

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

*preached by Rev Theophilus A. Ogunnaike
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We thank God this morning because Jesus Christ is our portion. If it is true that we have Christ, then we lack nothing. You might be thinking of what you lack that is so painful to you and that brings sorrow whenever you remember it. Christ is telling you in this sermon that if He is your portion and your possession, then, you lack nothing. The theme of the sermon is The Good Shepherd.

We all know the animal called sheep. A sheep is a meek and useful animal. Sheep is economically useful because of their wool that is used for textile materials. In the Old Testament, sheep rearing was the work of God's children, particularly the Israelites.

The Bible makes it clear to us that when reference is made to a sheep, it denotes something greater than just an animal. A sheep is so meek that it is used to represent those who know God. In the Bible, those referred to as sheep are those that are godly. If reference is made to goats or other unruly animals that are stubborn, then the ungodly people are being referred to.

Therefore, we want to focus our mind on the sheep and the Shepherd. The children of God are the sheep of God. Jesus Christ is the Shepherd. In Psalm 23 we read, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." In John 10:11, the Lord tells us that He is the Shepherd. "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

When the Psalmist said, "The Lord is my shepherd," we all know that Someone Who is great in Heaven and on earth is the Good Shepherd. The Psalmist who wrote this song is also a shepherd in the flesh. David the shepherd reared his father's sheep.

"He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters." This was David's habit towards his sheep whenever he took them out to the field to graze. After grazing, he would lead them to the valley of still waters to drink and later return them home.

"He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." That is the work of a shepherd. If we follow wisely what David the shepherd wrote here that the Lord is his own Shepherd, it surpasses a sheep as an ordinary animal. It is the Lord Whom David called his Shepherd. David is a human being, but a sheep spiritually and Jesus is his Shepherd. As David cared for his sheep, so the Lord his Creator cared for him. As David tried to protect the sheep from the lion and other wild animals, so the Lord Who created Heaven and earth protected and cared for him.

Let us drive the point home, the Psalmist meant that all the children of God are God's sheep. What we read in this Psalm is the way the Lord cares for His children. David said, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Put yourself in that position, if you are a child of God. The children of God do not lack anything. Jesus Christ is our Shepherd. What are the needs we are referring to here? The need of good things. 'The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but the children of God will never lack any good thing. What is that good thing? Salvation, sanctification, baptism of the Holy Ghost, healing, and other provisions from God. These are the good things the Psalmist prayed for. This is the portion of the children of God. David's life showed that he lacked nothing good, so also the children of God that follow Him shall not lack any good thing.

If God is our Father, and we are children of the King, can we lack anything? No! The Creator of Heaven and earth was not reluctant to give His only begotten Son to die for us. Then, what else can He not give us?



In this gathering, many may lack one thing or another, but our Creator, Who knows us, Who has all power in Heaven and on earth tells us that we shall lack nothing. Do you believe that? I do. May God increase our faith. Whatever is your desire, be it children, food, house or good health, our heavenly Father will meet your needs. The children of God own the Heaven and the earth because their Father owns them.'

The Lord has brought us here to the green pastures and is feeding us with heavenly diet, not remnants. May the Lord continue to feed our souls with this heavenly Manna.

Our hearts must not despise this food. Those that despise the food are they that will lack forever. This is the reason why sinners and worldly people are lacking good things. But when they come to Jesus, humble themselves, and decide to eat the Food of Life, then, they will have everything and will never lack again. In order to continue to have this good portion, they must -continue to lie in the green pastures to eat and drink that which is from God. If our heart desires it and does not despise it, Heaven and earth will pass away, but all that God promises His children, He will fulfil.

What does Jesus lack in His treasury? Think about it and tell me what you feel He does not have. When Jesus promises anything, does He not give it? Does He say something and does not do it? No. Is our God a human being? No. Can you not recall Balaam's saying that God is not a man that He should lie? He says something and does just that. He will surely fulfil His promises. It might seem delayed, but His delay is no denial. If Heaven and earth pass away, His Word will surely be fulfilled. We should therefore rejoice. We should not listen to the devil's saying that we have been forgotten. Can a woman forget her child? No. Even if it is possible for her to forget, our God will never forget us. The Lord will deliver us from all evil because we are His sheep. What protection surpasses that? May the Lord help us.

It is the same Bible we are reading that some other gatherings read, but they could not see the fulfilment of the promise of God. This song of the Psalmist does not avail for them. Why not? Because the Lord is not their Shepherd. They do not follow or listen to Him. If you are in Christ, all His promises will avail for you. The Lord said, 'Heaven and earth may pass away, but the Word that comes out of His mouth will never pass away unfulfilled.' I have tried it in this glorious Gospel and found it so.

