

The Preciousness and Blessedness of Knowing the Lord is My Shepherd (Ps 23:1a)

Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on May 16, 2010

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Psalm 23 (NKJV) ¹ *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.* ² *He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.* ³ *He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.* ⁴ *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.* ⁵ *You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.* ⁶ *Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.*

This is by far the most familiar psalm and maybe the most familiar passage in the whole Bible after the Lord's Prayer. But not all who know its words know its truths personally and relationally.

A story is told of an old pastor, so old he had been forced to retire, a humble old man, his voice weak from years of preaching. He was invited to a high society kind of luncheon by a friend. He really was out of his league, but he went; and there was a famous actor there. The host of the luncheon said to the actor, "Would you stand up and recite something for us?" The actor said, "Of course, I have an endless repertoire. What would you like?"

The old pastor thought this is his moment. He said, "How about the 23rd Psalm?" The actor said, "Well, that's an unusual request, but I happen to know that, and I'll do it on one condition. That you'll do it after I do it." Well, the old pastor hadn't bargained for that, but for the sake of the Lord he said, "All right." The actor got up and recited the 23rd Psalm with great intonation, beautiful, lyrical voice, tremendous interpretation; and he finished; and everyone applauded. The old pastor stood up and with weak voice began, but couldn't get past the word Lord without voice cracking in emotion. He made it through the 23rd Psalm in his humble way; and when he was done, there was not a dry eye in the room. Then sensing the emotion of the moment, the actor stood and said, "I...I think...I think I understand the difference in your response to me and to him. You clapped for me; you wept for him. The difference is I know the Psalm, but he knows the Shepherd."

I'm convinced there's thousands of people who know the words of Psalm 23 *by heart* but don't know the Shepherd *in their heart*. I'm convinced there are some present here who know this psalm but who do not yet know the Shepherd as Lord in a saving way, in personal relationship, sheep-to-shepherd, servant-to-Lord (LORD in v. 1 is covenant name for those in covenant relationship). I'm concerned many take comfort in reciting "*the Lord is my shepherd*" but they don't know His voice or follow Him as sheep in his flock. Maybe used to go to church when younger and learned the psalm when they were little, but now mostly follow their own voice intentionally independently of a flock/church, but still claim Jesus as "my shepherd" (emphasis on "my"). Jesus said "*My sheep hear **My** voice ... and they **follow Me***" (John 10:27).

Jesus said His sheep follow His voice. The original and dominant NT word for believers was *disciples* (followers, learners) and the dominant word for Christ, more than Savior, is *Lord/Master*. In the book of Acts, Jesus is referred to as Savior 2x and He is referred to as Lord over 100x! In the Hebrew OT, the word LORD that v. 1 begins with appears over 7000x!

There is a danger with familiar words like “Lord” and verses like “the Lord is my Shepherd” – we may know the words without knowing intimately and personally the living Word here. If you do not bow before this Lord and believe in Him as Lord (as Almighty Master) you don’t have the relationship spoken of in this psalm yet.

- Acts 2 says all who call on the name of *the Lord* shall be saved (*name of*= and all He represents and is)
- 3:19 “*repent **and turn** to God that your sins may be wiped away, that times of **refreshing** may come from **the Lord***”
- In 5:14, converts added are called “*believers in the Lord*”
- 8:22 “*repent of your wickedness and pray to the Lord ...*”
- In Acts 9, salvations are described as “*they **turned to the Lord** ... many believed in the Lord*” (v. 35, 42)
- If you want the peace spoken of in Psalm 23, Acts 10:36 proclaims “*peace through Jesus Christ (He is **Lord** of all)*”
- 16:31 “*believe in **the Lord** Jesus and you will be saved*”

I don’t want to fly past the word “Lord” in Psalm 23:1. We each need to start where the psalm starts and make sure first that the Good Shepherd *is my Lord*. The meaning and comfort intended by these words is for those who know Christ as Master and King. If you don’t: repent, turn, trust, believe, call on, commit to *the Lord*.

