

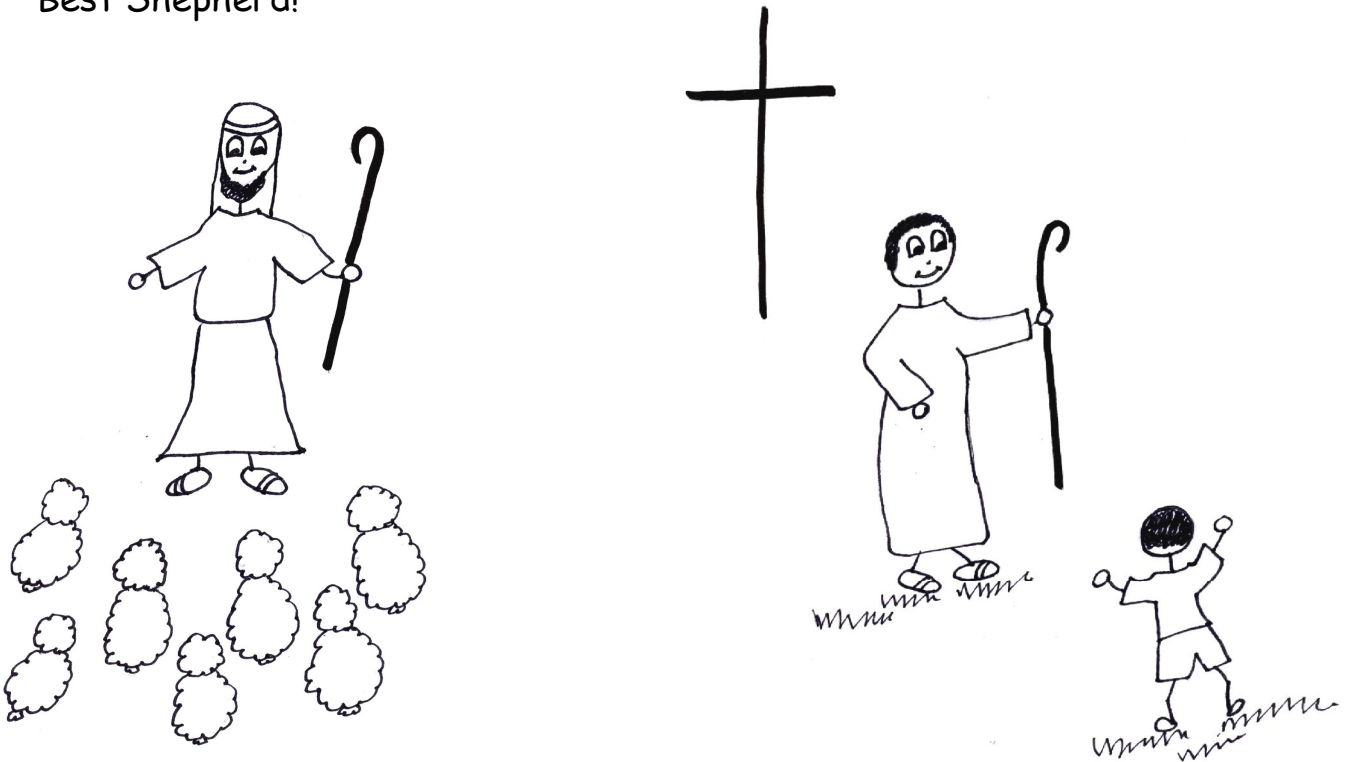
To My Shepherd
From Your Sheep

Jesus Christ, You are my Shepherd. You have come to search for and rescue me. Luke 19:10, "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." I'm glad that You found me. I want to experience the joy and rest that You want me to have. I can't find this on my own. I need You! I am Your sheep!



