

## The Great I AM: The Good Shepherd (4/19/2020)

Who was the most famous shepherd of the Old Testament? None other than King David. As a shepherd, when a lion or a bear came and carried off one of the sheep from the flock, he went after it, struck it, and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on him, he seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. At a young age he was already brave and courageous—strong in the LORD. When he was still a teenager, the prophet Samuel was sent to David's house to anoint him as Israel's next king. At that time kings considered themselves shepherds of their country. Just as he protected his flock, King David would protect his people from their enemies all around. He was a valiant warrior and brave leader.

He was also a talented author and musician. He wrote one of the most famous, if not the most famous, psalm of them all—Psalm 23. "The LORD is my shepherd I shall lack nothing." Not only was he a shepherd, not only did he write about how the LORD is his shepherd, but he was also the forefather of another King—our King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." As our Shepherd, he came into this world to rescue us from the wolf, Satan. He would lead the charge into battle against the devil and all of the forces of hell. In order to defeat Satan, the Good Shepherd would become the sacrificial Lamb offered up on the altar of the cross.

As valiant as it is for a shepherd to lay down his life for his sheep, the fact is a dead shepherd does the sheep no good. After slaying the shepherd, the wolf would then attack the flock and kill countless victims. But our Good Shepherd didn't stay dead. He said, "The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again." On the third day Jesus shattered the power of the grave by taking his life back. This proclaimed that the menacing wolf Satan has as much power over us as a purring kitten.

His empty tomb assures us he is our almighty Shepherd who will guide us through this life. He tends his flock, gathering the lambs in his arms and carrying them close to his heart. He feeds us in the green pastures of his Word, giving us the strength to follow his lead into the future. As a shepherd always has his eyes scanning the horizon for incoming threats to his flock, our Good Shepherd is always watching over us. What great comfort our Good Shepherd gives us with some of the most beautiful words in the Bible, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand."

Jesus, Shepherd of the sheep, Who your Father's flock does keep,  
Safe we wake and safe we sleep, Guarded still by you.

In your promise firm we stand; None can take us from your hand.  
Speak-we hear-at your command, We will follow you.

By your blood our souls were bought; By your life salvation wrought;  
By your light our feet are taught, Lord, to follow you.

Father, draw us to your Son; We with joy will follow on  
Till the work of grace is done, There to live with you.

We, in robes of glory dressed, Join th' assembly of the blest,  
Gathered to eternal rest In the fold with you.

*After sharing this devotion with your family, take the time to read John 10.*

Pastor Zuberbier