

The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves. Now many saw them going and recognized them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things. And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” But he answered them, “You give them something to eat.” And they said to him, “Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?” And he said to them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.” And when they had found out, they said, “Five, and two fish.” Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men.

(Mark 6:30–44)

## Introduction

In our previous study, we saw a grievous banquet hosted by a wicked shepherd-king. In this study, we come to a passage about a glorious banquet held by a righteous shepherd-king. A banquet of gore is followed immediately in the text by a banquet of grace. What’s the point?

In this well-known passage, there are several biblical motifs, such as wilderness, a hungry multitude, spiritual leaders who struggle to believe God, and God’s miraculous provision to meet the need. But perhaps the overarching metaphor or picture is found in v. 34 where the crowd is likened to “sheep without a shepherd.”

To an Israelite, the concept of shepherd was not restricted to a person who cared for animals. The term also referred to one who ruled, such as a king. In fact, a good argument could be made that this was the predominate meaning, at least under the old covenant (see

---

Numbers 27:17; 2 Samuel 5:2; 7:7; 1 Kings 22:17; 2 Chronicles 18:16; Psalms 78:71; 80:1; Isaiah 44:28; Jeremiah 49:19; Ezekiel 34:5, 8, 11–12, 23; 37:24; Micah 7:14; Matthew 2:6; Revelation 7:17 with 2:27; 12:5; 19:15 [where “rule” translates the word for shepherd]; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25).

God intended those who ruled his people to watch for enemies trying to attack the sheep, to defend the sheep from attackers, and to heal the wounded and sick sheep. Interestingly, during World War II, a shepherd was a pilot who guided another pilot whose plane was partially disabled back to the base or carrier by flying alongside him to maintain visual contact.

The point is that God expected those who ruled over his people to seek their safety and security – their well-being.

I belabour this point because, in Mark 6, there seems to be a deliberate contrast between two very different shepherds or rulers: Herod and Jesus.

As Jesus was inundated by the crowds, he observed, not for the last time (Matthew 9:36–38) that Israel, God’s chosen nation, the sheep of God’s old covenant fold, were “without a shepherd.” This comes right on the heels of the account of politically expedient, sensually-controlled Herod. The people needed a new ruler. They needed a good shepherd. They needed *the* Good Shepherd. They needed Jesus. And so do we.

## The Shepherd’s Concern

In vv. 30–32, we read of the Good Shepherd’s concern:

The apostles returned to Jesus and told him all that they had done and taught. And he said to them, “Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest a while.” For many were coming and going, and they had no leisure even to eat. And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves.

(Mark 6:30–32)

The disciples had been sent by Jesus on mission (vv. 7–13) and had now returned. We can therefore understand Mark referring to them as “apostles,” which, of course, means “sent ones.”

They were eager to share with Jesus what they experienced and so, literally, they gathered to him (v. 30). One can sense their excitement as they told him “all that they had done and taught.”

After some time, Jesus invited them to come with him “to a desolate place.” We encountered this word several times in chapter 1, and Mark will use this term three times in chapter 6.

The word can be translated “desert” or “wilderness.” Mark is providing a verbal hint. Whatever else this story is about, the readers are to think of Jesus being with his people in the wilderness, much like God in old covenant days was with his people in the wilderness. Mark highlights two matters of concern that Jesus had for his disciples as they headed for the wilderness.

## Needed Fellowship

First, the Good Shepherd knew the disciples needed fellowship. Being active on mission for Jesus is wonderful but, as has been noted, to be active with Jesus on mission is more important. Ministry for Jesus is essential, but far more essential is communion with him.

Ministry is draining, and popular ministry can be very draining. It is clear from what follows that the disciples had been well-received and therefore multitudes followed. But there lies a danger with such success – the danger of fatigue and therefore focus.

We need to pause – frequently – to spend time worshipping Jesus if we will truly and fully and fruitfully work for him. We need to daily “come away” and “rest a while” at his feet or else we will come apart spiritually, and perhaps in other areas as well (relationally, physically, emotionally, and even mentally).

