

I Will Not Lack Rest

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[0 : 0 0] overview here, he provides several things. And what he says is, I shall not lack, we shall not lack, we will not want, we will not lack anything. But what specifically will we not lack? In verse two, we'll not lack rest. And that's what we will focus on this morning. We will not lack restoration in verse three. We will not lack a road or guidance in verse three. We will not lack refuge or protection in verse four. We will not lack a resource of abundance in verse five. And then verse six, we will not lack a reservoir of hope. But this morning our focus is upon the fact that we will not lack rest. Father, open our hearts and minds. Grant us the spiritual ability to hear your word, to listen to what is said, and to receive it in a way that changes us and focuses us upon you and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, and focuses us upon your word that not only instructs, but encourages us. So build us up and allow us to really grasp what it means when we shall not lack rest. Amen. Because the Lord is my shepherd, I will not lack. Because the Lord is my shepherd, the first thing he says is, I will not lack rest. Now I could, you know, as a grandparent, my wife and I, grandparents, we could debate this. You know, we will not lack rest. Because we are lacking rest every single day. And it's, well, that's not what he's talking about here. You know, scripture speaks of the Lord as shepherd. One of the other things that Israel had as their emblem or symbol was not the star of David. That didn't come until many, many centuries later. But rather the shepherd's crook, you know, the shepherd's post, the staff. That was the emblem or the symbol of Israel. And the reason why that was is because their God was the shepherd, not just a shepherd, but the shepherd.

And in the ancient Near East, kings were considered shepherds of their people. But this was the shepherd of all shepherds. This was the only real shepherd. And so they get it. This was as much a national issue for them and emblem and idea as it was a personal. But what David does is he drives it home.

He brings it from the group, the collective, the nation, down to the individual, to the person, to him. And it applies to us, to me, the Lord, my shepherd. And when they talked about God's being the shepherd, it had to do with his control and power and authority and the fact that he was providential. He governed all things. He rules over all. And so we see this in many different places in the scripture. For example, Genesis 28, he was a companion, the shepherd companion to the pilgrim. In Psalm 121, he is that sleepless watchman who always watches over the sheep. In John 17, he is a protecting father. In 1 Peter 1.5, he is the almighty guardian. But the predominant picture of God's providence is the fact is, is the Lord my shepherd. The Lord my shepherd.

And we see this too in various places and how he was the shepherd. In Genesis 22, 14, God provided as the shepherd a sacrificial ram for Abraham. We see him as a shepherd in Exodus 33, when ultimately he says, my presence will go with you and I will give you rest. And that was one of the functions of a shepherd with the sheep to go with them and they with him and he would lead them to rest. In 1 Kings 17, he was the shepherd who brought Elijah bread and meat in the morning and in the evening and allowed Elijah to find water and refreshment from the rock. He was the shepherd in 2 Kings 4.

When the Lord provides for the widow. And in 2 Kings 7.8, the Lord provided for Samaria during a time of famine. And Jonah 4.6, the Lord provided a plant to shade Jonah. All these were examples and indicators of exactly what God the Father, the shepherd, did and could do and would do. And so they have a real live picture of what it means to be a shepherd. Now, I don't know about you, but I have been around sheep, you know, maybe for a few minutes here and there throughout my life. I don't know that much about sheep in an experiential way. I've read a lot about sheep, so I have a good sense of it. And I know I've had friends who are shepherds who own sheep. And poor sheep, you know, they always get a bad rap.

[5 : 33] But sheep are not as stupid as we make them out to be sometimes. But one thing they do need is someone to lead them. Because they will always follow another sheep if the sheep goes off in a certain direction. Unless the shepherd is there. Then they will follow the shepherd. And those who want to go astray, the shepherd brings them back. The sheep certainly stink. The sheep are useful for many things. The sheep need protection. They don't have much protection. The sheep need all kinds of things. But this was personal for David. Because obviously, he grew up as a shepherd boy. And he had the experience. He knew sheep very well and very intimately. And it's interesting that God would put him in a position of learning all about sheep in order to prepare him. This was his training. It was his basic training for when he would become essentially a general and become God's leader as a king. So he knew all about sheep. But he related his own actions and livelihood and experience as a shepherd working with sheep. He related that to God the Father who was declared as the shepherd. His shepherd. And he could speak personally of the Lord as his shepherd. When he was given the promise to be a king. When he kills

Goliath. When he is protected from King Saul's spear. When he is provided an intimate friend and mentor in his older friend Jonathan. When he is given bread and supplies many times when he was out in the wilderness. When he is protected from his enemies. When he is bringing the Ark of the Covenant back.

