

Isaiah 40:9-11

⁹Get yourself up on a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news, Lift up your voice mightily, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news; Lift *it* up, do not fear. Say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

¹⁰Behold, the Lord God will come with might, With His arm ruling for Him. Behold, His reward is with Him And His recompense before Him. ¹¹Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, In His arm He will gather the lambs And carry *them* in His bosom; He will gently lead the nursing ewes.

Here is our God, revealed in might, dealing out reward and recompense, andcarrying lambs, and leading sheep?

The mighty Shepherd God, strong and kind, carries us and leads us along as he vanquishes His foes before Him.

The character of God our Shepherd is built on two foundational trait: Defending and Tending.

Defending implies strength, and Tending implies compassionate care.

We, as sheep, need both, which reveals our 2 foundational traits: Weakness and Wandering.

Isaiah 53:6

⁶All of us like sheep have gone astray, Each of us has turned to his own way; But the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

Isaiah 42:3

³"A bruised reed He will not break And a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice.

Why is the reed bruised, and why is the wick reduced to a smolder?

Jeremiah 2:19

¹⁹"Your own wickedness will correct you, And your apostasies will reprove you; Know therefore and see that it is evil and bitter For you to forsake the Lord your God, And the dread of Me is not in you," declares the Lord God of hosts.

The Shepherd has 2 instruments He uses to tend the sheep, one for repelling predators (defending) and one for rescuing sheep (compassionate care).

Psalms 23:4

⁴Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

The rod is literally a club, and he uses it to defend the sheep from those that would PREY ON ITS WEAKNESS.

The staff has a large crook at the top used to rescue the sheep from the the PITFALLS OF ITS WANDERING.

The rod and staff ensure the sheep can always be saved, whether they remain close or wander far from Him.

Both of these saving acts come at great risk of peril to the shepherd.

1 Samuel 17:34-5 ³⁴ But David said to Saul, “Your servant was tending his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and took a lamb from the flock, ³⁵ I went out after him and attacked him, and rescued *it* from his mouth; and when he rose up against me, I seized *him* by his beard and struck him and killed him.

Acts 13:22 ²² ... He raised up David to be their king, concerning whom He also testified and said, ‘I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.’

2 Images

The marvel of the Shepherd’s heart is that He is zealous and strong to defend the sheep, but compassionate enough to tend to their every need.

This being God’s heart for His people, His heart breaks when a shepherd does not care for the flock!

Zechariah 11:17 (strength and vision)

¹⁷ “Woe to the worthless shepherd Who leaves the flock! A sword will be on his arm And on his right eye! His arm will be totally withered And his right eye will be blind.”

John 10:11-15

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. ¹² He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters *them*. ¹³ *He flees* because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, ¹⁵ even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

Jesus, the good Shepherd, could have used His influence to enrich Himself, or fled from danger to save His own life.

Instead, He laid His life down with one very specific, two-fold purpose in mind: defending and tending our souls!

John 10:27-30

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of the Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.”

Jesus gave Himself so we could hear His voice, know Him, follow Him, live forever, never perish, and never be separated from Him again.

He is leading us to that everlasting pasture, bordered by peaceful streams, where we will lie down in safety and feed on his faithfulness forever.

1 Peter 2:25

²⁵ For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.