

# The Shepherd

Symbols, Metaphors, Similes



*"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with his arm, who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand" Isaiah 40:11*  
King James Bible

This one verse says so much about the Shepherd, and yet it is confusing in some ways. I think that Christ is using the shepherd as a metaphor to teach us what He is doing for us. A metaphor describes something in terms so as to create a picture to be more easily understood. When Jesus talks about the Good Shepherd he is describing His part and shows us how He is like a shepherd to us by laying down His life for us as the shepherd would give his life for his sheep. We can recall how He

told the disciples why He spoke in parables.

A shepherd knows his flock; he marks his sheep; and he seeks the lost or ones that have gone astray. A shepherd leads and guides his sheep and looks after those who are sick. He feeds his sheep. The shepherd watches continually and is compassionate. This verse also tells us that He gathers them in his arms. These attributes of the shepherd are much more pronounced when we compare them to the Good Shepherd, or as God is called in some places, The Great Shepherd.

According to the verse from Isaiah He does all these things. The part of the verse that talks about His measuring the waters in the hollow of His hand is interpreted by some to mean that He gives us what we need when we need it. He doesn't give us things we can't handle. In fact, we are often told that He will only give us what we can handle with His help, but I think this verse also includes not only our physical being, but our intellect. The Lord has the knowledge of medicine and many other things, but man can only comprehend so much. We are learning every day and God gives us that knowledge. So often, particularly in medicine, we want to know everything, but we can only handle so much knowledge and we need to be patient. But it is human nature to want the knowledge of medicine that would help us now, or that would have helped our loved ones when they were suffering. We seek the knowledge of the whole universe, but if you stop

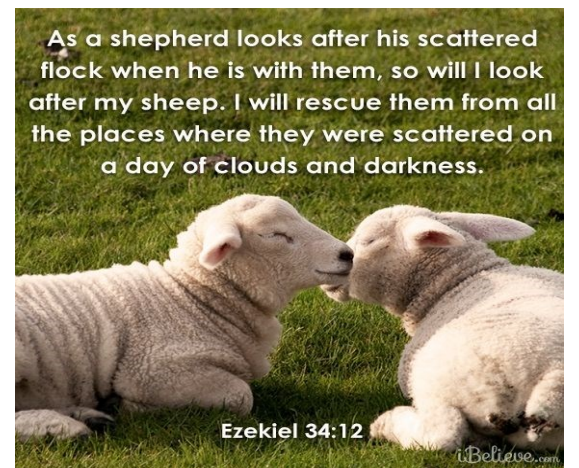
*Greater love has no one than this,  
than to lay down one's life for his friends.*  
John 15:13



and think how we have sometimes done the wrong thing with the basic knowledge God gave us, perhaps we should understand why He only gives us so much at a time.

God measures what we can handle. The main thing we need to remember is He also gives us the power of prayer, and we can handle it with His help. That is not easy for us to do because we want to be self-sufficient!

In THE MESSAGE by Peterson he states the second part of the above verse as the Shepherd treating the sheep by "Hugging them as he carries them, leading the nursing ewes to good pasture." The compassion in



this interpretation is very evident and very rewarding to know that we are loved and carried by God. Hugging? What a wonderful feeling, especially by onewho loves us.

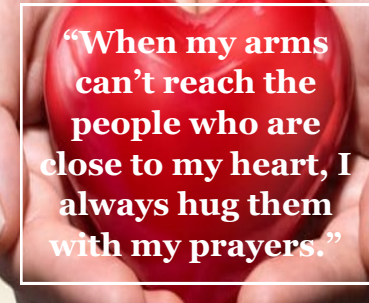
In John 10:11 we are told "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." He laid down His life for us when He came to earth as man to sacrifice so that we may have eternal life. We have been given safety, peace, and nourishment. In a poem by William Blake, called "The Shepherd," from his Songs of Innocence he wrote:

*"How sweet is the shepherd's sweet lot!  
From the morn to the evening he  
                strays;  
He shall follow his sheep all the day,  
And his tongue shall be filled with  
                praise.  
For he hears the lambs' innocent call,  
And he hears the ewes' tender reply;  
He is watchful while they are in peace,  
For they know when their shepherd is  
                nigh."*

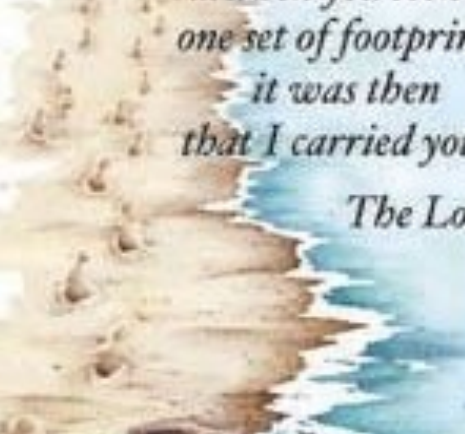
I know the Shepherd that hears the cries of the ewes and the lambs. He praises me. He hugs me when I need it. And from morning through the day He is with me. Do you know Him too?

*What do we mean when we say "The Lord is my Shepherd. He leadeth me."?*

**“HAVE I NOT COMMANDED  
YOU? BE STRONG AND  
COURAGEOUS. DO NOT BE  
TERRIFIED; DO NOT BE  
DISCOURAGED, FOR THE  
LORD YOUR GOD WILL BE  
WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.”  
JOSH 1:9:**

A close-up photograph of a pair of hands gently cupping a large, vibrant red heart. The heart is the central focus, with its glossy surface reflecting light. The hands are positioned around the heart, with fingers visible at the edges. Overlaid on the heart is a white-bordered box containing a quote in a bold, red, serif font. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color.

**“When my arms  
can’t reach the  
people who are  
close to my heart, I  
always hug them  
with my prayers.”**



*"...when you see only  
one set of footprints,  
it was then  
that I carried you".*

*The Lord*

Dear Heavenly Father, you are the Good Shepherd to us. Yet we sometimes stray and we call to You, and You always answer. Help us to remember that answer to our call every day and reach out to allow others to hear it too. Please continue to keep us and tender us in your flock today and every day. Amen

1. Why didn't God give us the cures for diseases when He allowed the diseases to inflict us?
2. Why does science only know certain things that seem to grow with each generation?
3. Why does the flower have all the knowledge and know what nutrients to take from the ground to grow beautiful flowers?
4. Should we stop to think that we are already the beautiful flower that God has given everything through His Son so that someday we will have everything?"?
5. Do you know you are being hugged?
6. How do the verses from I Corinthians 13:12-13 affect the work of the Shepherd. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly, but then face to face; Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."

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