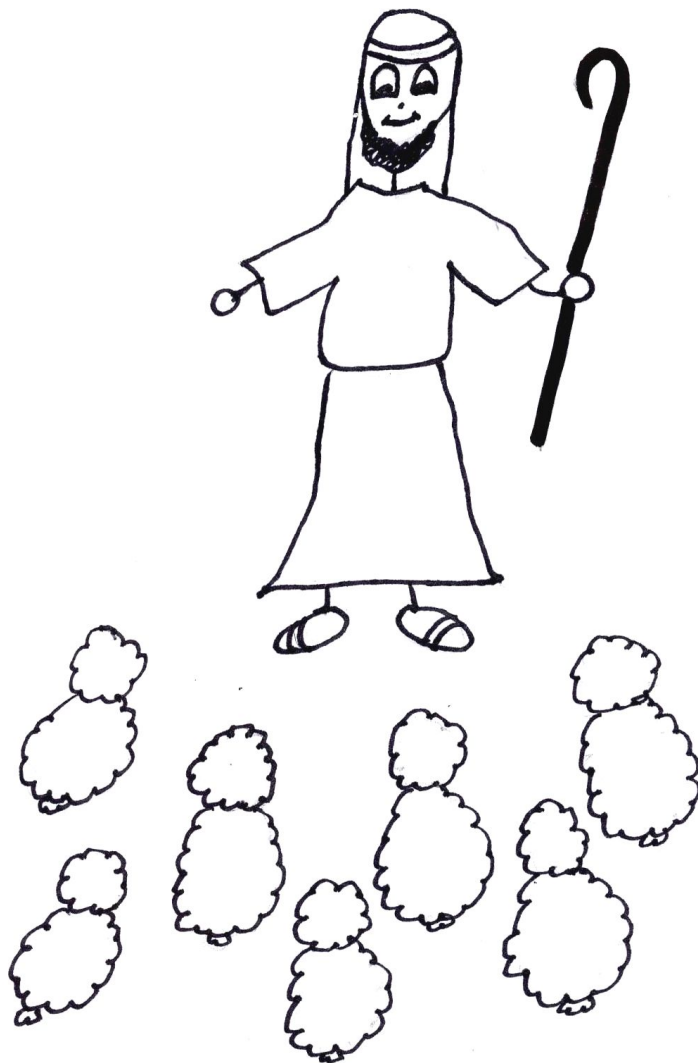
John 10:14-15 I am the good Shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

You are my Shepherd. As You know, a shepherd lived with his sheep. He was everything to them: guide, doctor, protector, and provider, and he supplied whatever they needed. As a disciplinarian, he would discipline the sheep with a rod, a thin straight stick. This was to get them going in the right direction when they got off the right path. He was their deliverer. The shepherd used his staff to deliver the sheep from trouble and bring them close to him. He would even give his life to save them! You are all these things to me! You gave Your life so that I could live! You continue to go to battle for me, Your sheep! You guide, heal, discipline, deliver, and protect me, and give me whatever I need to live in Your plan. You're the Best Shepherd!