Jesus himself would retreat after ministry (see 1:32–35). If he needed this, how much more do we!

Another reason why such a retreat is necessary is because of the danger of relying on our own power for ministry rather than relying on the person and the power of God. For this reason, we need alone time with Jesus. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who cares for his sheep, including his appointed shepherds. In a valid sense, every disciple of Jesus who is involved in the mission of Jesus is a shepherd. If you are one of those, then let him shepherd you to health and to vigour and to fruitfulness. View the Lord’s Day as such an opportunity. Begin, and/or end each day with a time of retreat and rest in solitude with him. Gather with other disciples to do this.

## Needed Rest

Second, the Good Shepherd knew they needed rest. We should not miss this. Ministry can be exhausting, and so a holiday is needed.

Note that, according to old covenant law, the prescribed (seven) annual feasts amounted to several weeks of holiday each year. Added to this were the various sabbatical days prescribed by God. It is worth asking, has the human constitution so changed over the centuries that we do not also require days and seasons of rest? No, it has not. As Robert Murray McCheyne lamented at the end of his life, “The Lord gave me a horse to ride, and a message to deliver, alas, I have killed the horse and cannot deliver the message.” He died at 29!

As someone has well said, “Rest is not a sedative for the sick, but tonic for the strong” (Mrs Charles Cowman). So, serve the Lord with great zeal (which is the message that many need to heed) and then enjoy a nap – today!

It is helpful to observe that Jesus himself knew the pressures of ministry, and as here, there were times when he was so inundated by the crowds in need of ministry that he also could not find time to eat (3:20). Here, he shows deep concern for his disciples. He would not let them go without food for his sake. He cared more for them than for himself. What love!

## The Good Shepherd’s Compassion

Verses 33–34 highlight the Good Shepherd’s compassion:

Now many saw them going and recognised them, and they ran there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And he began to teach them many things.

(Mark 6:33–34)

I love this scene. It provides a beautiful insight into the kindness of Jesus. We have a beautiful example of divine compassion. Jesus’ compassion was revealed by what he knew the sheep needed.

## The Need to Be Led

As I mentioned previously, to more fully appreciate this scene, it is helpful to refer to the parallel scene in Matthew 14. There, it is clear that the disciples had returned after John the Baptist was beheaded. It seems that Jesus combined the call to the disciples to retreat with his own desire for a time away. He was mourning; he was grieving over the death of his cousin and faithful messenger. This context helps us to appreciate even more how good our Shepherd is.

As Jesus and his disciples departed the shores of Galilee, the crowds noticed. They raced to beat them to their destination. The lake was small enough that the crowds could do so

on foot. So, as Jesus and the disciples, arrived, a very large crowd had gathered. We should pause for a moment.

This large crowd would, by the end of the day, grow to five thousand men (v. 44). Matthew adds that this number did not include women and children, which either means that the crowd comprised only men or that, in addition to these five thousand, there were also thousands of women and children.

Regardless, this was a huge crowd. When you consider that Capernaum perhaps had a population of two thousand, and that Nazareth was even smaller, this crowd was from far and wide. Most likely, these people were the fruit of the recent mission from which these disciples had returned. Their popularity was growing, but why? John provides some insight when he writes, “Perceiving then that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by himself” (John 6:15). The multitude is not at all interested in retreat; they were clamouring for revolution! They wanted to crown Jesus as King, and they wanted to do so now.

Perhaps the recent beheading of their beloved John was the last straw. They were sick and tired of Roman rule and were fed-up with the wicked and corrupt leadership of “King” Herod. As the disciples told the villages about Jesus and his kingdom, the crowds were perhaps moved with Messianic expectation. Therefore, they came out in droves. They wanted to see Jesus and wanted to follow Jesus because they wanted change. For too long, they had been politically “shepherded” by the likes of Herod and spiritually mistreated by the scribal shepherds. The flock was in very sad and very bad shape. They saw Jesus as the promised Shepherd of Ezekiel 34:23–24. They would wait no longer!

