

**THE SHEEP'S TRUST IN THE SHEPHERD'S LEADING**

- I. Where is the Shepherd leading to? II. What is the Shepherd leading through?  
III. What makes the sheep so trusting?

**I. WHERE IS THE SHEPHERD LEADING TO?**

- A. Setting of Ps. 23 is the mountainous regions of the Bible lands
1. Vs 4-6: shepherd leading flock from winter grounds to summer range
  
  2. During this time shepherd spends months completely alone with sheep
- B. The Shepherd of God's Church leads all His sheep according to His plan
1. He knows the way and He knows the destination
    - a. God has a plan for each of us
  
    - b. our life is no haphazard journey of random events
  
    - c. how do I know I am His sheep?
  
  2. Where is the spiritual Shepherd leading His people to?
    - a. vs. 2-3 refer to the initial leadings and 4-6 to ultimate leading
  
    - b. the Shepherd's purpose is to lead His sheep to glory
      - the glory of perfection (Eph. 5:25-27; Phil 3:20-21; Rom. 8:28-30)
  
      - the glory of eternal communion (Rev. 21:1-3; 22-23)

**II. WHAT IS THE SHEPHERD LEADING HIS SHEEP THROUGH?**

- A. To get to 'summer grazing grounds' is a *long, intense trek of weeks*
1. sheep don't get 'airlifted' but are to walk *valleys of shadows of death*

B. Why lead the sheep along these treacherous paths to top?

1. It is the only way to heights: Acts 14:22; John 16:33; Rom. 8:28

a. Christ's sheep are to keep in mind the 'end of the journey' (Rom. 8:18 & 2 Cor. 4:17-18)

b. Why are tribulations good?

2. It are also the best ways because of the presence of food and water (Ps. 119:50; 65, 67, 71-72, etc.)

### **III. WHAT MAKES THE SHEEP SO TRUSTING?**

A. Why does sheep confess: *I will fear no evil?*

1. Because the flock of sheep sense the shepherd's nearness

a. The shepherd's presence isn't loud but gentle and quiet

b. What is the Lord Jesus promise to His people? (Is. 43:2; 2 Chron. 16:9; 1 Peter 3:12; Matt. 27:20)

2. Because the shepherd's rod and staff comfort the sheep

a. rod and staff is/are the shepherd's main tool and weapons

● used to help – protect – guide – correct – defend – reassure

● all these are 'comforting' though at times 'wounding or hurting'

### **CLOSING REFLECTION: Do you so experience the Shepherd and His staff/rod?**

A. We learn to know Shepherd only as He works with us: *through Word/Spirit*

1. His Word is both *two-edged sword* and *sweet balm*

2. Christ's sheep are handled by the Shepherd through His Word and Spirit

a. not 'sensing this rod/staff' is very unsettling

b. 'sensing His rod/staff' is salvation

B. Are you a total stranger of the guiding rod/staff of Shepherd?

1. It is far more than knowing or holding to right creed!

2. It is being held and guided by the personal presence of the Shepherd