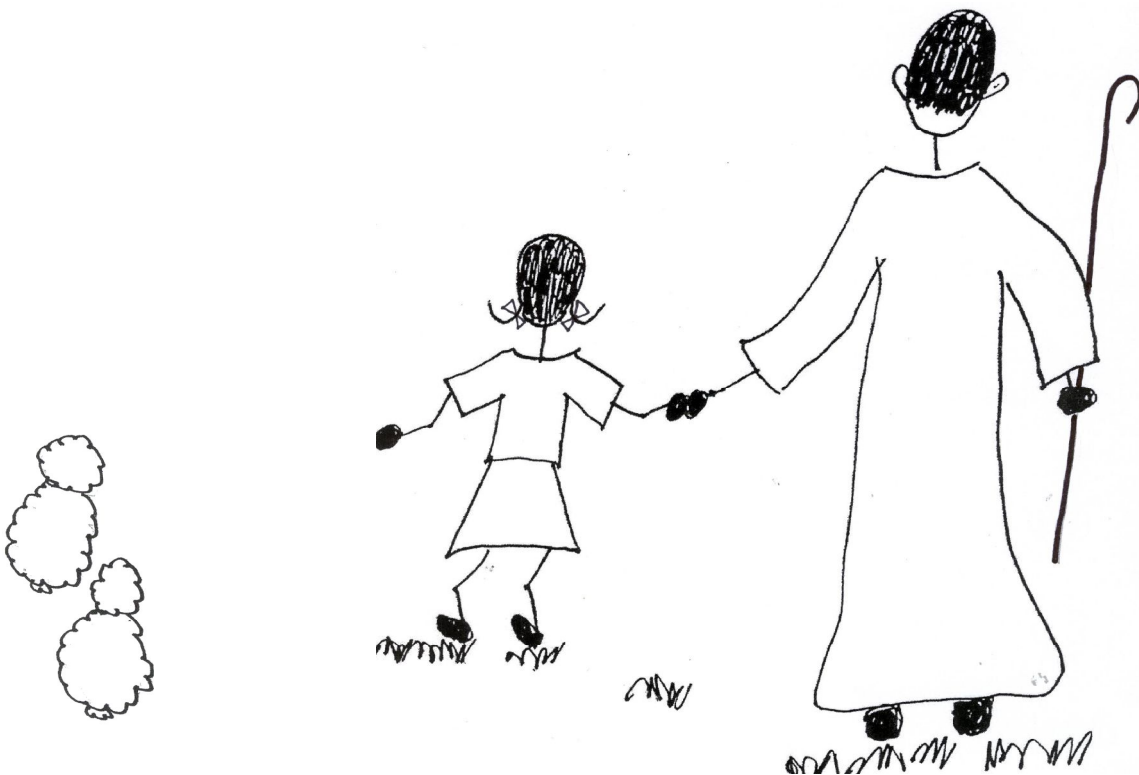


John 10 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

Sheep have no sense of direction. They can't find the barn! At night they have to be led into it. They can't clean themselves. Sheep are easily frightened and they panic! They can't defend themselves and they are helpless when injured. If one falls on his back, he can't get back onto his feet! They can't find food or water. Sheep are extremely helpless! Two things that settle and reassure the sheep are the sight of their shepherd and the sound of his voice. Sheep need a shepherd to care for them.



You made me just like a sheep. I have no sense of direction in the spiritual life without You. I can't clean myself from sin. You took care of that at the cross. You made it possible for me to be cleansed from sin. First, I had to become a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, when I sin, I can rebound. Then I'm "washed" and right back in fellowship with You. My emotions take over many times, and I become frightened and panic! You solved that problem too! You gave me ten problem solving devices to use in times of trouble to fight off my enemies: the old sin nature, Satan, and the cosmic system. When I injure myself in the cosmic system by sinning, You gently get me back on the right path with You. You give me spiritual food and water: Bible doctrine and the filling and power of the Holy Spirit. You settle and reassure me. You are my Shepherd; I am Your sheep and I need You to care for me!



Deuteronomy 31:6 Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the One Who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you.

Psalm 23:1
A Psalm of David.
The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.
or
A song of David.

The Lord [Jesus Christ] is the one who keeps on shepherding me; I cannot lack anything.

Through Your word, the Bible, I know that Your child David wrote this when he was at the lowest point of his life. He had many, many troubles. David had been a shepherd and he understood the needs of sheep. He also understood the job of a shepherd. He compared himself to a weak sheep. He knew that You would take care of **all** of his needs just as he had taken care of his sheep. He knew that he didn't earn or deserve Your care, but that it was a grace gift. He looked to You as his Shepherd! I look to You as my Shepherd! I know that no

matter what happens in my life, You are going to be there and have ready whatever is best for me at that moment!

