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to Sheep

What David Says  
as a Sheep



**SHEEP TO SHEEP**

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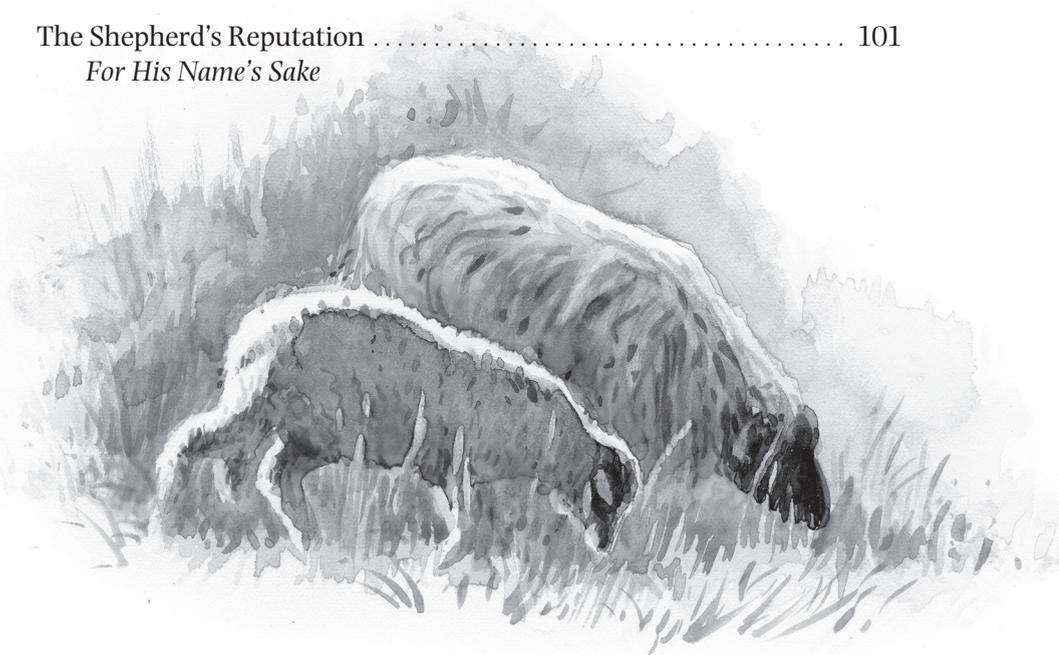
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## Under *His Watchful Eye*



Recite the Twenty-third Psalm.

At the end, add, "Oh, the benefits of being the Shepherd's daughter."

A man in a Walmart check-out line began a conversation with one of my Bible-class members. During the conversation she made a reference to the Lord. He asked where she attended worship and after she told him, she proceeded to say, "We are studying the Twenty-third Psalm."

He responded, "Do you know my favorite part of that psalm?"

"No," she said with anticipation in her voice.

He said, "The Lord is."

"Why is that?" she asked.

"Because just knowing that He exists, and that He always has been and always will be brings me such comfort. He is in control and I don't have to be."



The Maker  
of the  
universe calls  
Himself our  
Shepherd,  
and He  
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sheep.



I agree with him. Just knowing “the Lord is” is quite enough, but it gets even better. David explains what that means for us as His sheep.

When I look into the night sky and gaze at the vastness of the galaxies, I look toward 250 million times 250 million heavenly bodies that are larger than the sun. They were created and placed in their orbits by the hands of Jesus. It excites me to know that He calls me His. The Maker of the universe calls Himself our Shepherd, and He invites us to be His sheep. Think about that.

### He Knows You

Have you ever felt like no one seems to understand your situation or that no one cares about you? Have you said to yourself, “I feel completely alone”? I know at times we have all experienced

these feelings, but the good news is that we have a Shepherd who understands everything about us.

- He knows you.
- He knows your story.
- He knows your background and all your family history.
- He knows your strengths and weaknesses.
- He knows your temptations.
- He knows what you need.