As the crowds pushed upon Jesus and his disciples, though tired and grieving, his compassion took control of the situation. The words “he had compassion on them” are intense. The word refers to a strong feeling in the gut—to such an effect that it controls your actions. I recently woke up at 4:00 AM with such pain in my stomach that I thought it might be necessary to go to the emergency room. Thankfully, the pain subsided over the next two hours, but at its peak, the feeling in my gut controlled my every action. That is the kind of compassion envisioned here.

While he would not be swayed by their wrongheaded zeal, Jesus nevertheless sympathised with their deplorable condition; therefore, he was moved to minister to them.

The phrase “they were like sheep without a shepherd,” as we have noted, has old covenant connections and provides a hint as to Mark’s intention. He wants us to see not only that all human shepherds will ultimately fail to live up to our expectations, but most importantly, that Jesus is the only truly Good Shepherd. He is greater than Moses, greater than David. At the recent National Prayer Breakfast, President Trump said to his guests, “I

will never let you down.” I do not doubt his intentions, but that is a promise he cannot possibly keep. Jesus alone is the Shepherd who will never let his people down.

## The Need to Learn

Jesus’ compassion was practical, as Mark reveals when he writes, “And Jesus began to teach them many things.” Yes, he cared about their physical needs (as he cares about ours), but that was not his first concern. His greater concern was that these shepherdless, and therefore spiritually malnourished and politically harassed, sheep were in need of truth.

We are not informed about the content of his teaching, but no doubt it was in accord with what he began teaching: the gospel of the kingdom of God (1:14–15). We can be sure that Jesus did not scratch their revolutionary itch but rather explained to them their need to repent and to receive their King—on his terms. He would have explained to them perhaps much of what is recorded in the Sermon on the Mount. And of course, if they paid careful attention, they would have realised the impossibility of living out this mandate of the King and his kingdom, apart from divine grace.

Jesus was aware of the various sufferings that Israel was experiencing under the heathen Romans, the heretical priests, and the hedonistic Herod. Yet he was deeply concerned about their worst suffering—alienation from God—and their need for deliverance from the wrath of God. It was this that so moved him to compassion.

We too must be concerned about various suffering that occurs in our society and in our world. But our deepest concern must be for those who are living at enmity towards God; those in constant and consistent rebellion against a holy God, who is just and will punish sinners unless they repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. That is, we need to be moved to compassion towards those who are under the wrath of God because they have not returned to the Shepherd of their souls, the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Peter 2:25).

People all around us need to learn the truth about King Jesus. People are confused about who he is and why he came. As we learn about him, as we become increasingly aware of his character, we need to go out and look for opportunities for others to learn who he is, who they are, how they can be saved, and how they can become subjects of this glorious king!

## The Need to Be Loved

In all of this, the love of the Saviour-Shepherd shines through. Jesus saw the people of God in dire straits. They were not being lovingly led by their political or spiritual leaders (and, under the old covenant economy, these two responsibilities were always combined, just as

they are in Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep). This moved Jesus. He was disturbed for them and therefore took time to teach them.

We too should be deeply concerned about those who are not being loved. Think of those who are in churches where those who should be shepherding the sheep are in fact fleecing the sheep. Like self-appointed ‘prophet’ who is often referred to as ‘Shepherd Bushiri.’ Pathetic.

Think of those who are oppressed by others and who are depressed by themselves. Think of those who have no hope because they are without God (Eph 2:12). Think of those enslaved to sin and convinced that they are unlovable. Again, think of those who are loved by God – they are Christians – and yet are the victims of such poor teaching that they do not enjoy being loved by God.

## The Need for the Lord

At the end of the day, these shepherdless sheep needed the Lord. And of course, this is the point that Mark is concerned to make. This scene is intended to make the point that there is only one hope for the flock of God, and it is not in mere man. No, the only hope is in the God-Man, the Shepherd-King, the Lord Jesus Christ. This, of course, would have been the content of what Jesus would have taught them.

Apart from Jesus Christ, you will be scattered and harassed and aimless, and life will, in the end, prove to be pointless. Be careful to whom you listen. Be very careful. If you listen to fools, you will be destroyed. There is a way that seems right to a person that, in the end, will prove to be the way of death.