For you who do know personally the Shepherd who inspired this psalm, there is also a danger with familiarity. We may assume we already know all there is to know of this psalm because we have memorized it and maybe heard it taught before. But I want you to know I’ve already read hundreds of pages in preparation for this study, and the freshness and fullness of what I’m discovering and insights new to me have filled and refreshed my soul, and I pray will do the same for you. We’re going to take our time phrase-by-phrase week-by-week seeking to dive into the depths of the still waters of this psalm rather than just skimming the surface, but even then this won’t be exhaustive. I hope our study will stimulate further exploration and meditation of truths we may have learned as kids but will never exhaust as long as we live. The inexhaustible refreshing blessing here I pray will fill us so that our cups overflow

OUTLINE:

1. The Original Heading
2. The Original Setting
3. The Continual Blessing

1. ORIGINAL HEADING – “A Psalm of David”

Discuss headings—original to Hebrew text, not added by translators

PSALM – song, either by individuals, choir, or congregation (some of them it appears were done in combinations or parts, responsively. 55x in NASB the heading says “*for the choir director*” (ESV “choirmaster”). Some glimpses of choir ministry in OT:

- in 1 Chron 15:27 we read of “*the singers, and Kenaniah, who was in charge of the singing of the choirs*” (NIV)

- Nehemiah says he “*also assigned two large choirs to give thanks ... **The two choirs that gave thanks then took their places in the house of God; so did I, together with half the officials, as well as the priests ... The choirs sang under the direction of Jezrahiah.***” (Neh. 12:31, 40-42)
- 1 Chron 15:22 “*Chenaniah ... was in charge of the singing; he gave instruction in singing because he was skillful.*”
- 25:6-7 speaks of certain ones set apart “*to sing in the house of the LORD ... for the service of the house of God ... Their number who were trained in singing to the LORD, with their relatives, all who were skillful, was 288.*”

Some headings have further instructions for the musicians or the songs’ instrumental accompaniment (ex: heading of Ps 22) but Ps 23 heading is simply: “*A Psalm of David*” – i.e., it was authored by David, the poet of Israel, also quite a skilled musician himself.

Some of the psalms David apparently originally gave as solo praise to the Lord (ex: heading of Psalm 7) and others he wrote he may have played or sang before the people initially and/or taught them:

Psalm 22:25 *From you comes the theme of my **praise in the great assembly; before those who fear you** will I fulfill my vows.* (NIV)

v. 22 *I will declare your name **to my brothers; in the congregation** I will praise you ...*

Heb. 2:12 quotes it this way: “***in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises***” NIV; it applies this beyond David to Christ Himself who will sing to us!

It was interesting to me to learn that shepherds who were musically inclined would sometimes sing or play to their sheep, which would give them calm and peace. David, musician/shepherd, knew this on many fronts; as former shepherd of sheep, as a figurative ruler-shepherd over the flock of Israel (God’s people), and as himself a sheep under his shepherd-Lord, a sheep in need of calm and peace.

Zephaniah 3:17 (NIV) *The LORD your God is **with you**, he is mighty to save. **He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.***

What a picture of the Lord our Shepherd! Many verses speak of Him being with us and mighty to save, but we may not often think of the Almighty transcendent self-sufficient God taking “*great delight in us*” (!?) or “*rejoic[ing] over us with singing*” (!!). The infinite and Holy God of wonders amazingly caringly loves each of His sheep with tender attention and affection, quieting us w\ love!

When you consider that David, musician/shepherd *and sheep*, is the author of Ps. 23, it increases its preciousness and blessedness.

1 Samuel 17:14 says “*David was the youngest. Now the three oldest followed Saul,¹⁵ but **David went back and forth from Saul to tend his father’s flock at Bethlehem ...***

²⁰ *So David arose early in the morning and **left the flock with a keeper** and took the supplies and went as Jesse had commanded him ...* [he soon overhears a trash-talking giant nearly 10 feet tall]

²⁶ Then David spoke to the men who were standing by him, saying, “What will be done for the man who kills this Philistine and takes away the reproach from Israel? For who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should taunt the armies of the living God?” ²⁷ The people answered him in accord with this word, saying, “Thus it will be done for the man who kills him.”

²⁸ Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab’s anger burned against David and he said, “**Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? ...**”

... ³¹ When the words which David spoke were heard, they told them to Saul, and he sent for him.

