready to come to it's rescue—ever patient and tender, and helpful...



...At this point it is important to point out that similarly in the Christian life there is an exciting and comforting parallel here. Many people have the idea that when a child of God falls, when he is frustrated and helpless in a spiritual dilemma, God becomes disgusted, fed-up, and even furious with him. This simply is not so. ..



...One of the great revelations of the heart of God given to us by Christ is that of Himself as our Shepherd. He has the same identical sensations of anxiety, concern, and compassion for cast men and women as I had for cast sheep. This is precisely why He looked on people with such pathos and compassion. It explains His magnanimous dealing with down and out individuals for whom even human society had no use. It reveals why He wept over those who spurned His affection. It discloses the depth of His understanding of undone people to whom He came eagerly and quickly, read to help, to save, to restore. ..



...When I read the life story of Jesus Christ and examine carefully His conduct in coping with human need, I see Him again and again as the Good Shepherd picking up cast sheep. The tenderness, the love, the patience that He used to restore Peter's soul after the terrible tragedy of his temptations is a classic picture of the Christ coming to restore one of His own"

- W. Philip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*



He restores my
soul.

-Psalm 23:3a



“soul” is נֶפֶשׁ (*nephesh*)

- Nephesh = whole being / life / inner self
- It doesn't just mean the immaterial “soul” as in Greek thought, but the whole person—the seat of desires, emotions, vitality, and life itself.
- “Restores my soul” = revives my life / brings me back / renews my strength



I. Our Good Shepherd Restores Us to Life



¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. ¹¹ I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

– John 10:10-11



“Do you know what this means? It means to breathe new life into you! To reset you. To take you from the shambles you find yourself in and rebuild you. To bring you back to life. To wake up in the morning with motivation for life. To put you in a place where you love life again. It may not be that you love everything in it, but you love life because you see something greater than the things you don't like. This is what happens when you follow God and allow Him to restore your soul.” – Danail Tenev, *Psalms 23*



⁶Jesus said to him, “I am the way,
and the truth, and the life. No one
comes to the Father except through
me.- John 14:6



II. Our Good Shepherd Restores Us through Rest



²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”- Matthew 11:28-30



III. Our Good Shepherd Restores Us When We Stray



³ So he told them this parable: ⁴ “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it? ⁵ And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. ⁶ And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ ⁷ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.-Matthew 15:3-7



²¹ For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. ²² He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. ²³ When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. ²⁴ He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. ²⁵ For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

-1 Peter 2:21-25



¹⁶ So we do not lose
heart. Though our outer self is
wasting away, our inner self is
being renewed day by day.

-2 Corinthians 4:16



¹⁴ But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. ¹⁵ For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

- 2 Corinthians 2:14-16



IV. Our Good
Shepherd Calls us
to Restore One
Another



¹⁹ My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, ²⁰ let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins. -James 5:19-20



“But what He does expose us to will strengthen and fortify our faith and confidence in His control. If He is the Good Shepherd, we can rest assured that He knows what He is doing. This in and of itself should be sufficient to continually refresh and restore my soul. I know of nothing which so quiets and enlivens my own spiritual life as the knowledge that God knows what He is doing with me!”

- W. Philip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks At Psalm 23*



³³ I have said these things to you,
that in me you may have
peace. In the world you will
have tribulation. But take heart; I
have overcome the world.”

- John 16:33



“In essence, while challenges persist, embracing Him grants us a life surpassing the grip of adversity. Our triumph lies not in the eradication of problems but in the abundance of life found in Christ. This life empowers us to embrace joy and courage despite adversity.”-Danail Tenev



Where do you need the
Good Shepherd's
restoration today?



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