He knows every miniscule detail of your life, and He doesn't see us as one big flock of sheep because He knows us individually: by name, personally, and intimately. Isaiah 43:1 says, “I have called you by your name; you are Mine.” That's personal.

Our Shepherd is real. He *is*, present tense. Read each of the following verses and record the “benefits.”



“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep” (John 10:11). What does the Good Shepherd do for His sheep?



“I am the good shepherd, and I know My sheep, and am known by My own” (John 10:14). What does the Good Shepherd know about you?



“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me” (John 10:27). What should we do as His sheep? What does this verse teach you about Him and knowing your situation?



Do these three verses convey to you that your Shepherd is within your reach?

## Remember Your Characteristics

As we learned facts about sheep, we also learned that we are like them.

- We are stubborn.
- We like to follow the crowd.
- Sometimes we are stressed, discontent, and nervous.
- We have needs that have to be met physically and spiritually.
- Oh, how we need a Shepherd!

## Who is *Yahweh*?

Notice as the sheep speaks: “Yahweh is my shepherd.”

David wrote this as one of the sheep. Picture a little sheep talking to sheep across the road in another pasture: “Look who my shepherd is. The Lord is. He is my owner, my manager.” You can almost sense the pride this

sheep has in proclaiming to whom he belongs. David used the name that God called Himself: *Yahweh*.

Scripture plainly describes our Lord Jesus as the Shepherd in the verses below.

All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: "I will strike the Shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered" (Matthew 26:31).

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep (John 10:11).

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant (Hebrews 13:20.)

As Christians, we must realize the significance of who our Shepherd is and the claim that you and I get to make as His sheep.

- Our Shepherd is the all-powerful, all-knowing, all-seeing God of the universe, Jesus Christ.
- Our Shepherd is the God who creates, though He was not created (John 1:1–5, 14–18).
- Our Shepherd is the God who makes and was never made.

### **The Same as in the Beginning: *Yahweh***

Why is it important to recognize that the Lord *is*? What is the significance of recognizing the Good Shepherd as "the same as in the beginning"? Because we live in a world that is ever changing. But our Lord never changes.

It is indisputable that Jesus is *Yahweh*.

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist (Colossians 1:15–17).

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it (John 1:1-5).



What does Hebrews 13:8 mean to you?

### The God Who Sees Me: *El Roi*

When Moses was a shepherd, he met God at the burning bush and they had the following conversation:

Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, *when* I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you’” (Exodus 3:13-14).

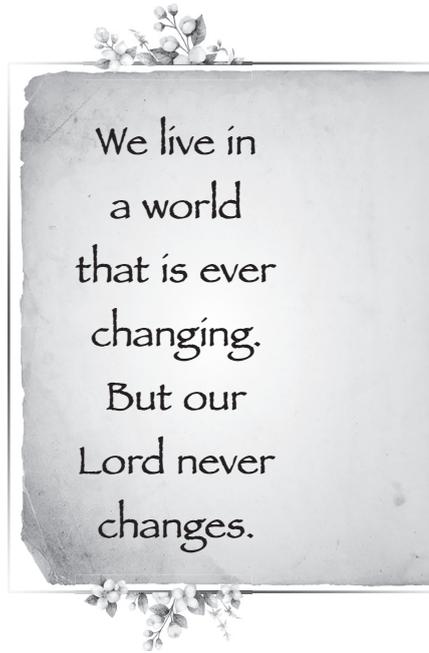
Our God is Yahweh. He is unchanging, uncaused, ungoverned. Yahweh is our Shepherd. And our Shepherd is *El Roi*, the-God-Who-Sees-Me. Hagar, an Egyptian slave of a Hebrew woman, addressed God as *El Roi*:

Then she called the name of the Lord who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, “Have I also here seen Him who sees me?” (Genesis 16:13).



Describe what it means that your Good Shepherd is *El Roi*; the God-Who-Sees-Me.