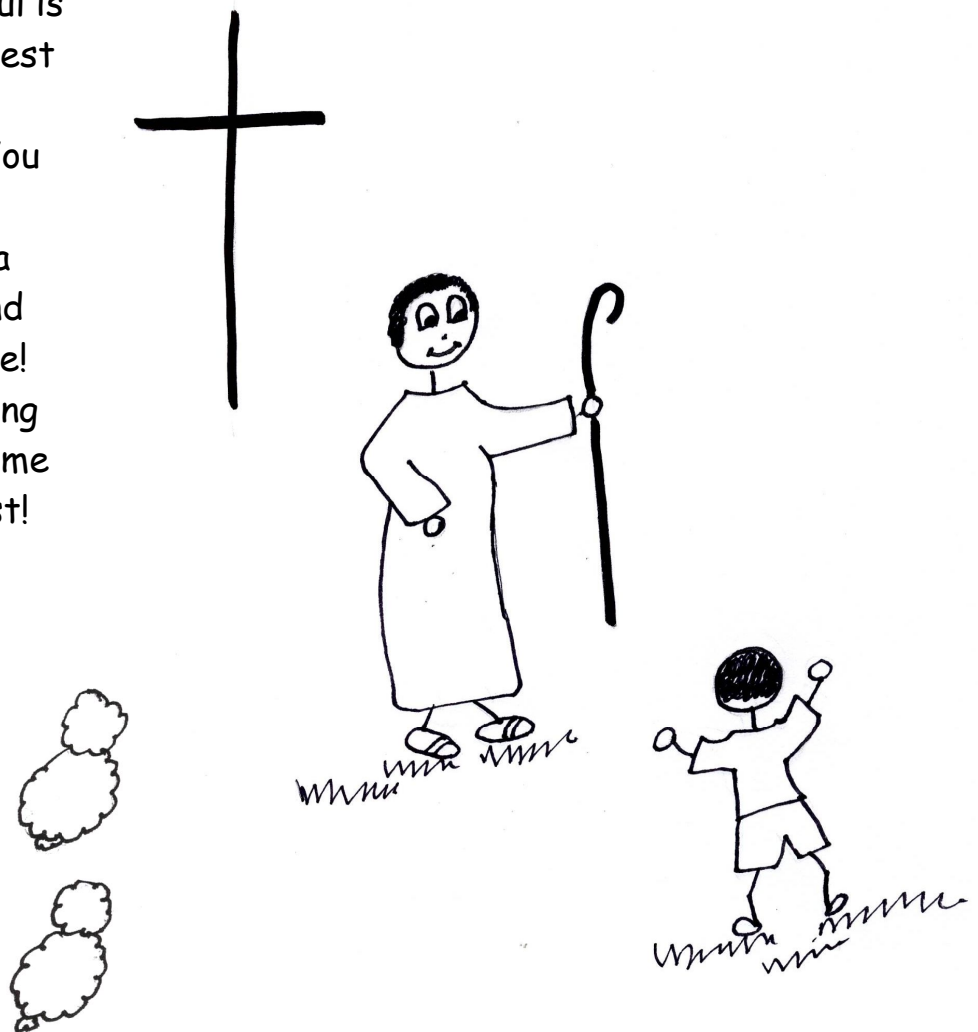


Psalm 23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters.

or

He causes me to lie down in pastures of choice grass; He leads me to waters of refreshment.

Just as You did to David, You cause me to "lie down in pastures of choice grass" of Your word, Bible doctrine. You give me food for my soul. You have provided the way for me to do this through the three spiritual skills: the filling of the Holy Spirit; perception, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine; and the use of the ten problem-solving devices. When I am filled with the Holy Spirit, my thirsty soul is satisfied and can digest or metabolize Bible doctrine, its food. You lead me to waters of refreshment. What a great, refreshing, and nourishing place to be! You provide everything that I need to make me grow and give me rest!



Psalm 23: 3 He restores my soul [rebound]; He guides me in the paths of righteousness [predesigned plan of God] for His name's sake [for His reputation].

David praised You for bringing him back to You and guiding him in grace and truth. He knew that You did all of this because of Who and what You are; because of Your reputation. I thank You for rebound and Your predesigned plan to restore my soul. You are always doing for me in grace, and You are glorified when I take what You give me and grow in that knowledge and grace. It shows Your wonderful reputation. You are always faithful, even when I am not, and for that You deserve the credit! Praise be to You, my dear Shepherd!



Psalm 23: 4 Even though I walk through the valley [place of shelter and transport] of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod [divine discipline] and Your staff [divine deliverance], they comfort me.

My dear Shepherd, David knew that You would walk with him through the valleys of life and the valley of death. He feared nothing because You were with him. David had many frightening things going on in His life, but he **walked through** the valley. He didn't run! His walking showed the steady growth of a soul which knows its road, its destiny. He felt safe and secure. He knew that You would never take Your sheep down a path which You had not already walked. Therefore, he was at peace. Even though there was the possibility of David being killed, he considered death a shadow, and You were the Light. He kept his eyes on You! It was comfort for David, as it is for me, to know that You bring Your children back to the path by Your rod, discipline. Then it was such a comfort for David to be delivered and protected by Your staff, which is comfort for me, also. Both the rod and the staff keep us, Your children, close to You. My confidence in You, my Shepherd, gives me courage. "Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me." Thank You, my Shepherd!



Psalm 23: 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil [promoted David]; my cup overflows.

I have learned that according to the law of hospitality in the Ancient Middle East, once a traveler was received into the shepherd's tent, and especially once the host had prepared a table and set food before him, he was guaranteed protection from any enemies. David was saying that You were letting his enemies know that they were not to harm him in any way! He was protected by You! Your food on the table for me is metabolized doctrine which forms the ten problem-solving devices. Through them and the power of the Holy Spirit, I am protected. The anointing of the head with oil is a sign of promotion. You promoted David because of where he was in his spiritual life. You promote me according to where I am in my spiritual life. You are glorified by my promotion because You have done the work! You give me blessings which make my cup, my soul, overflow. You are always taking care of Your sheep!



Psalm 23: 6 Surely goodness [prosperity] and lovingkindness [grace] will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

You lead me through life so that I can become a mature believer. Then, You will give me blessings that will knock my socks off! And You will bless not only me but also those around me! You are too cool! You shepherd me through life so that I can enjoy, in Your timing, a happy death. You give me dying grace, a special grace at the time of death! You lead me to a great eternity with You! Your goodness and grace follow me all the days of my life, and I will live in Your house forever!



To My Shepherd From Your Sheep

References: Robert McLaughlin Bible Ministries
www.gbible.org

Lessons from the Arizona conference, January 11-13, 2008,
1-16-08, 1-18-08