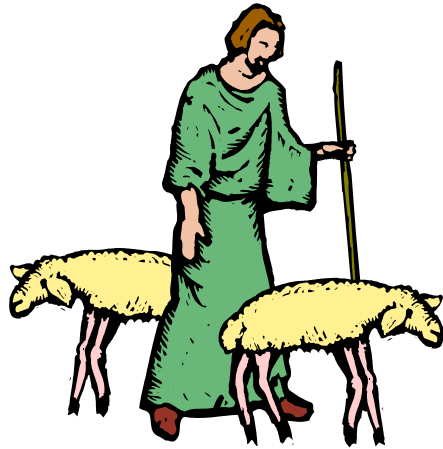


In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

Your house will be my home as long as I live. And not only that. You will welcome me into your heavenly home when my time here in the hills and dales of Yorkshire comes to an end.



***THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD;
THERE IS NOTHING I SHALL WANT***

PSALM TRANSLATION JOSEPH GELINEAU
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Praying with the Shepherd



The Lord is my shepherd

Here in these Yorkshire hills, you, Lord, are my Shepherd. You are my personal shepherd and also the shepherd of the sheep that I too look after.

There is nothing I shall want

In you I have everything I need. Though I veer towards human comfort, it will never satisfy me. Because it is human it will always have human limitations. But you, Lord, are no longer limited in a human body, though you have experienced it. You are the only one who can satisfy my real needs.

*Fresh and green are the pastures where
he gives me repose*

You let me rest in fields of green grass. The Dales pastures are lush. Sometimes the sky is blue and it is a 'good to be alive' day. Sometimes there is a lowering grey sky, full of rain, and it is windy, Pennine weather, but the grass is still green and juicy, and I can enjoy the food and the views and be refreshed.

*Near restful waters he leads me, to revive
my drooping spirit.*

....beside Ilkley Tarn... Semerwater...Malham
Tarn... small places of refreshment
surrounded by hills or trees. But other God-
given waters are the 'laughing waters'...
the tumbling streams tinkling through woods
and down hillsides...the smaller waterfalls of
Heber's Ghyll...and the greater ones of Janet's
Foss, West Burton Falls and Hardraw Scar.
They bring joy to the spirit as well as cold,
clear refreshment to my parched throat.

You give me new strength. How lovely It is to
lie in and sleep in a morning... But when I get
up and shower and come to meet you - I'm up
and running!

*He guides me along the right path; he is
true to his name.*

You guide me in the right ways. You hold me
and prevent me from rushing up self-chosen
paths. You give me affirming pointers - and
you never let me down.

*If I should walk in the valley of darkness,
no evil would I fear.*

Even though I go through the deepest dark-
ness, I will not be afraid, Lord. In places like
Gordale Scar or Troller's Ghyll, with steep,
rugged cliffs on either side, a difficult path to
climb, a limited view of the sky and a stream
with ankle-twisting boulders in the bottom.
You have been there in all the painful struggles
and brought me out at the other end. I will not
be afraid for you are with me.

*You are there with your crook and your staff; with
these you give me comfort.*

Your shepherd's crook and stick rein me in, protect me
and make me strong and brave.

*You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of
my foes*

You prepare a special feast for me, where all my enemies
can see me. But who are all these enemies? Maybe they
are the enemies of doubt and fear, and I am reassured and
vindicated. My spirits may sink, my future may be hidden
from me...but you know... You, God, never let me down.
Thank you, Lord!

*My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is
overflowing.*

You welcome me as an honoured guest and fill my cup to
the brim. You lay your hand in blessing on my head. A
firm and loving hand. And you pour perfumed oil on it.
The aroma will stay for some time. You welcome me and
make me feel at home. It is like a warming cup of tea when
I am cold... or a cup of ice-cold water in the heat of the
day...

*Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the
days of my life.*

I know that your goodness and love will be with me
throughout the whole of my life. As you have always been
to me, so you will always be.