Yahweh is our Shepherd. He sees us and our needs. To think that David links a lump of clay to Divine destiny! This should stir our hearts to think our

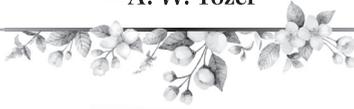


Shepherd is so deeply concerned for us. When I came to this understanding as I studied the psalm, my heart felt as though it was wrapped in a warm blanket. I felt up close and dear to the heart of the God-Who-Sees-Me. What about you?



*God dwells in eternity but time dwells in God. He has already lived all our tomorrows as He has lived all our yesterdays.*

—A. W. Tozer



*Sheep Homework*

1. Rest in the fact that your Good Shepherd is the God-Who-Sees-Me. Study Genesis 16:13.
2. What is your situation? He knows your story, and He sees every detail of your life.
3. Memorize John 10:14. Think upon the fact that you are known by Him.
4. Ask the Good Shepherd to wrap your heart in comfort like a warm blanket and feel His loving presence.

## The Names of God in Psalm 23

**Verse 1:** The LORD is my shepherd; [*Jehovah-Rohi*]  
*Jehovah-Rohi* means “The LORD is my Shepherd.”

I shall not want [*Jehovah-Jireh*]  
*Jehovah-Jireh* means “The LORD Will Provide.”

**Verse 2:** He makes me to lie down in green pastures, He  
leads me beside the still waters [*Jehovah-Shaloam*]  
*Jehovah-Shaloam* means “The LORD of Peace.”

**Verse 3:** He restores my soul [*Jehovah-Rapha*]  
*Jehovah-Rapha* means “The LORD Who Heals.”

**Verse 4:** He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His  
name’s sake [*Jehovah-Tsidkenu*]  
*Jehovah Tsidkenu* means “The LORD Our Righteousness.”

**Verse 5:** You anoint my head with oil [*Jehovah-  
Mekaddishkem*]  
*Jehovah-Mekaddishkem* means “The LORD Who Satisfies.”<sup>2</sup>

Notice the names of God in each verse and their meanings. What does this mean for your life as a Shepherd’s daughter?

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<sup>2</sup> “Names of God,” pamphlet, stock #452X (Rose Publishing; 2003).





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## Claim *Surrender and Ownership*



Recite the Twenty-third Psalm.

At the end, add, "Oh, the benefits of being the Shepherd's daughter."

Shepherds mark their sheep to claim ownership. Many years ago shepherds notched the ears of the sheep to distinguish them from the sheep of nearby shepherds. Should a sheep stray from the flock, the mark on its ear would tell other shepherds to separate that sheep from their flock and return it to the proper owner.

Today shepherds put rings in their sheep's ears or mark them with spray paint.

When the sheep in our passage makes the claim, "The Lord is *my* shepherd," he is saying, "I belong to my shepherd and not another." Expressed in a different way, "He is mine and I am His." After understanding the mark of the shepherd, it is obvious that not all sheep can make that claim.

A seventeenth-century Welch poet said it this way:

The God of love my Shepherd is,  
And he that doth me feed;  
While he is mine and I am his,  
What can I want or need?

—George Herbert

### Who Belongs to the Good Shepherd?

Imagine sheep standing in a barren pasture, under the ownership of an evil sheepman. His stock is thin and weak, riddled with disease and parasites. If his sheep were able to speak, I'm sure they would say, "Oh, how I wish I could make the claim that I belong to the good shepherd across the road. My dreams would be fulfilled if only I could be set free from the ownership of my evil shepherd."

What makes the good shepherd's sheep different? The other sheep don't belong to the good shepherd. They cannot claim ownership because they do not bear his mark.



Read Ezekiel 34:1–10. How does an evil shepherd take care of his sheep?



Read Ezekiel 34:11–31. Record how many times "my sheep" and "my flock" are used. Write down the benefits of being under the care of the Good Shepherd in this passage.



According to Matthew 7:21–23, who enters the kingdom of heaven? What futile claims of ownership did the lawless make? Why were they futile?



What must a sheep do in order to claim he belongs?



According to Jesus, which way does a sheep enter in with the shepherd (Matthew 7:13–14)?



What do these verses teach us about those who claim “the Lord is my shepherd”?