I recently read a book about the construction of the Panama Canal. Workers started falling ill at an alarming rate. Seventy-five percent of those who went to the local hospital had contracted malaria, but it was not known at the time that malaria was carried by mosquitoes. In order to keep ants from climbing up the legs of the hospital bed, they put the feet of the beds in canisters of water, which only attracted mosquitoes and became a breeding ground! This seemed right to the experts (most of whom mocked the theory that malaria was borne by mosquitoes), but in the end it proved deadly.

And so it is when it comes to being right with God: Be careful to whom you listen. This is why membership of a local church is such an important decision. Make sure that you will be properly shepherded toward Christ, the Good Shepherd.

## The Shepherd’s Character

In vv. 35–42, we encounter the shepherd’s character:

# The Good Shepherd

Mark 6:30–44

Doug Van Meter

---

And when it grew late, his disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” But he answered them, “You give them something to eat.” And they said to him, “Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?” And he said to them, “How many loaves do you have? Go and see.” And when they had found out, they said, “Five, and two fish.” Then he commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups, by hundreds and by fifties. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people. And he divided the two fish among them all. And they all ate and were satisfied.

(Mark 6:35–42)

Who was this Shepherd? Who was this one who had compassion on these leaderless, unlearned, unloved sheep? Well, if there was any doubt at this point, what happened next should have put all doubts to flight.

Jesus was busy doing what he loved to do: care for the sheep. He was teaching them, and perhaps in some cases touching them to heal them. Regardless, let your imagination work and envision the rapt attention of the crowd as he was among them. The crowd was so attentive to Jesus that they lost all track of time and, apparently, of their hungry stomachs. Five thousand hungry men stood listening to Jesus late into the day. What an awesome thing. Talk about a Mighty Men event – that is, men paying so much attention to Jesus that the cravings of their body took a back seat.

Would to God that the global church of Jesus Christ was filled with such men today: men paying such close attention to Jesus and his word that their other appetites no longer control them. The pornography business would lose a lot of money; sons and daughters would have fathers who are present and who pay attention; wives would have husbands who treat them with sacrificial love rather than with the leftovers after his needs are met; employers would have more committed employees who go to work and treat their workplace as a place to honour the Lord; local churches would be filled with men who are keen to serve rather than to sit and soak – or worse, to sit and sour; local churches would be filled with men who are committed to giving rather than getting and the mission of the King would go forth with zeal and with the funding that is required; local churches would be filled with men – think about that! – rather than filled with women who come alone because their husband or father is too consumed with and by the world to take spiritual leadership seriously; local churches would be filled with men who take seriously their covenantal responsibilities, and who fulfil them with the result that the church is strengthened rather than weakened by those who are consumed with their own agendas; and local churches would be filled with men who put the desires of the King and his

kingdom before their desires for their petty little empire. May God give us such men – and women!

## An Unwelcome Assignment

The disciples, apparently unlike the men who were listening intently to the Saviour, become agitated as the sun began to set. They worried that this huge crowd could not be fed. They were not unconcerned about the needs of this crowd; they were simply unsure how those needs could be met. Shepherds carry such a concern. But perhaps these disciples needed some more training by the Good Shepherd, for their reasonable conclusion was that the crowd needed to be dispersed and each man fend for himself (v. 36).

Of course, when you think about it, this was a non-solution. After all, a crowd that was larger than most towns would not be able to be catered for by surrounding villages. But at least the problem would not be on the disciples' shoulders. Perhaps they thought, "We didn't invite them, let them take care of themselves." Yet they were responsible for them. Had they not gone to the surrounding villages telling people to repent and to follow Jesus? Apparently these five thousand men were doing just that. They were seeking the King, and many no doubt were seeking his kingdom. And, if the Lord assured the sent ones that *their* needs would be met on mission (6:7–10), were these thousands of seekers not justified in assuming that he would meet their needs as well? Did Jesus perchance touch on this subject as he taught them that day? Did Jesus perhaps say to this crowd what he said to the crowd on the Mount: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you" (Matthew 6:33)? If so, these men may have had good reason to assume that God would meet their immediate needs.