After some people might have read this portion of the Scriptures, expecting blessings to come from above, they will not wait, they will still want to run about to seek help from other places contrary to the Word of God. You do not need to run anywhere. If you are a child of God, after you have prayed to God, the next thing to do is to wait for the salvation of God. It will surely come. You cannot miss it if you wait on the Lord; and that is what the Psalmist is saying. What you need do is to become one of the sheep of Christ.

If you are one of His sheep, no matter what happens to you on earth, the blessings of God will come to meet you. Only wait on the Lord. You only need to be firm and consistent. Do not run helter skelter. Be honest, be straightforward with the Lord; don't have a double mind; just wait on the promises of God. If you stand firm, you will not be ashamed. Do your own part by waiting on the Lord and you will never be ashamed. God will fulfil His promise.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me." This is the faith of the Psalmist. It may happen to you and me. You may be in a confused state and it may seem death is hanging over you, wanting to swallow you. Do not run around; you don't need to seek help from anybody; you need the help of God. All you need do is to wait on the Lord.

Look at the case of Daniel. Who could have helped Daniel in the den of lions? Only the Lord Jesus Christ Who went to him in the den. God is the only Mighty One that can do that.

"Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." I don't want us to overlook that statement. If you are indeed a sheep of Jesus Christ, expect the rod and the staff from Him. The Lord chastens the child He loves. Chastening does not mean that the Lord does not love us. The Bible says that anybody who hates his child will not correct him, but if you love your child, you will apply the rod of correction.

David is telling us his experience here how God corrected him. Anytime he committed sin, God reprimanded him, and that was a comfort to him. David was able to sail through as a child of God. The Lord is saying the same thing to us that we should run to Him in the time of trouble because He is our God. We do not need to run away from the Lord anytime we have trouble or problem. It may be a correction from God, because He is a loving Father Who will not leave His child to rot away. He will

reprimand or correct him so that the child will be useful, and so the Lord will not be ashamed of him as a child. If truly we are children of God, then, we must be corrected. In fact, we should always be praying to God that He should correct us when we make mistakes.

If the Lord refuses to correct us, then we are in danger. We must be corrected by God. We must be liberated from the bondage of sin, from the world and from Satan through Jesus Christ. If He has liberated us, He has made us His portion, His inheritance; therefore, He will keep and take care of us.

You know what happens to young ones who are not corrected. You young ones should not be annoyed when your parents correct you; they want you to be good children. You can see your mates outside the fold of the Gospel, who refused to be corrected; they have turned to robbers, murderers, rogues and vagabonds. They just roam the streets and commit sins day and night, and so, many of them have been destroyed. Therefore, if God continues to correct us as His children, then, we will not lack any good thing, because He is our God.

The Bible says, 'The line has fallen unto us in goodly places, we have a goodly heritage.' What is the heritage? It is Jesus Christ. He is in possession of whatever we may need, and if He has liberated us, we must abide in Him. We are rich people, if Jesus continues to be our God.

"Thou preparest a table before me, in the presence of my enemies, thou anointest my head with oil and my cup runneth over." This is exactly what the Lord does for us. He prepares a table before us and gives us the Bread of Life. He has filled our heart with His Spirit and used the power of Heaven to surround us.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Goodness and mercy are the portion of the children of God. Why should goodness and mercy follow me all the days of my life? Because Jesus Christ is my inheritance. He is the Giver of good things.

Now, the Bible says, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' Some people run around to look for money and promotion, but they may not find them. Promotion, money and all good things are with Jesus Christ right here in the Gospel. Come to the Gospel and you will have good things.

The Psalmist said, goodness and mercy shall follow him. What are we looking for? Everybody is seeking the goodness and mercy of God. What is the goodness? The salvation of God is our goodness. Jesus laid down His life to obtain this for us. But a hireling, who is not the shepherd, because he does not own the sheep, he saw danger coming, he deserted the sheep and ran away, allowing the lion to devour the sheep and scatter them. He does not care about the sheep because he is only a hireling and not the shepherd.

'I am the Good Shepherd, I know my sheep and my sheep know me.' He laid down His life, and died so that we may not die. If any danger is coming to us, He will shield us. Can a father or a mother do that for a child? No. Or can a child do that for the parents? No. Jesus Christ, our Good Shepherd is the only One Who can shield us from danger.

If you do not have anything, as long as you have Christ, surely you have all things. If everybody deserts you and Jesus is with you, then you are well off. We have seen a case of someone blessed with many children, but none of the children catered for him in the time of distress. Only Jesus cares and protects His sheep. Even if people try to care for you, can they take you to Heaven? It is Jesus Christ, your Good Shepherd alone, Who can take you to Heaven. If Christ has not been your Shepherd, then, tell Him today that you want to belong to Him, that you want to be in His fold where sheep are protected and guarded, where provision and necessary help are given. Do not trust in man, but trust in Jesus Christ. He died for you to redeem you. Why don't you come to Him now? He will help you. Do not be outside the fold; come now into the fold and with Jesus, you are secure.