And in those battles over the enemies he was victorious. And when he was even protected by from his own sons who were out to kill him. The Lord was his shepherd. So he had not only a visual picture.

Not something ethereal and wishful and hopeful in his mind. But something realistic that happened to him. The Lord was indeed his shepherd.

But because the Lord is my shepherd. I will not lack. We will not lack. What will we not lack? Well first of all the question is. Is the Lord your shepherd? And if you know the great shepherd of the sheep.

[8 : 03] Jesus Christ. According to John. He is the shepherd. Because of what he has accomplished for you in his life. He's gone before us.

He lived that perfect life for us. He died upon the cross for us. He was raised again from the dead. Accepted by the Father. Ascended into heaven. And he continues to lead as the shepherd.

And if we know him in that way. By faith and trust. Then we know him as shepherd. Jesus is the great shepherd. Matthew 22.4 Says that as a shepherd.

He will give blessings. He has a promise of a spiritual feast. Matthew 25.34 We receive a glorious inheritance. And in John 14 of 1 Corinthians 2.

We will be welcomed into his fold. And we will be welcomed home. In a heavenly home. He is the shepherd. But we shall not lack. We shall not want.

[9 : 05] And the word there means we will not lack any basic. Essential. Important provision. In our lives. Because of that. That's the same idea that we find in Deuteronomy 2.7.

For the Lord your God has blessed you in all the work of your hand. He knows you're trudging through the great wilderness. These 40 years the Lord your God has been with you. But you have lacked nothing.

Imagine being out bivouacking. Or camping. For 40 years. Not a week. 40 years. Out in the middle of dry.

Hot. Dusty. Dirty. Wilderness. And yet God said you have lacked nothing. Nothing.

It's the same exact word. Used only in one other place. In Nehemiah 9.21. Where he reminds the people. Nehemiah does. He said. 40 years God sustained you.

[10 : 05] You sustained them in the wilderness. They lacked nothing. Their clothes did not even wear out. Can you imagine what that would do to Walmart? Or Nordstrom's? Their clothes never wore out.

And their feet did not even swell. Oh that would be fun. That was for the people who experienced the most difficult and uncertain circumstances.

Wandering around out in the wilderness. Always wondering whether or not the Egyptians or some other enemy are going to come by night and wipe them out. But God protected them.

He protected them as a mother bird. As a parent. But specifically as a shepherd. The Lord my shepherd. You will not lack. I will not lack. And we will not lack life.

Because in him we live. And breathe. And have our being. We will not lack. The essential provisions to sustain us. As long as it is called day.

[11:09] If you turn. If we looked at Matthew 6. Jesus reminds us in that sermon. That we have no lack of anything.

Is that we have no need to worry. About how tall we will get. Or how much we will have. We have nothing to worry about. Because if God can provide for the birds.

Then he certainly can provide for you. In one of the positive things about moving to a different place in Castle Rock.

Is that our backyard has been filled with all kinds of birds. We never had that before. You know. The previous place we had were geese. And crows.

Or blackbirds. You know. And you know what geese are like. But we have all kinds of. I checked out. You know. Got one of those apps. And you know. Every time I saw a bird that I didn't recognize.

[12:05] Besides a robin. I got that one down. You know. I'd look it up. We have this one. And you know. You type in the bird. And what time. And where.

And everything. And you know. It says this is the bird. And this is what they are. And it even tells you. You know. The kind of chirping. Or the sounds that they make. Is really. It's kind of cool. It's not like I don't have anything else to do.

But I just kind of want to know. You know. Our neighbors. That are joining us. We. Eleven different types of birds have visited us. But I'm looking at them.

And you know. They don't have any. Any lack. You know. They pick the berries. You know. They eat the bugs. And the seed. And whatever. They're always fed. Well fed. They just come to our place.

Because they like the dessert. And. But that's what Jesus is saying. I provide for you. You have no need to worry about it. Because I'm going to give it to you. Whatever it is you need.