³² David said to Saul, “Let no man’s heart fail on account of him; **your servant will go and fight with this Philistine.**” ³³ Then Saul said to David, “You are not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him; for you are but a youth while he has been a warrior from his youth.” ³⁴ But David said to Saul, “**Your servant was tending his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock,** ³⁵ **I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued it from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized him by his beard and struck him and killed him.** ³⁶ **“Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; and this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, since he has taunted the armies of the living God.”** ³⁷ **And David said, “The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear, He will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine.”** And Saul said to David, “Go, and may the Lord be with you.” ...

David feared no evil, for God was with him. Notice also how a good shepherd is willing to lay down his life for his sheep and won’t let any snatch out of his hand if he has the power to prevent it (which our Almighty Lord promises no one can snatch any of His sheep from His hand). David put the credit and glory where it belonged in v. 37; ultimately it was the ever-faithful Good Shepherd Lord who did all this

... ⁴⁰ He took his stick in his hand [shepherd rod or staff?] and chose for himself five smooth stones from the brook, **and put them in the shepherd’s bag which he had, even in his pouch, and his sling was in his hand;** and he approached the Philistine ...

⁴⁹ And David put his hand into his bag and took from it a stone and slung it, and struck the Philistine on his forehead. And the stone sank into his forehead, so that he fell on his face to the ground. ⁵⁰ Thus David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and a stone, and he struck the Philistine and killed him ...

David was a faithful shepherd of sheep: he fed them, he forced them to lie down when the stubborn sheep didn’t want to, he fought for them, he fearlessly led them through danger, guiding through darkest valleys to peaceful waters. That’s the guy writing Ps. 23, and that’s the guy God chose to shepherd Israel as king (not people’s choice). In 2 Sam. 5:2, Israel’s tribes say to David: “Previously, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and in. **And the Lord said to you, ‘You will shepherd My people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel.’**”

In 2 Sam. 7:8, the LORD tells Nathan to say to David: “Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, **“I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel.**’ ⁹ **“I have been with you wherever you have gone ...”**

David was a shepherd after God’s own heart in many ways.

2 Sam. 24:17 *Then David spoke to the Lord when he saw the angel who was striking down the people, and said, "Behold, it is I who have sinned, and it is I who have done wrong; but these sheep, what have they done? Please let Your hand be against me ..."*

Think of our Good Shepherd Jesus, the sinless, taking punishment for us sinful sheep, in our place! What David pictured on the human level as a shepherd, magnifies for us on the spiritual level what David means when he writes *The LORD is my shepherd*. So when you read the original heading of Psalm 23, remember who David is and think of his life as you meditate on this psalm.

2. The Original Setting

Let's review the setting of Ps 23, "pearl of the psalms"

Passage	Psalm 22	Psalm 23	Psalm 24
Person	Savior	Shepherd	Sovereign
Ministry	Suffering	Providing	Reigning
Time	Past	Present	Future
Imagery	Darkness	Green pastures	Brightest glory
Symbol	Cross	Crook (staff)	Crown
NT text	John 10:11	Heb. 13:20-21	1 Pet. 5:4
NT Title	Good shepherd	Great shepherd	Chief shepherd
Action	Died for sheep	Lives for sheep, meeting all needs	Reigns and will return for sheep

Between Mt. Calvary (22) and Mt. Zion (24) is life's pasture (23).

Joel Beeke says Christ "*As good Shepherd He was the Shepherd-Redeemer on Calvary's cross when He laid down His life for His sheep ... As great Shepherd He is the Shepherd-Owner ... who lives to find His sheep in time, irresistibly bringing them back to His flock and fold to care for them eternally. As the chief Shepherd He is the Shepherd-Keeper who maintains His flock ... waiting ... to return to bring them forever where He is. Ps 22 presents Him as the good Shepherd who died for His sheep. Ps 23 proclaims Him to be the great Shepherd who lives for His sheep. Ps 24 sets Him forth as the chief Shepherd who shall come again for His sheep.*

Ps 22 preaches the prophetic good Shepherd's *yesterday of suffering*; Ps 23, the priestly great Shepherd's *today of grace*; Ps 24, the kingly chief Shepherd's *forever of glory*.

