THE SHEPHERD AND HIS SHEEP

The Lord is my shepherd... [Psalm 23]

Dictionary definition of a shepherd: a herder of sheep; to gather, guard, herd, lead and to drive sheep. The Lord God symbolically uses the words “sheep” and “shepherd” numerous times in the Bible.

He is the Good Shepherd, [John 10]
We are his people, the sheep of his pasture. [Psalm 100]

Wonderful scripture facts about our Shepherd and his sheep:
1. The shepherd chooses the sheep.
   He chose us in Him before the creation of the world. [Ephesians 1:4]

2. The shepherd buys the sheep.
   ...you were bought at a price [1 Corinthians 6:20 and 1 Peter 1:18-19]

3. The shepherd calls them each by name.
   He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. [John 10:3]

4. The shepherd delights in caring for the sheep.
   And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.
   [Philippians 4:19]

5. Sheep are totally defenseless and cannot care for themselves.
   ...apart from me you can do nothing. [John 15:5]

6. Sheep, left to themselves become victims of their own destruction.
   There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death. [Proverbs 16:25]

7. Sheep must feed on green pastures to mature properly and to produce offspring. To mature and produce spiritual offspring, we must heed his command to daily nourish ourselves with his Word.
   I am the living bread that came down from heaven... [John 6:51]

8. Sheep have no built-in defense system and are in need of continuous protection.
   Unto thee, O my strength will I sing, for God is my defence... [Psalm 59:17]

9. Sheep must be at rest before they can chew their food.
   Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him... [Psalm 37:7]
   Come to me...learn of me...and you will find rest for your souls. [Matthew 11:28-29]

10. Sheep must have a balance between eating and exercise.
    You are light in the Lord, walk as children of light. [Ephesians 5:8]
11. Sheep who wander are exposed to many dangers. 
   *Return ye backsliding children and I will heal thy backsliding.* [Jeremiah 3:22]

12. Sheep are led to higher pastures through the valley filled with danger, but the Shepherd is always there.
   *I will never leave thee nor forsake you.* [Hebrews 13:5]
   *I will fear no evil, for thou are with me...* [Psalm 23:4]

13. Sheep are protected and disciplined by the rod, emblematic of the Word of God: the staff, uniquely an instrument used for the care and management of sheep only, is a symbol of the concern and compassion the Shepherd has for his sheep.
   *Thou art with me, thy rod and they staff they comfort me.* [Psalm 23:4]
   It is also emblematic of the Holy Spirit.
   *The word of God...is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* [Hebrews 4:12]

14. In conclusion, we who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Redeemer, are well cared for. We are constantly aware of our Shepherd’s presence. It is his presence that guarantees no lack of any sort. There will be abundant green pastures, quiet clean waters, new paths into fresh field, antidotes for insects, disease and parasites (the tribulations and trials that continually beset us,) There will be quietness and contentment, for the sheep are safe and at peace in the hands of the blessed Shepherd.

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*You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is steadfast because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.* [Isaiah 26:3-4]

*My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.* [Isaiah 32:18]

*May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip us with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.* [Hebrews 13:20-21]