Further, as mentioned, it is possible that these men saw themselves as soldiers of the King. And as Paul would write, "Who serves as a soldier at his own expense?" (1 Corinthians 9:7).

Whatever they may have been thinking, the disciples concluded that the crowd needed to be dismissed and dispersed to care for themselves. The Good Shepherd, however, had a very different plan. He was going to reveal himself as God, as Creator, as the one who had the capacity and ability to meet the needs of those who followed him. He would display this capacity in several areas.

## The Capacity to Supply

Jesus told the concerned, and perhaps somewhat anxious, disciples, "You give them something to eat." The tone is an emphatic imperative. That is, Jesus was placing responsibility upon these disciples. He was telling them to be a part of the solution rather than adding to the problem. And the disciples didn't like it!

They responded with what seems to be a tone of disrespect, “Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat?” Two hundred denarii was a year’s wages for an average worker. And, of course, there was little hope that such an amount of bread would even be available nearby.

We know that the disciples were living on a minimum. They did not have the resources that the crowd needed. But they forgot the one who did. Jesus was testing them, much like God tested his people in their wilderness so long ago (Exodus 16).

Jesus’ response is exquisite! “You mentioned bread. Great! How much do you have? Go and see.” I doubt that this went down very well. But, to their credit, they investigated. They came back with the report: Five loaves and two fishes. A little boy’s provision of five scones and two sardines (John 6:9). I’m pretty sure they thought that this would be the end of the matter. Jesus would tell the crowd to disperse. If so, they were wrong. Jesus had all he needed in order to feed the hungry.

We need to remember this. We need to reflect on the character and therefore on the capability of Jesus to meet the needs of those whom he loves, those whom he leads, those whom are learning from him. In other words, we need to learn to lean.

The needs of the mission and the ability of our Master move us to give what we have and leave the economics to him. Indeed, as this miracle reveals, little is much when God is in it.

We have experienced this as a church. God has used us as a congregation to meet the needs of those who need the Bread of Life. How will we respond in these days of wilderness challenges? Will we surrender what we have been given to feed the hungry? Will we avail ourselves of the opportunity to help those who are faithful but who are hungry? Will we trust the Good Shepherd to do the unexplainable? He has done so before, let us trust him to do so again!

Verse 39 is a wonderful allusion to the Good Shepherd feeding his sheep in green pastures. But there perhaps are other allusions here as well: for one, the messianic promise of the desert being turned into a garden. As William Lane suggests, “By divine intervention the land of curse will become fat pastures where the sheep will be gathered and fed by the true shepherd (Ezek. 34:26).” In other words, Jesus led the crowd to the wilderness that they might experience messianic grace. He still does.

In shady, green pastures, so rich and so sweet,  
God leads his dear children along;  
sometimes on the mount where the sun shines so bright,  
God leads his dear children along;  
Sometimes in the valley, in darkest of night,  
God leads his dear children along.

Some through the waters, some through the flood,  
some through the fire, but all through the blood;  
some through great sorrow, but God gives a song,  
in the night season and all the day long.

## The Capacity to Save

The mention of the green grass also points us to something else of significance. If the grass was green, it must have been spring. In fact, John tells us that this occurred as “Passover was at hand” (John 6:4).

There is a thematic connection with God’s initial miraculous provision of his people in the wilderness as recorded in Exodus 16. That too occurred in proximity of Passover. Moses led and fed his people in the wilderness around the time of that first Passover. The one greater than Moses was feeding his people at the time of this Passover. Jesus was the true Good Shepherd who will do far more than Moses. He would lay down his life for the sheep—and, in Jesus’ case, it would be accepted (see Exodus 32:30–35).