Ps 22 announces the good Shepherd's *suffering cry*; Ps 23, the great Shepherd's *blessing comfort*; Ps 24, the chief Shepherd's *interceding claim*.

Ps 22 reveals the good Shepherd *away from home*; Ps 23, the great Shepherd *bringing home*; Ps 24, the chief Shepherd *at home*.

Christ is full Shepherd for His people, *on account of His being given by the Father. The Father opened the virgin womb to give His sheep the good, dying Shepherd. The Father opened the ... tomb to give His sheep the great, living Shepherd. The Father shall also open the skies to give His sheep the chief, coming Shepherd.*"¹

That's the immediate context. What about in the psalms overall? When Psalm 23:1 says 'the Lord is my *Shepherd*' – how is the word shepherd used in the psalms?

Psalm 28:9 *Save Your people and bless Your inheritance; **Be their shepherd also, and carry them forever.***

NKJV translates as a verb “*shepherd* them”; KJV “*feed* them.” The shepherd at times carried sheep to destination. God carries forever.

He also leads. If you look at Psalm 78, it surveys the history of Israel and the Lord’s dealings with them, using shepherding image

¹⁴ *He led them with the cloud by day And all the night, with a light of fire.* ¹⁵ *He split the rocks in the wilderness And gave them abundant drink ...* ¹⁶ *He brought forth streams also from the rock And caused waters to run down like rivers.* ¹⁷ *Yet they still continued to sin against Him, To rebel against the Most High in the desert.* ¹⁸ *And in their heart they put God to the test By asking food according to their desire.* ¹⁹ *Then they spoke against God; They said, “Can God **prepare a table in the wilderness?**”*

... ³⁸ *But He, being compassionate, forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them; And often He restrained His anger And did not arouse all His wrath ...* ⁴⁰ *How often they rebelled against Him in the wilderness And grieved Him in the desert!*

... ⁵² *But He led forth His own people like sheep And **guided** them in the wilderness like a flock;* ⁵³ *He led them safely, so that they did not fear; But the sea engulfed their enemies.* ⁵⁴ *So He brought them to His holy land, To this hill country which His right hand had gained.* ⁵⁵ *He also drove out the nations before them And apportioned them for an inheritance by measurement, And made the tribes of Israel dwell in their tents*

... ⁶⁹ *And He built His sanctuary like the heights, Like the earth which He has founded forever.* ⁷⁰ *He also chose **David His servant** And took him from the sheepfolds; ⁷¹ **From the care of the ewes with suckling lambs He brought him To shepherd Jacob His people, And Israel His inheritance.** ⁷² *So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, And guided them with his skillful hands.**

Meditate on your Good Shepherd in His integrity and never-failing skill: conquering enemies, calling forth sheep, constantly leading, cup-overflowing provision, compassionate patience to complaining sheep, covenant-keeping faithfulness despite our unfaithfulness, and caring for His flock tenderly like newborn nursing lambs!

Iain Campbell explains: ‘David had received a great deal of his personal training in the wilderness looking after his father’s sheep ... God’s purpose in David’s life was to make him a different kind of shepherd [like Jesus calling fisherman disciples to be “fishers of men”]... God took David from shepherding the sheep to be a shepherd of the people. God trained David, while he was a shepherd of sheep, to be a pastor of men. In Psalm 23, David confesses his own need of a shepherd. However skillful he was, and however trained in exercising his pastoral office as king, it was his greatest strength to know that God was his own Shepherd.’²

Psalm 80:1 *Oh, give ear, **Shepherd of Israel**, You who lead Joseph like a flock ...*

Psalm 95:6 *Come, let us worship and bow down, **Let us kneel** before the Lord our Maker. ⁷ **For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you would hear His voice [the shepherd’s voice],** ⁸ *Do not harden your hearts...**

This is an important aspect and application of Psalm 23:1 saying “the Lord is my Shepherd”: it’s His pasture we’re in, it’s His hand we’re under, it’s His world He made that we’re standing on now (or sitting). He is God, we are not. He owns that cattle on thousand hills and every pasture and every blade of grass and every breath we take is owned by God and loaned to us by God. We’re on His earth breathing His air as long as He lets us; all of life on all of this planet is all from God, through God, to God, and for God’s glory.

