

midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof."

4. And I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

a. I will dwell in the LORD's house

- 1) To *dwell* means to abide or to remain. Like his sheep, David was confident that he would abide close to God.
- 2) The word *house* refers to one's dwelling place, shelter or abode. Mackie states, "At sunset he [the shepherd] conducts them back to' the fold, where, during the night, they may lie down in safety, and mix with several other flocks. The sheepfold is often a large cave, or an enclosure in a sheltered hollow made by a rough stone wall, which has, along the top, a formidable fringe of thorns like furze and blackthorn, kept in position by stones laid upon it. At the mouth of the cave, or at the side of the wall near the entrance, the shepherds have a covered place made of branches ... as on the night of the Nativity at Bethlehem, they keep watch over their flocks by night."
- 3) The sheep had no fear of being deserted and neither should we.

b. I will dwell in the LORD's house forever

- 1) David pictured himself as a sheep dwelling with the LORD.
- 2) He is confident that this would never ever change.

Conclusion: Our Good Shepherd protects us, feeds us, and cares for our hurts. Like David wrote, surely God's goodness and mercy will follow us all of our days and we will dwell in His shelter forever.

In John 10:27-28, Jesus said, "*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.*"

Young people, Jesus wants you to become one of His sheep. Jesus paid for your sin by dying on the cross and rising to life again for you. To become His sheep, you must repent of your sin and trust Jesus' death as your payment.

Song: Surely Goodness and Mercy **292**

Psalm 23:5-6

26 August 2018 PM - Psalm 23:5-6 - Ps18 - Scott Childs

Introduction: I have never raised a sheep, but we do have chickens. When they are discontented, they squawk and cry, but when they have food, water, and plenty of greens to eat, they are quiet and contented.

Transition: In the last two verses of this Psalm, David describes a few more reasons that God's sheep can be quiet and contented.

1. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:

a. Our Shepherd knows all of our enemies

- 1) Sheep have many enemies. Wild beasts, snakes, parasites, poisonous weeds and even thieves.
- 2) The shepherd knows every enemy that threatens the peace and safety of his sheep.
- 3) Certainly, your Good Shepherd is no less informed. He knows every temptation that tries you. He sees every cruel person that torments you. He hears every unkind word shot at your heart. He knows that you are weak without His strength. (Proverbs 15:3) "*The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.*"

b. Our Shepherd prepares a peaceful table

- 1) He *prepares* us a table. The *table* surely refers to a place to eat. Because this Psalm is about a shepherd and his sheep, it is unlikely that this table has four legs. More likely, it refers to a lush paddock. A good shepherd would prepare the best possible pastures for his sheep.
- 2) David's description of the table also implies that the sheep may eat in peace – *in the presence of their enemies*. Enemies could not prevent the peaceful feast.
- 3) The shepherd, Phillip Keller, applies the table to the high flat plateaux known as tablelands. This seems likely since David just described travelling through the valley to reach the next pasture. In summer, those lush highland paddocks provide a healthy table for the sheep.
- 4) Keller states that the shepherd will travel to the

tablelands ahead of the sheep to look for dangers and poisonous weeds. He will strive to remove all these enemies before bringing his sheep to the table.

- 5) Our Good Shepherd prepares a feast for us, though enemies may surround us. If we will cast our cares on Him, He promises to give us peace. (Philippians 4:6) "*Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*" If we stay close to Him, we can peacefully enjoy the table of blessings He has prepared for us. (Isaiah 26:3) "*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*" (Psalms 56:3) "*What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.*"

2. Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

a. The shepherd anoints his sheep's head with oil

- 1) Keller flies commonly pester sheep by getting in their eyes and noses. If the flies are not controlled, the sheep have no peace and often get sick. Keller would make an oil ointment from linseed, sulphur and tar to rub on the heads of his sheep. This helped to control the flies and give the sheep peace.
- 2) Oil is a type of medicine. Shepherds anointed heads and other injuries with healing oils. Our Shepherd gives us comfort, healing words and joy in trials which works like a medicine. (Proverbs 17:22) "*A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.*"
- 3) In Bible days, people anointed guests to their home with oil to assure them of hospitality and protection. ^{Brumfield}
- 4) When our Good Shepherd anoints us with oil, it pictures His care for our wellbeing. He comforts. He calms. He refreshes. He heals. His Holy Spirit is our indwelling Comforter. Oil depicts abundance of God's blessing.

b. The sheep's cup runs over

- 1) This phrase describes the total contentedness of a sheep that is full, not thirsty, protected, guided, and anointed

with oil.

- 2) If we will stay in close fellowship with our Good Shepherd, we too will be able to say, "My cup runneth over." Obedient Christians are contented Christians. (Psalms 119:165) "*Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.*" Though the Apostle Paul had a difficult life, because he had a flourishing relationship with Christ, he was able to say, (Philippians 4:11-13) "*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do [lit. endure, overcome] all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*"

3. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life:

a. God's goodness and mercy will follow me

- 1) Some have suggested that goodness and mercy represent the shepherd's dogs that followed the flock. More likely, these qualities represent the abundant benefits provided to the sheep by their shepherd.
- 2) *Goodness* (i.e., things agreeable, pleasant, excellent, glad, kind, right, beneficial, etc.) and *mercy* (i.e., goodness, kindness, faithfulness) are benefits from God. They follow or pursue us.
- 3) The shepherd's abundant provisions of food, water, guidance, restoration, correction, and protection represent his goodness and mercy to his sheep.

b. These blessings will follow me all through life.

- 1) The sheep had no fear that their kind shepherd would change his ways and stop meeting their needs.
- 2) As God's sheep, He promises that He will never change. He is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb 13:8). He will always love us, because He is love (1Jn 4:8). He has promised to care for us continually (1Pe 5:7). (Psalms 46:1) "*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the*