

The One Who is Our Shepherd



God Revealed In His Names (Part 8)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we continue with our theme that has yielded so many rich truths, God Revealed in His Names, what we can now about God from the various names given Him in Scripture.

In my past four talks I've been dealing with the covenant names of Jehovah, names that portray various aspects of God's covenant keeping faithfulness in his dealings with man. The four names I've dealt with so far are: First, the one who provides; second, the one who heals; third, the one who is our banner; fourth, the one who is our peace. Let me say those again and you remember I suggested that you might try in the course of this week to memorize. I believe it would be a tremendous source of encouragement to you. The four names I've already dealt with are: first, the one who provides; second, the one who heals; third, the one who is our banner; fourth, the one who is our peace.

Today I'm going to deal with the fifth of these covenant names, the one who is our shepherd. For this I turn to one of the most familiar passages of the scripture, the 23rd Psalm, so often called "The Shepherd's Psalm." And in the course of my talk today I'll be working through the verses of this psalm in order. We'll begin with verse 1 where this title of Jehovah is found.

> "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

I'm amazed how much scripture can say in so few words. Particularly, in the original Hebrew. It might interest you to now that in Hebrew that entire first verse of Psalm 23 consists of only four words. I'll say them for you in Hebrew. Adoni Roi, that's "the Lord is my shepherd." Lo eschtha, "I shall not want." Think how much is contained in those four words. Saying it again in English, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." That's the most amazing statement, isn't it? "I shall not want." Every need that could ever arise in my life will be met. I'll never find myself in a situation where there is something that I really needed that is not available to me. The Lord has guaranteed that to me. Out of his relationship with me and mine with him because "the Lord is my shepherd, I

shall not want."

The Living Bible says, "Because the Lord is my shepherd, I have everything I need." Think of all that's contained in that beautiful name, the Lord my shepherd. It's so important to see that it's a personal relationship with God as a person and this is the basis for everything else.

It's also an individual relationship. David says, "The Lord is my shepherd." It's very direct, very personal. In Psalm 80:1, which is a psalm of David, David says:

> "Give ear, O shepherd of Israel, thou who dost lead Joseph like a flock; thou who art enthroned above the cherubim, shine forth!"

So, the Lord is the shepherd of Israel as a people. And David could have said in Psalm 23, "The Lord is our shepherd" but it wouldn't have meant nearly as much as saying, "The Lord is my shepherd." Can you say that? "The Lord is my shepherd." Do you have that individual, direct, personal relationship with the Lord?

I remember having grown up in the Anglican Church in Britain where I was always trained to speak about Jesus Christ, our Lord and our savior. I met a little lady in a humble home and she said, "my Lord." And a little while later she said, "my savior." And I thought to myself, "I can't say that. I don't have that relationship. In a general way, I can say our Lord and our Savior, but I don't understand how she can say "my Lord and my Savior." Thank God, today I do. I have that relationship. It's individual. It's personal. It's direct. "The Lord is my shepherd."

Let's look at what flows out of this relationship in the rest of the psalm. Verse 2:

> "He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside quiet waters."

The Lord provides all the nourishment that I need. Of course, primarily we're thinking in terms of spiritual nourishment. He gives me clear, pure water and fresh clean grass. Everything is clean, fresh, health giving. Verse 3:

> "He restores my soul; he guides me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

I love that word "restore." It means to put back in the right condition, to refresh, to renew. Do you ever feel jaded and tired and worn and frayed? Do you know that it's possible to have your soul restored? The Lord can put you back fresh, confident, strong? He restores our soul. He guides me in the paths of righteousness. He makes sure that I follow the right way. You know that there are so many ways in life? So many choices? Do you ever feel confused and uncertain as to which road to take? When you know the Lord as your shepherd he leads you and he guides you in the paths of righteousness. And then it says, "For his name's sake." That blesses me, too. Because his name doesn't change. It doesn't depend on whether I'm weak or strong. It depends on his name. His honor is at stake. He's guaranteed his name that he's going to do it. His name is attached to the very word shepherd, the Lord, my shepherd. Verse 4:

> "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me."

There are times in life when we do go through the valley of the shadow of death. I don't think that's always when we're personally at death's door but there are times when we go through darkness; everything seems to cave in, everything seems to go wrong, we don't know where to turn, we don't know whom to trust, the pressures build up but you can say like David, "Even in the midst of that valley I fear no evil; for thou art with me." His presence is guaranteed. David goes on, "Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." You know, there are two aspects to that. At least, this is the way I see it. The rod is discipline, the staff is comfort. Sometimes we want the staff but not the rod. But you'll notice the rod comes first. When we accept God's discipline in our lives then his comfort is made available to us. So, even in the midst of the valley, the dark valley; the dark, lonely valley.