He’s in charge, we’re not. He’s all-wise, we’re not (we’re foolish sheep). We need to hear His voice not ours, or our hearts harden. Anytime God’s Word is spoken and not received, hearts harden. We as sheep need to lie down, v. 6 says “*worship and bow down.*”

That is the essence of worship in this passage. When you think of worship, don’t think of a music style you like, and assume that is what makes worship. Don’t think if singing is not done the way *I’d prefer*, if it doesn’t do *for me* what *I’d* like or make *me* feel certain way, I haven’t really worshipped. To understand worship biblically like in v. 6-7 what we see is a *low view of me/my* and *high view of God* (it’s all about Him, not me, He’s the Shepherd, I’m just a sheep that is only alive by His goodness and mercy). In this text, the heart of worship isn’t in sights and sounds and subjective feelings, its essence is humility (*worship, bow down, kneel, etc.*).

The goal of our worship service is not to lift you up superficially (which we could try to plan, and some do). The biblical pattern is always that we must be *brought down*, humbled first in the sight of the Lord, then He will lift you up after sufficient humbling. If we would receive the comfort and grace God intends by “shepherd” language in Psalm 23, we need to start by recognizing we’re sheep (which is not a flattering or self-esteem boosting metaphor of us!). That’s our best place to be, for God gives grace *to the humble*.

God is honored by humble worship in different ways and styles. He’s honored when people who are different are able to humbly come and bow and kneel and worship together their one Shepherd. We sheep don’t all look alike, think alike, do things the way we all like – but we have the same Shepherd who puts us in His flock. It’s not only humbling, but refreshing and comforting, to focus on Him

Psalm 100:3 *Know that the Lord Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.*

That thought should keep us in our place, and the posture of grace.

4. The Continual Blessing of Psalm 23

The first 5 words of Psalm 23 alone have echoed down through the centuries in the mouths and minds and hearts of believers who personally have experienced the preciousness and blessedness of knowing “*the Lord is my shepherd.*” We began with the story of an old man who so evidently treasured the truths of this psalm.

Elizabeth Elliot tells of someone on the other end of life, a young girl, a ‘toddler who was very ill but had learned to recite the Twenty-third Psalm on her fingers.

Starting with her pinkie, she would grab a finger as she said each word of “The Lord is my shepherd.” As she said the word *shepherd*, she would clasp her thumb in recognition of the care God has for her. One morning, after a long and hard fight against her disease, the little girl was found dead with one hand clasped around the other thumb. The Lord *is* her shepherd. He has made her to lie down in green pastures. He has led her to quiet waters. Surely she will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.’³

Another story is told of a shepherd boy in the UK in the country of Wales : ‘two ministers ... went on holiday together tramping in the Welsh hills. High on the moors they met a shepherd lad and stopped to chat with him. They found this boy had never been to school and that he knew nothing at all of the Christian faith. The two ministers finally read to him the 23rd Psalm, and ... help[ed] him find a personal faith they got him to repeat the words, “The Lord is *my* shepherd.” Next year they were back in the same hills. This time they called at a cottage to ask for a drink of milk. The lady noticed them looking at a photograph of a lad on the mantelpiece. “Yes,” she said, “that was my son. He died last winter in a snowstorm while tending his sheep. But there was a curious thing about him, his right hand was clutching the fourth finger of his left hand.” “Well now,” one of the ministers replied, “we met your boy last year. In fact, since he was a shepherd boy, we taught him to repeat the first line of the 23rd Psalm, and we told him whenever he said it to himself, to pause at the fourth word, and think ‘This psalm was meant for me.’”⁴

From a more technical standpoint on the Hebrew text, *Word Biblical Commentary* notes: ‘The distinctiveness in the opening words of this psalm lies in the use of the pronoun, *my* shepherd; the shepherd theme, traditionally interpreted communally of the “flock” (or nation), is here given its most personal interpretation in the entire biblical tradition. (Even if the use of “I/my” was intended, or later interpreted, in a communal sense, the implications of a personal association with the shepherd remain.)’⁵