[13:02] And if you don't have it. Then you don't need it. I learned that when I was in the south. If you ain't got it. You don't need it. Okay. Second Peter 1.3.

And following tells us that we have. God gives us everything that we need for life and godliness. I shall not lack. But because the Lord is my shepherd. Here in this verse.

I shall not lack rest. And we shall not lack rest. Because of who God is. Of who he is as a shepherd. We will not lack rest. Because of who he is as a shepherd.

Not because of who we are. Or what we do. Rest is that metaphor of the green meadows and still waters. It means rest and refreshment and security. One thing you don't want to do is take sheep down by the riverside.

Because they have this tendency to go into the water. Get too close to the water. And there they go tumbling down the river. You need still waters.

[14:04] Quiet waters. Still waters were places like a pond or a lake. Still water was something that meant refreshment and rest and security.

It doesn't mean a mere cessation of labor. You know when we say rest we mean take a break from work. You know that's rest. Sleeping. That's rest.

But rest was invested in this meaning that communicated a celebration of one's work. Just like God did. Six days he worked.

And on the seventh day he celebrated his masterpiece. He rested. He took a break. He didn't merely cease working because he continues to work.

But it meant he stepped back and was delighted in the work of his hands of what he had done. And so rest has that meaning there. To delight and celebrate the work. Rest means to commune with God.

[15:05] In fact the whole point of the Sabbath, the Shabbat, was that you would gather your time with God. You would spend time with God. And in spending time with God, he would saturate you.

And you would become saturated with his presence that would fill you up to the degree that you really received the glory of God in the place of rest.

And that's what he means. To have rest. Rest to them. They thought of rest as a place of going into the place of the tabernacle or the temple and being in the very presence of God.

And being consumed by him and receiving this delight and rest. This calm.

It was at the place of worship in the presence of God there was true rest. It's what Adam and Eve celebrated when they entered in the rest, when they appeared in the garden at the first day.

[16:10] Rest and worship in the beauty of holiness means to be in the Sabbath. The Sabbath communicated. So when he talks about rest, he said the Lord is my shepherd.

You will not lack rest. He's not saying you're not going to have an inability to sleep or take a nap or anything. What he's talking about, you will not lack the opportunity to be in the presence of God who gives you the rest you need.

The calm. The peace. The presence of God himself. You think of the account of Exodus as a movement of God's people from an ending toil of slavery into the movement to where they have the tabernacle and they are able to worship with God in that rest.

Rest is found in the sanctuary because rest is found in him and in his presence. And that's why Jesus says, come unto me, all you who are burdened and weighed down in your labors and I will give you rest.

He's the great shepherd who gives rest. He supplies strength and recuperation. It's found in the delight of God's special day of rest. It's found in God. It's found in God himself.

[17:30] But we have a greater rest in Jesus. Far more than David knew. David was anticipating, you know, this greater rest. He was looking forward to it. He experienced it to some degree.

But we have now, looking back to Jesus, who is the rest. He gives rest. He gives spiritual rest. We don't have to work for our salvation.

He gives mental rest. He gives emotional rest. He gives all kinds of rest for us. And he even provides rest physically for us. He delivers us from the bondage of sin and offers this rest.

In him, on the cross, he said, it is finished. Meaning it's all paid for. Everything is done. The work is complete. And you can have rest because of it.

The Lord Jesus is our shepherd. We will not lack rest in him. So we will not lack rest because of who he is in the shepherd. But secondly, you shall not lack rest because of what he does as the shepherd.

[18:36] We shall not lack rest because of what he does as a shepherd. Notice where and how the shepherd brings you to rest. Now, in my mind, to bring me to rest means to take me by the hand to my bed and put me in and tuck me in and let me sleep.

Right? But the picture here that we have of the great shepherd, God the Father, is the shepherd. He says, in Green Meadows. Green Meadows.

He causes me to lie down. Sometimes when we would drive out to Lyman, you know, there was just this basic barren area.

During the 1800s, this was considered a high desert area because there really wasn't anything around. Except when on occasion you would see streams or ponds and you would see these trees. You know, the cottonwood. I don't know if they had cottonwood back then. But the trees along, you know, they were green. But everywhere else there wasn't any green. There was hardly anything but maybe sagebrush or weeds.

