

# The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 35-8.

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## The Shepherd Lord.

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“The Lord is My Shepherd: I Shall Not Want.”

Three thousand years have passed away since the sweet singer of Israel first sang this psalm about the shepherd care of God. Thirty centuries! It is a long time. And in that vast abyss all the material relics of his life, however carefully treasured, have moldered into dust.

The harp, from the strings of which his fingers swept celestial melody; the tattered banner, which he was wont to uplift in the name of the Lord; the well-worn book of the law, which was his meditation day and night; the huge sword, with which he slew the giant; the palace chamber, from which his spirit passed away to join the harpers harping with their harps—all these lie deep amid the debris of the ages.

But this psalm—though old as the time when Homer sang or Solon gave his laws, and though trodden by the myriads of men in every succeeding age—is as fresh today as though it were just composed. Precious words! They are the first taught to our children, and perhaps the Holy Child Himself first learned to repeat them in the old Hebrew tongue beside His mother's knee in Nazareth; and they are among the last that we whisper in the ear of our beloved ones, standing in the twilight between the darkening day of earth and the breaking day of heaven. The sufferer in the sick-chamber; the martyr at the stake; the soldier on his sentry duty; the traveller amid many perils; the Covenanter; the Huguenot; the Vaudois—these, and a multitude which no man can number, have found in these words a lullaby for fear, an inspiration to new life and hope. “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.”

“The Lord.” It is printed in small capital letters, and wherever that is the case we know that it stands for the mystic word Jehovah. And so much in awe did the Jews stand of that awful name that they substituted for it some lesser word for God wherever it occurred in their public reading of the sacred Scripture. Only once a year was it pronounced, and that on the great day of Atonement, by the high priest in the most holy place.

Jehovah means the Living One, the self-existent Being, the I AM; He who

was and is and is to come, who inhabiteth eternity, who hath life in Himself. All other life, from the aphid on the rose-leaf to the archangel before the throne, is dependent and derived. All others waste and change and grow old; He only is unchangeably the same. All others are fires, which He supplies with fuel; He alone is self-sustained. This mighty Being is our Shepherd. Lift up your heart to Him in lowly adoration, and say, “Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, Thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; Thou that dwellest between the cherubim, shine forth.”

But as we travel in thought down the ages we meet a gentle, weary Man on whom the shadow of coming sorrow hangs darkly. He is speaking within a few miles of the spot where these words had been first uttered some twelve hundred years before. Is it treason? Is it blasphemy? Is it the raving of lunacy? No; with all the marks of self-possession and sober truth He takes up these very words, and applying them to Himself, He says, “I am the Good Shepherd.”

Combine these two—the august word for the everlasting God and the tender word for the Saviour—and we have a worthy title for our Lord, Jehovah-Jesus. Let us read it into our psalm, and say, with a new appreciation of its meaning, “Jehovah-Jesus is my Shepherd.” What need can we have which may not be met by this twofold nature? As Jehovah He has all power; as Jesus all sympathy. As Jehovah He sustains all worlds; as Jesus He ever liveth to make intercession. As Jehovah He is sovereign Lord of all; as Jesus He still treads the pathways of this world by our side, whispering sweetly and softly in our ears, “Fear not, little flock.”

Now all this is true of our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of the sheep. He has a shepherd's heart, beating with pure and generous love that counted not His life-blood too dear a price to pay down as our ransom. He has a shepherd's eye, that takes in the whole flock, and misses not even the poor sheep wandering away on the mountains cold. He has a shepherd's faithfulness, which will never fail nor forsake, nor leave us comfortless, nor flee

when He seeth the wolf coming. He has a shepherd's strength, so that He is well able to deliver us from the jaw of the lion or the paw of the bear. He has a shepherd's tenderness—no lamb so tiny that He will not carry it; no saint so weak that He will not gently lead; no soul so faint that He will not give it rest. He pities as a father. He comforts as a mother. His gentleness makes great. He covers us with His feathers, soft and warm and downy; and under His wings do we trust.

Ah, He has done more! “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way.” Punishment and disaster were imminent; but Jesus, from His throne in eternity, saw the danger and was filled with compassion for the multitudes which were as sheep not having a shepherd. Therefore, because He was the Shepherd, He offered to give His own life as the substitute; and God laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Then was heard the terrible summons, “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd.” “He laid down His life for the sheep,” and thus redeemed the flock by the blood of the everlasting covenant. Praise Him! Praise Him!

“My.” What a difference comes in with that little word my! “The child is dead!” said one of the farm-servants who had carried the sick boy to his mother; “My child is dead!” said the mother. “This estate is well known to me; I have trodden every mile of it from childhood,” so speaks the gray-headed bailiff; “This is my estate,” thus speaks the heir. So in religion the difference between knowledge and appropriation is simply infinite. It makes all the difference between being saved or lost whether you say, “Jesus is a Saviour” or “Jesus has saved me;” whether you say, “The Lord is a Shepherd” or “The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.” Even if, like Thomas, you could see the Saviour in the clear light of reality, and have every doubt removed, and His hands offered to your touch, yet it would avail you but little unless you

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