

COMPANION SHEPHERD, PSALM 23:3,4

Let us consider another beautiful thought for today. Let us meditate. Let us reflect. Let us take time to give tender concern and care over the Word of God today. The second great picture in the beautiful little sunny Psalm 23 that we see is: the Companion Shepherd. This is a beautiful Psalm and it is so beautiful to, not only have a Physician Shepherd to heal us and to minister to our needs whether they be spirit, soul, or body, but we have a Companion Shepherd. One that can walk with us and One that can talk with us.

We find these words in the little Psalm in verses three and four that pertain to the great picture of Jesus Christ the Companion Shepherd. The Word of God says here, particularly in verse four:

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me (Psalm 23:3,4).

And as we examine the word *rod* in the Hebrew to see the different usages of this word, it is a beautiful Hebrew word, *shay-bet*, which means a rod, not only, beloved, to defend and protect, but it is a rod that feeds. It is a rod that corrects. One way to ascertain the beautiful meaning of the Word of God is to look in another place where God may explain by using the same word. In Isaiah, the eleventh chapter, in verse four, we find what the rod really is. We find these words:

But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked (Isaiah 11:4).

It is the same word for *rod* that is used in Psalm 23. What a beautiful thought that with the words of his mouth, his Word is like a rod to chasten us. His Word is like a rod to defend. His Words that have come out of His wonderful mouth are like a rod to lead and to guide and to feed.

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No wonder the Bride said in the Song of Solomon that she wanted to know Him and to be like Him. So, again, in the little prophet of Micah in the Word of God, we find the same word, *rod*, used again, and we can see then how He comforts us with the Word out of His mouth. In Micah, the seventh chapter, and verse fourteen, we find this precious Word saying:

Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old (Micah 7:14).

So we find God commanding His undershepherds to feed His people with the *Rod*, with the Word that comes out of His mouth. So it does not matter if we go through low places, low valleys, lonely places, dark places, even the shadow of death where there might be lurking all kinds of enmity and opposition from fallen Lucifer, we do not have to be concerned. We do not have to be anxious. We do not have to have fear in our souls because the Word of God, the Rod of God will feed us. It was a definite fact that in eastern customs that the sheep that stayed nearest the feet of the shepherd that he used his long rod and a crook in the top of the rod and a curved knife that he would cut down branches from the trees, choice branches and fruits. As he led his sheep out to a new pasture, he would feed, then, those sheep that were close to his feet with food from the trees nearby. So we find here in the Word of God that God commanded His undershepherds to feed His people with the Rod, with the Word of God.

And then, again, if we look in Psalm, the second chapter, we find these words in chapter two, verse nine.

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psalm 2:9).

So we find, beloved, that the Word of God, the Rod out of His mouth, that He is going to comfort us with as we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, through the darkness of

this world, that that rod will not only break the power of the enemy against us that would prevent us from progressing in our spiritual journey, but this Rod, this Word out of the mouth of Jesus Christ, will also break our hardness, break our wills, and melt us, so that we can become tender and kind and merciful and true. And, likewise, we find in the Word of God, in Proverbs, the twenty-ninth chapter, that he has something else for us through the Rod and that is in chapter twenty-nine, fifteen. He said:

The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame (Proverbs 29:15).

The Word of God that is given to you by the Shepherd, and the undershepherds of God, is a rod of reproof to you. It is a rod to your back. The Word of God says; if you spare the rod, you hate the child. But if you give him the rod, he feels secure. And when we are walking with Jesus Christ in the valleys of this world and the darkness of this world, and He speaks to us with the Rod of Truth out of His mouth, though it will reprove us, though it will correct us, it will also give us security and give us a sense of protection because we are sure. We know that He loves us because He cares enough to minister His Rod. And a child that is left to himself will bring shame to his parents. So, beloved, the Bible says, “Whom God loveth, He chasteneth.” So whom He loves, He gives us the Word of reproof and correction. And Paul said, in Second Timothy: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:16,17). So the Word of God will reprove us, the Word of God will show us how to walk more perfectly in Jesus Christ. The Word of God will show us how to be a bright and shining example for Jesus.

He is a Companion Shepherd that never leaves us, never forsakes us, walks with us in the

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darkest of trials and temptations, walks with us in the valley of the shadow of death. And in that experience, he gives unto us His Precious Word out of His mouth—the Rod out of His mouth that will defeat the enemy, that will defeat our own carnal nature, that will make us more like Him, that will feed us that we might grow spiritually and that will correct us.

How good is our Companion Shepherd.

Precious Jesus, we ask You, now, today, in that wonderful, holy Name, that Name that is above every name, to bless every word out in radio land today. We ask you to bless every heart that is listening. Mete unto them the Precious Word of God. Quicken it and bless it that they might grow in the grace and knowledge of the LORD and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen. □