

All The Days Of My Life

I plan to tread a familiar path this Lord's Day as we begin our New Year together looking at Psalm 23. We are greatly privileged if we can say the words of this beautiful psalm with David, and know them to be true. To know the Lord Jesus Christ as 'my Shepherd' is to know Him by faith as Saviour, Provider and Friend. The inspired writers of Scripture, directed by the Holy Ghost, tell us what this means, and clearly identify the Lord Jesus Christ as the Shepherd of whom David speaks.

Christ, God's Shepherd

The prophet Zechariah saw the redemptive and substitutionary work of God's Shepherd in His role as the God-man mediator. He writes, 'Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd' (13:7). The Lord Jesus Christ, God's fellow, is God's Shepherd for us. Upon Him the sword of judgment and divine wrath against sin fell. This is the wonder of God's work of salvation. God Himself, in the form of a man, representatively takes our sin, assumes our guilt, bears our condemnation and dies in our place. In doing so Jesus Christ magnified the grace and love of God for His chosen people.

Christ the Great Shepherd

The writer to the Hebrews identifies the Lord Jesus as the Great Shepherd writing; 'Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep' (13:20). Our Great Shepherd in satisfying divine justice has secured peace and reconciliation between God and man. Our Shepherd having died is now raised again from the dead, having defeated all our enemies.

Christ our One Shepherd

Ezekiel shows us the Lordship of Christ in His kingly office. He is the unique and matchless Shepherd who leads and feeds His flock. Our One Shepherd, having redeemed His people by death and risen again in glory, now provides and protects His little ones. 'And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them' (34:23). Providentially, spiritually and eternally, Christ leads and feeds us in the green pastures of spiritual revelation and by the still waters of gospel truth.

Christ the Chief Shepherd

And, when our life is over Christ the Chief Shepherd shall come for us and gather us to Himself. 'And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory' (1 Peter 5:4). Well might the Lord's people rejoice in the Lord alway! God's Shepherd took our crown of thorns and He will give us a crown of glory. This is surely goodness and mercy. The Lord Jesus Christ, our Great Shepherd who rose again, our One Shepherd who supplies all our needs, is coming again to receive us into glory.

Christ the Good Shepherd

Finally, our King of kings and Lord of lords condescends to take the title of Shepherd to Himself. In John 10:11, Christ, our Saviour, declares, 'I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep'.

How blessed we are to be able to join with David in naming the Lord Jesus Christ 'My Shepherd'. How honoured we are to know by faith God's Shepherd, that Great Shepherd of the sheep, the One Shepherd all-glorious in His kingdom, and the Chief Shepherd who is coming again. And, knowing Him, to be able to say with the psalmist, 'I shall not want', for 'He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young' (Isaiah 40:11).

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We thank the Lord for the year now past in which His goodness and mercy have been evident. We enter another year confident we shall lack no good thing. We wish the best for one another, but we neither know what is best, nor have power to grant our good wishes. Our loving God knows what is best for the sheep of His flock and the wellbeing of His people is omnipotently assured. We will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Amen

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