F. B. Meyer comments on the precious little 2-letter word: “My.” What a difference comes in with that little word *my*! ... the difference between knowledge and appropriation is simply infinite. It makes all the difference between being saved or lost whether you say, “Jesus is a Saviour,” [even “*the* Savior”] or “Jesus [is *my* Savior who] has saved *me*,” whether you say, “The Lord is a Shepherd” or “The Lord is *my* Shepherd ...” Even if, like Thomas, you could see the Saviour in the clear light of reality, and have every doubt removed, and His hands offered to your touch, yet it would avail you but little unless you could appropriate Him by saying, “*My* Lord and *my* God.” ... There is nothing to hinder you [from bowing to Jesus as Lord and Shepherd today]. Do not [wait] to inquire if you are one of His sheep; look away from yourself to Him, and see if He be not well qualified to be your Shepherd.’⁶

Think of this: the All-sufficient Almighty Maker of Heaven and earth, God of wonders beyond our galaxy, condescends to reveal Himself like an earthly shepherd. Since I know Him as Lord, He lets *me of all people* call Him, Supreme King of the universe, “*my* Shepherd!” The One who spoke our solar system into existence also speaks to *me* as His sheep! The world’s creator and sustainer also loves *me* individually, knows *me* individually! Even though He knows me and all my sin He chose *me* individually, He cares for *me* individually! He even died for *me* individually particularly!

This is not just general redemption, love, care, that's His particular redemption, personal love, individual care. Paul never got over this reality: "Christ loved *me* and gave Himself up *for me*" (Gal. 2:20). Charles Wesley joined him in wonder at this: 'And can it be, that *I* should gain and interest in **My** Savior's blood? Died *he* for **me** ... Amazing love! How can it be, That Thou, **my** God, should die **for me**?'

A Puritan writes: 'May this sweet title persuade those who as yet never knew what it was to be enfolded in the bosom of Jesus, who as yet were never lambs nor ewes in Christ's fold, consider the sweetness of this Shepherd, and come in to him ... he will be really sweet if you come into his flock, even notwithstanding your sins. You look into Christ's fold, and you see it hedged and fenced all about to keep you in from sin, and this keeps thee from entering; but, oh! let it not. Christ, indeed, is unwilling that any of his should wander ... if they wander he will fetch them in ... O come in therefore to Jesus Christ; let him be now the shepherd of *your* soul. And know then, he will be sweet in endeavouring to keep you from sin before you commit it; and he will be sweet in delivering you from sin after you have [wandered into and] committed it. O that this thought -- that Jesus Christ is sweet in his carriage unto all his members, unto all his flock, especially the sinning ones, might persuade the hearts of some sinners to come in unto his fold.'⁷

Is Jesus your Lord and your Shepherd personally today? We've looked at the word "Lord" and "my" and "Shepherd," but every word in v. 1 is important including the present tense verb *is*

- I'm not asking if Jesus *was* your shepherd (what you learned as a kid or some prayer you prayed a long time ago)
- I'm not asking if you hope He *will be* in the future, that in the future you hope your relationship will be right w/ Him
- Can you say the first 5 words of this psalm in present tense

Can you say "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine" about the beloved Son of God and are you in love relationship with Him?

Let's let the Good Shepherd Jesus have the last word in John 10:

*"if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture ... I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly ... "I am the good shepherd, and **I know My own and My own know Me** [knowing not of facts but intimate relationship]*

*... ²⁷ "My sheep hear My voice, and **I know them, and they follow Me;** ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. (v. 9-10, 14, 27-28)*

What a Savior! What a Shepherd! What a Sovereign!

Come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our God our Maker, for He is our God and we are the people of His pasture, just the sheep of His hand. Today if you would hear His voice, do not harden your hearts ...

¹ Joel Beeke, *Jehovah Shepherding His Sheep*, p. 8.

² Iain Campbell, *In the Care of the Good Shepherd*, p. 11-12.

³ M. P. Green. *Illustrations for Bilical Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989.

⁴ G. A. F. Knight (1982). *Psalms : Volume 1*. The Daily study Bible series. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, p. 117.

⁵ Peter C. Craigie (2002). *Word Biblical Commentary : Psalms 1-50*. Word Biblical Commentary. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, Vol. 19, p. 206.

⁶ F. B. Meyer. *Shepherd Psalm*.

⁷ John Durant, quoted in *The Treasury of David* (updated old English pronouns).