

Psalm 23

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It is through pain sheep learn to stay with their shepherd. Sheep are prone to wander. Sometimes sheep refuse to return when the shepherd calls, forcing the shepherd to gently break his leg to teach him to stay close.

With love and care the shepherd splints the broken leg then carries it to a new and safe place of pasture. This hurts the shepherd because he loves the sheep but he knows pain is a great teacher. Wounded, the sheep has no other choice but to stay close to the shepherd, to go only where the he leads, and trust him completely for every need.

Like sheep, we are prone to wonder. Our adventurous nature can lead us to dangerous places and cause us to make detrimental choices. Sometimes we don't see the danger but our Shepherd does. He calls us by name: sometimes we return, sometimes we refuse. In love He allows pain to touch us in order to teach us.

Read Hebrews 12:6

Who does the Lord discipline?

He lovingly tends to our wounds and carries us to new, safe, and quiet places. He knows when wounded we will stay close to Him, going where He leads, completely trusting Him to supply all our needs.

“Fear No evil”

Wolves prowl around low to the ground hoping to capture their prey without warning. A good shepherd is alert, carries a rod and staff, and sleeps at the gate to protect his flock from evil.

Though we have an enemy (1Pt 5:8), with God as our good Shepherd alert at the gate of our heart, we have nothing to fear.

Read Isaiah 41:10.

What does God do for those who are tempted to fear?

Friends, there is not need to fear. Our good Shepherd provides so we shall not want and His love allows pain teach us. He stands by the gate ready to strike evil with His rod and staff. We can count on His goodness and mercy to follow us all the days of our lives.

Personal Reflection and Application. Read John 10:1-18

What has God revealed to me in this lesson? How will I respond?