We cannot have it both ways. We either belong or we don't. Jesus makes it clear that some will claim to be His when He doesn't know them (Matthew 7:21–23). As His sheep, we are under His authority and direction. It is the Shepherd who guides and directs the sheep, and that means we have to do it His way. Sheep that want to do things their way always end up in trouble.

So many are quick to claim “The Lord is my Shepherd,” but do not follow His will or commands. My intention is not to sound harsh or unkind, but I believe that because of our present culture's philosophy of “live and let live,” we have forgotten that God has a standard, and He is the only authority.

He tells us what we must do in order to become His sheep. You will find an explanation later in the chapter. Saying “Lord, Lord” doesn't make one His sheep, because Jesus plainly said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

### **Mrs. Gadabout**

Phillip Keller writes about a ewe called Mrs. Gadabout. He states that she was beautifully proportioned, strong, and had an excellent coat of wool. She bore sturdy lambs that matured rapidly. But despite her wonderful attributes, she was restless, discontented, and a fence crawler. She seemed always to find a hole in the fence, crawl through, and feed on the other side.

She repeatedly left the fold, and she also taught her lambs the same tricks. In a short time, she began to lead other sheep through the same holes and



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—Matthew 7:21-23



over dangerous paths. She never seemed to understand whose authority she was under. She wanted to do things her way. She could not surrender her own will.

Keller writes that after putting up with her tactics for a period of time, she had to go. Her career of fence crawling was cut short. Mrs. Gadabout became mutton stew. That was the only solution to the dilemma.<sup>3</sup>

### The Authority Battle

Why do you think *surrender* is a hard word? Surrender means to cease from resisting and submit to authority. Just as in battle, when we surrender, we raise the white flag. What does it mean to surrender your life totally to the will of the Good Shepherd?

- Does it mean we have to give up our own bad behavior?
- Does it mean we have to give up our secret sins?
- Does it mean we have to give up our way of thinking improperly?
- Does it mean we have to give up our own way of treating others?

I read a perfect analogy of my will versus God's will. My life is one of surrender. Surrendering means to search out God's will and follow His plan. If I throw out a boat hook and catch hold of a sappling on the shore and pull, do I pull the shore to me, or do I pull myself to the shore? Surrender is not pulling God to my will but aligning my will to His.



Ponder and discuss the “boat hook” analogy.



What do you need to surrender to God's will?

Just as sheep like to go their own way, we do too. A Frank Sinatra classic of yesteryear summarizes how so many people feel today: “I Did It My Way.”

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<sup>3</sup> W. Phillip Keller, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1974), 33–34.

But as we saw in the fate of Mrs. Gadabout, our way is not always wise. Sheep that do not surrender don't do well in the flock.

### Some Desire Benefits without Membership

In the world of social media, we post our problems or needs on Facebook or Instagram. So many on social media are quick to ask for prayers, and so many want God to show up and bless their lives, yet they aren't part of His flock. They have no intention of submitting to His will. They don't bear His mark of ownership because they are not willing to surrender to Him. Bearing His mark is important, yet our culture wants spirituality without authority.

It is easy to say we are spiritual when we have no intention of submitting to God's authority. We must realize that if we do not bear His mark, we cannot make the claim, "The Lord is *my* Shepherd."

 Discuss and ponder this sentence: "Our culture wants spirituality without submitting to authority."

 How do you think our culture views spirituality?



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### Bearing the Mark of the Good Shepherd

Now we turn our attention to how we bear the mark of the Good Shepherd. To understand the Bible, we must begin with the basics. There are two laws: The old law (Old Testament) and the new law (New Testament).

As we make application, we must understand that God has always distinguished His sheep from those of other shepherds. He sets His sheep apart, just as any shepherd does.

A study of the old law helps New Testament Christians gain a deeper understanding of what it means to "bear His mark." Under the old law,

circumcision became the badge of membership among God's people. It was a distinguishing mark of a Jewish male (Leviticus 12:2–3).