## The Capacity to Strengthen and to Satisfy

Verse 40, as observed by many commentators, makes a deliberate statement concerning how this multitude of men “sat down.” They did so “in groups, by hundreds and by fifties.” This alludes to passages such as Exodus 18:13–27, and others, which speaks to two things. First, it speaks to the formation of Israel. It appears that Jesus was deliberately forming his new Israel here in the wilderness. But second, this grouping speaks of a military formation. As noted, this group may have had a revolutionary mindset. Jesus was organising his army. But his intentions were much different than what most expected. His army would conquer, not by the sword of the soldier, but rather by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17; Revelation 1:16; 19:15).

But here is where the story becomes even more significant for the disciple of Jesus. Jesus took the bread and, looking up to heaven, “said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples” who then gave to “the people.” This sounds like another meal that would become familiar to later Christians: The Lord’s Supper (see Matthew 26:26; 1 Corinthians 11:23–24).

Jesus was eating a meal of communion with his people in the wilderness, and this foreshadowed his later institution of the Communion meal. But that, of course, points to the eschatological meal, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, once Christians come fully out of the wilderness (1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelation 19:9).

But in the meantime, what is a purpose of this meal? Simply, to strengthen our faith in Christ; to strengthen us to keep on living for Christ in our wilderness. The Lord’s Supper,

as with every means of grace from the good hand of the Shepherd, is for the strengthening of his soldiers for the mission. Again, Communion speaks of being with Jesus. And this is essential for mission.

It seems that Jesus was laying a foundation for a lesson that they would only understand later, but one that they did learn: their need for communion with Jesus if they would conquer for and with him.

As in Psalm 23, God prepares a table in the wilderness for his new covenant people, and as we eat there, we are strengthened for whatever challenges we will face in the wilderness in the week before us.

God has provided all we need to go forth with his gospel. He has provided us with himself in the second member of the Trinity. Seek him and sup with him as you sup on him (see John 6:35–59). This is the only way we will be truly and fully satisfied (v. 42).

### The Shepherd's Cross

Finally, in vv. 43–44, we learn something of the shepherd's cross: "And they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were five thousand men."

The miracle was over, and the leftovers were collected. We are told that "those who ate the loaves were five thousand men." For those with faith, this is marvellous, and it is motivating. After all, Jesus is King. Jesus is God! But, of course, not all are persuaded. In an amazing attempt to circumvent Mark's intention of pointing his readers to a miracle, some have concluded that what happened here was the multiplication of hospitality. That is, the little boy saw a need and released what he had to help meet that need. Word spread and the crowd was moved to share the provisions that, I suppose, they had been secretly hiding and hoarding! The whole crowd then ate and they gave the leftovers to the disciples, who carried it off in what, according to the Greek word here, were very large baskets. I don't think so!

But unbelief is not only a thing of the present. It existed perhaps on that day as well. We have to ask, where were these five thousand men when Jesus was opposed by the religious leaders? Where were they when he was arrested and unjustly convicted of crimes he did not commit? Where were they when he hung on his cross?

This section of Mark ends with chapter 8. When you read 8:1–5, 11–14, 31ff, it's clear that the effect of this miracle was not long-lasting. That is, though it pointed to the truth that Jesus is the promised Shepherd Saviour—the promised Shepherd King—most did not believe.

## The Good Shepherd

Mark 6:30–44

Doug Van Meter

---

You see, like so many today, many of those in the crowd did not realise they needed mercy more than they needed miracles; that they needed forgiveness more than they needed food; that they needed grace more than they needed glory; that they needed a Saviour-King more than they needed a political King. They did not realise they needed the Redeemer more than they needed a revolutionary. And that would contribute to Jesus dying on the cross.

The Good Shepherd came to earth to save his sheep. Are you one of those? Do you see your need beyond what is physical and temporal? Do you see that you are lost, having wandered after your own ways? If so, then today is the day to return to the Shepherd and Bishop of your soul. Repent and believe on the one who, though he lived a sinless life, yet died and suffered for the sinful. Believe on the one who rose from the dead and who ascended to save those who know the hunger of being estranged from God. Believe on the one who is the Bread of Life.

Can you say, with conviction and with confidence, “The Lord is my shepherd?” I hope so. Because if you can, you can complete the verse: “I shall not lack.” After all, when you have the Good Shepherd, what else could you possibly want?

AMEN