[19:43] But he says, I will bring you to the place of the meadows to offer you rest. Refreshment. It emphasizes the rest first.

It's green pastures. It's new. It's fresh. It's green, tender spring grass. It's meadows. And that's what he brings us to.

Now, how does he do that? The Lord causes you to come to a place of rest. Very little greenery except during those short spring and fall months. You know, we talk about parks being parched.

And the lawns being parched. Well, God's meadow is green. And that's what he brings us to.

Especially we find it in the spring and the fall.

Lots of travel between the air and the desert. Over rocks and sand and heat. But it is God who is the shepherd who leads us to the place of the meadow. Where there's greenery.

[20:45] Calmness. Shade. Provision. Through life's travails and work, he always brings us to a place of rest when it is time. Sometimes when we don't take the rest, he brings it in a very real sense.

Such as working too hard and you collapse physically. Or getting sick. You don't want to take a rest? I'll give you a rest. But he says, he leads me to still waters.

He leads me to still waters. The word is not merely he's leading you by the hand. Or he's showing you the way. He's in front and marching and following.

But the word conveys this idea. It's what's invested in this word. When he leads, he does so tenderly. And gently. And affectionately.

Wow. He doesn't come from behind with a stick and beat us on the way. He leads us gently and kindly. To the way. And along the way.

[21 : 49] It's a deliberate placement. He leads me to. In the best circumstances of life, he gently leads. In the cruelest circumstances of life, he still compassionately.

Gently. Gently leads. It's like that hymn. All the way my Savior leads me. What have I to ask beside? Can I doubt his tender mercy?

Who through life has been my guide? Heavenly peace, divinest comfort. Hereby faith in him to dwell. For I know. Whatever befall me. Jesus does all things well.

He leads me. But I'll also notice where he leads me to. Still waters. The quiet, calm, peaceful, secure waters. Not the rivers.

But some underground springs supporting an oasis. The cisterns. You know, the places where they dug out these wells. It's the idea of quietness and security and refreshment.

[22 : 52] Away from the conflict. Something we need today. That while we are not embattled physically, we are certainly embattled mentally and emotionally today.

And so all the way my Savior leads me. Cheers eats. Winding path I tread. Gives me grace for every trial. Feeds me with living bread. Though my weary steps may falter.

And my soul a thirst may be. Gushing from the rock before me. Lo, a spring of joy I see. He leads me to waters of refreshment and rejuvenation and supply.

Well, let me just wrap up with three things that could possibly cause us to miss the benefits of his kind of grace. Gracious rest. One is fear.

Fear robs us of that rest oftentimes. You know, the shepherd will remove danger before the sheep can graze. Before they can enjoy and appreciate the meadow and drink.

[23 : 58] If he sees a wolf, the shepherd will take a slingshot or whatever else he has and either chase the wolf away or kill it. But it's then when the sheep are no longer frightened where they can go to enjoy the meadow.

And God often paves the way for us to do that by chasing away the wolves. You know, one of the greatest promises, the God, the shepherd in Jesus says, I will never leave you nor forsake you. And I would say the ultimate point here that we could see is it is not the absence of danger, but the presence of the shepherd that gives security and rest.

That's why the psalmist, even surrounded by enemies, he writes in Psalm 4, verse 8, I will both lie down in peace and sleep for you alone. Oh, Lord, make me dwell in safety.

The second thing sometimes is extreme hunger. You know, sheep cannot rest until they're fed enough. We have a little boy who's like that.

[25 : 07] He's not about to rest until he gets something to eat. But the third thing is the belligerence of other sheep. But that's what the great shepherd does. He alleviates the circumstances.

He takes care of the circumstances that bring us fear. He provides for us so we are not so dreadfully hungry. And he takes care of the belligerent sheep so that we can have the rest.

If the Lord is your shepherd, you won't lack rest. And that you can bank on. Father, thank you for that. Thank you for the promise.

Thank you for the reminder. Thank you for the encouragement. Thank you for all that you've done for us before and continue to do now. And thank you that Jesus is our great shepherd.

We pray, Lord. And during these circumstances that may yet last another six months, perhaps another year or so, where the forces of evil are trying to take advantage to disrupt our society and our lives, to look to you as the great shepherd and to be reminded that we do not lack and we will not lack rest.

[26 : 26] Give us that rest, we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.