Circumcision, as defined in the Old Testament (Genesis 17), was a symbolic procedure that announced that a Jewish male had entered into a covenant relationship with God.

Now, note a contrast:

And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live (Deuteronomy 30:6).

What is mentioned in this passage that gives us a glimpse of a bigger picture? The picture changes in the New Testament. Circumcision, as was practiced under the old law, is no longer required, because we live under a new and better covenant.

But as it is, Christ has obtained a ministry that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is better, since it is enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. For he finds fault with them when he says: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Hebrews 8:6–10 *ESV*).



According to Colossians 2:11, by whom and through whom are we circumcised today?



What has been nailed to the cross? (See Colossians 2:11–14 and Romans 8:2.)

Who made it possible for this law to be “wiped out”?

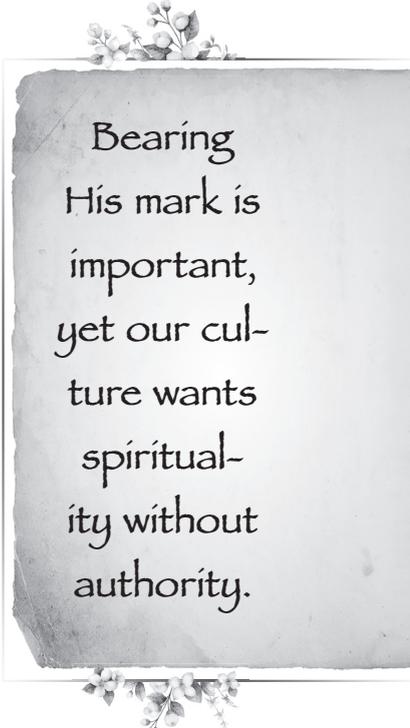
Why was this law nailed to the cross?

According to Colossians 2:11–14, how are we spiritually circumcised today?

What happens when we submit to this spiritual circumcision?

How do we bear the mark of Jesus today?

- We hear about Jesus (Romans 10:17).
- We believe that He is the Son of God (John 3:16).
- We realize our sins and repent (turn away) from those sins (Luke 13:3).
- We confess Jesus before men, and we continue to do so every day of our lives (1 Timothy 6:12; Romans 10:10; 1 John 4:15).
- We are baptized into His death so we can be in the likeness of His resurrection (Romans 6:3–8).



Bearing  
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Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him (Romans 6:3–8).

Answer the following questions based on Romans 6:3–8.



Verse 3: Into whom and into what were you baptized?



Verse 4: What happens when you are baptized?



Verse 5: To whom are you united at this point? (See NASB or ESV.)



Verse 6: What happens to your “old self”?



Verse 7: Explain verse 7 and ponder its meaning.



Verse 8: If you have died with Christ, then what?

Did you get the visual? Baptism is a reenactment of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- Just as Jesus died on the cross, we die to our sins.
- After His death, He was buried in a tomb. When we die to our sins, we are buried in water (immersed).

- Jesus was raised from the dead and came out of the tomb. When we come up from the water, we are raised as new persons, free from our sins. (See also 2 Corinthians 5:17.)
- Baptism recreates symbolically for us the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, and we participate in that. Once we do this, we bear His mark.



What do we do when we are baptized (Galatians 3:27)?



How are we added to the church (Acts 2:47)?



What does Acts 2:38 explain about the forgiveness of sins?

Have you surrendered? Can you make the claim that “He is mine, and I am His”? As the Shepherd’s daughter, I raised my white flag a long time ago. I have come to understand that surrender is where the full life begins.

An old hymn expresses it best: “All to thee my blessed Savior, I surrender all.” Your Shepherd deserves more than a part-time half-hearted sheep. When you sing that hymn, place extra emphasis on the words *all* and *daily*. And then say this prayer, “Empty me, Lord, so that I can be full of You.”



1. Meditate upon the Twenty-third Psalm.
2. Be intentional about surrendering your will to God’s will.
3. Ask the Lord to help you surrender. Raise your white flag.
4. Sing the hymn “I Surrender All” every day this week.
5. Memorize Galatians 3:27.