I remember lying one year on end in hospital with a disease that doctors apparently were not able to cure. Believe me, that was a dark, long, lonely valley. But the Lord was with me all through it and brought me out at the other end stronger than I'd ever been before. The Lord is my shepherd.

We now look at verse 5:

> "Thou dost prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; thou hast anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows."

What really blesses me there is that all this is in the presence of our enemies. Right there where everything is against us, God provides the best. He spreads a banquet, he prepares a table. And there are our enemies like wolves out in the darkness, scared away by the light of the campfire, prowling around but afraid to come into the light and there God provides his best. It will be good to have a banquet provided by the Lord anywhere but it's as good to have it in the

presence of your enemies. And to know that because the Lord is there, he is the shepherd, they can't touch you. They cannot touch you, you're safe. Even in the presence of your enemies.

Then David says, "thou hast anointed my head with oil; my cup overflows." Not merely do we have enough for ourselves, we have enough for others.

And then we come to that last verse, verse 6:

> "Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

You see, no matter what situation we're in, no matter what we have to go through, there are two unchangeable factors in our lives: the goodness of the Lord and the lovingkindness of the Lord. That word lovingkindness in Hebrew is Hafed. It particularly means "the faithfulness of God to his covenant commitment." So, the Lord has committed to be my shepherd. He'll never break it. His goodness and lovingkindness are always with me.

And then consider the meaning of that last sentence, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." Do you know what that tells me? Whatever I'm doing, wherever I'm going, I'm on my way home. I'm going home to the place the Lord has provided for me.

I live in a little island in the middle of the city where I am and there's just one road in and it's the same road off and there used to be a sign as you got to the bridge that led onto that little island that said "Dead End" because there was no exit. And I used to look at that sign and say to myself, "Dead End." And then I'd say, "Well, it may be a dead end for some people but for me it's the way home." And that's how it is if you know the Lord. What others call a "Dead End" for you is the way home. You know that you're going to be living in the house of the Lord forever, mo matter what you have to go through. He'll be with you and you'll know your destination. You're on your way home. No dead ends for you. Dead ends are for the people that don't know God but for you the dead end is the way home.

So that's just a personal reflection on that beautiful psalm.

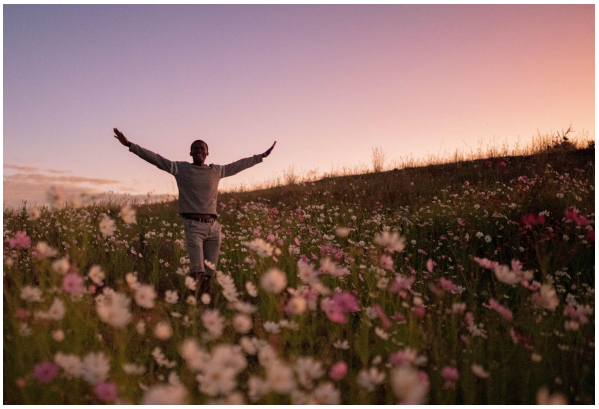
All right. Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll continue with these covenant names of Jehovah. I'll be speaking about the sixth covenant name, the one who is our righteousness.

Bible Teaching Resources



Books

Illuminate and expand your understanding of the Bible with the Derek Prince collection of Christian books.



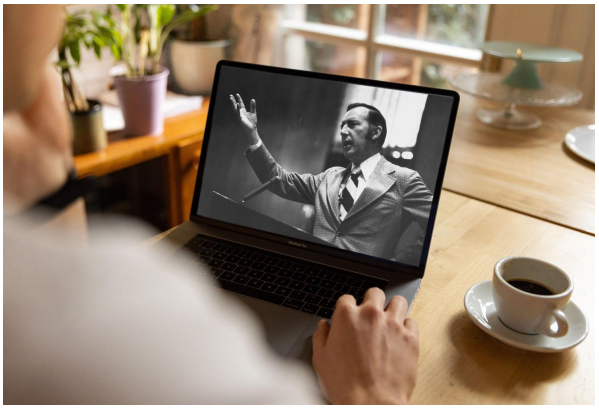
Daily Devotionals

Browse free biblically inspired daily devotionals by Derek Prince for practical teachings to uplift your Christian faith.



Legacy Radio

Listen to inspiring 10-minute messages and connect faith to life with the Derek Prince Legacy Radio podcast.



Sermons

Watch original and digitally remastered sermons by Derek Prince. Includes full message transcripts (free download).



Official App

Available free, download the official Derek Prince Ministries app and equip your faith, anywhere, anytime.



Proclamations

Declare life and experience the transformative power of God's Word with our bible-based Proclamations.

Copyright © Derek Prince Ministries