

HE MAKES ME TO LIE DOWN

Life is for many of us a go, go without making time to ponder on its spiritual consequences. The physical part of life demands without excuses. People work three jobs to meet the everyday needs. Not making time for enough rest or sleep to restore the body's energy. Life is without a doubt a run, run 24/7 for some. Like robots disregarding the importance of caring for the body, people live under the influence of having to work for things, in many cases to pay for unnecessary accumulated debts. We Christians follow the way of the world, sinking into the love of things as well. They are the sheep who strayed from the way that led them to a closer relationship with God. The Bible, yes, their Bibles lie collecting dust, while they find time to go to church once a week to appease their conscience. YAHSHUA, our Shepherd, faithfully leads with His staff and His rod, calling all to hear and follow Him. Always providing, always listening to the needs of His sheep.

He even gave His life to save them from eternal destruction, offering forgiveness and restoration of their soul to unite with Him. He says, I am the good shepherd. The good Shepherd risks and lays down His life for the sheep; "I am the good Shepherd; and I know and recognize My own, and My own knows Me- even as [truly as] the Father knows Me and I also know the Father- and I am giving My [very own] life and laying it down on behalf of the sheep" (John 10:11,14-15). That's the love our Shepherd has demonstrated to us.

"He makes me to lie down" Caring for us our Shepherd supplies for our needs, spiritual, physical, and mental. When He makes us to lie down in green pastures, it is to restore our soul. In the midst of the hustle and bustle of life, His voice is clear, calling us to lie down in the coolness of the pastures. Not only to restore our physical body, but also to restore us spiritually. The coolness of the grass displays the amazing necessary food for survival. When we can't stop our activities to rest, the body suffers in many ways; when we do not take time to feast in His Word, our spirit suffers also. What becomes of us will not represent the caring of our Shepherd. In our stubbornness, He makes us to lie down. It is a command that if we ignore, He will find a way for it to happen, mostly through sickness the "valley of the shadow of death." He uses His rod on those who have strayed from Him, who are His true sheep, for the Lord corrects and disciplines everyone whom He loves, and He punishes, even scourges, every son whom He accepts and welcomes to His heart and cherishes. You must submit to and endure [correction] for discipline; God is dealing with you as with sons. "For what son is there whom his father does not train and correct and discipline? He disciplines us for our certain good, that we may become sharers in His own holiness. For the time being no discipline brings joy, but seems grievous and painful; but afterwards it yields a peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it". (Heb. 12:6-7,9b-11). It is a serious thing if we, His sheep, give Him a deaf ear, it is a fearful thing to incur the divine penalties and be cast into the hands of the living God! (Heb.10:31). Remember what He said, My sheep will listen to My voice and heed it; and I call My own sheep by name and brings them out; they will follow Me, because they know My voice (John 10: 3). There are many who say they are YAHSHUA'S sheep, but are not His followers. They will never hear His voice, as they walk far from Him, while His true sheep are laying down, feasting on His Word. The new birth is necessary for us to be in Him, and be His sheep. Those who are not His, will not be disciplined.

But those who have experienced the new birth and run away from Him, He will bring them back and make them to lay down for a time in His presence, in order to know YAHSHUA as their Shepherd. He makes His sheep to lie down in green pastures to restore them and afterward, He leads them to their destination.

Always present with them in every circumstance; be it in the green pastures, be it in the valley of the shadow of death. His staff to guide them through hard-to-get places and His rod to guide them through discipline, the good Shepherd never leaves nor forsakes them but presses on to the beautiful place He has prepared for His sheep. He leads them through a narrow gate, not easy to get through with all the baggage of the world. This is the reason why His sheep must forsake all to follow Him; otherwise, there will not be possible for them to enter through the narrow gate; they will stay outside, for He said, "If anyone wants to follow him, must deny self, pick up his cross to follow Him." There is no other place better to get to know Him than in the valley, where we must depend completely on Him in order to endure the hardships of the valley, without giving up the faith in Him, and learning to live by faith, not by sight. At the end of the pilgrimage, He prepares a table for His sheep with all delicacies that we can't imagine and then He anoints them with oil and that, my friend, is victory over all that we had to go through. Paul said, "And if we are Him children then we are His heirs also; heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ; only you must share His suffering if we are to share His glory; But I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth being compared with the glory that is about to be revealed to us and in us and for us and conferred on us" (Rom. 8:17-18). YAHSHUA said, "I give them eternal life, and they shall never lose it or perish throughout the ages. And no one is able to snatch them out of my hand". (John 10:28)

Sitting at the feet of our Shepherd, as in "green pastures" is of great reward. Mary chose that, while Martha stayed busy with the things of life. Mary seated herself at the Lord's feet and was listening to His teaching, but Martha (her sister) was distracted with much serving; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, is it nothing to You that my sister has left me to serve alone? Tell her then to help me. But the Lord replied to her by saying, Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; there is need of only one or but a few things. Mary has chosen the good portion which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 9:39-42).

YAHSHUA showed us the importance of continuous relationship with Him when He retired with the disciples to a quiet place to pray, after a long day ministering to the crowds. They had to be restored by laying down at the feet of YAHSHUA (green pastures) in a secluded place, away from the noise of the crowd.

After His resurrection, YAHSHUA appeared to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, where they were to meet Him for the last time. Tired of waiting, they decided to go back to their old way of life – by going fishing. They fished all night and caught nothing. YAHSHUA appeared at early morning and ordered them to cast the net on the right side of the boat, they did and they were not able to haul it in. YAHSHUA then invited them to have breakfast with Him. When they got out on land, there was a fire of coals there and fish lying on it, and bread (John 21). They had breakfast with Him that morning and were restored physically and spiritually. YAHSHUA calls each one of us His

sheep to meet Him early in the green pastures, where spiritual food is available to restore our soul and strengthen our relationship with our Shepherd.

When was the last time that you had early breakfast with the Shepherd? The Bible says “I love those who love me and those who seek me early and diligently shall find me”. (Prov. 8:17). How do you measure the value of priority? Make sure that you are seeking Him first thing in the morning for you to be established in His purpose and goals. YAHSHUA said, “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things will be added to you” (Matt. 6:33). Putting Him first will assure our peace and our prayers answered.

THINK ABOUT IT!