

Characteristics of Sheep

1. timid, fearful, easily panicked
2. dumb stupid, gullible
3. very vulnerable to fear, frustration, pests, hunger
4. easily influenced by a leader, by the shepherd
5. stampede easily, vulnerable to mob psychology
6. little or no means of self-defense; can only run
7. easily killed by enemies
8. the shepherd is most effective, calming influence
9. jealous, competitive for dominance
10. constantly need fresh water, fresh pasture
11. have very little discernment in choosing food or water
12. best water source is early morning dew
13. perverse, stubborn - will insist on their own way , even eating poisonous plants or drinking dirty water
14. easily "cast" - flipped over on their back, unable to right themselves
will die of starvation if not turned over by shepherd; helpless
15. frequently look for easy places to rest
16. don't like to be sheared, cleaned
17. too much wool can cause sheep to be easily "cast"
18. creatures of habit; get into "ruts"
19. need the most care of all livestock
20. need to be "on the move"; need a pre-determined plan, pattern of grazing
21. totally dependent of shepherd for every need
22. need "rod and staff" guidance

Characteristics of A Good Shepherd

1. loves his sheep and develops a close, intimate relationship with them so that they know his voice and trust him.
2. understands the needs of the sheep better than they do
3. understands what threatens sheep and what makes them sick
4. works tirelessly to provide protection, security
5. leads them to fresh pastures and fresh water
6. searches out sheep when they stray
7. defends sheep against all their enemies
8. provides protection while they sleep
9. shears them and examines each one for injury or disease
10. goes ahead of sheep and prepares the path
11. disciplines and corrects them
12. comforts sheep when they are hurt or fearful
13. keeps sheep "on the move" so they don't get into a rut
14. Liberally anoints them with oil to prevent disease or to heal an injury
15. keeps sheep from fighting, from hurting each other
16. cares for, loves sheep and sacrifices his life for them.
17. rejoices in health, well-being and prosperity of his flock
18. will leave the flock to search for lost sheep and
19. experiences great joy in finding lost sheep[
20. carries the lamb s close to his heart,
21. gently leads those with young
22. gets deepest satisfaction from seeing that sheep are contented, well-fed, and safe

What Our Good Shepherd Provides

Psalm 23

Perfect Protection— "The Lord is my Shepherd"
Perfect Satisfaction — "I shall not want. "
Perfect Rest— "He maketh me to lie down. "
Perfect Nourishment— "In green pastures "(pastures of tender grass)
Perfect Guidance— "He leadeth me."
Perfect Peace— "Beside the still waters"
Perfect Restoration— "He restoreth my soul"
Perfect Walk— "The paths of righteousness"
Perfect Confidence— "I will fear no evil"
Perfect Companionship— "Thou art with me."
Perfect Discipline— "Thy rod,"
Perfect Support — "Thy staff,"
Perfect Consolation— "They comfort me."
Perfect Fellowship— "Thou preparest a table before me"
Perfect Triumph— "In the presence of mine enemies."
Perfect Strength— "Thou anointest my head with oil."
Perfect Joy— "My cup runneth over."
Perfect Love -- "Goodness and mercy shall follow me"
Perfect Habitation— "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever

Psalm 23 (Amplified)

The Lord is my shepherd (to feed, guide and shield me); I shall not lack.
He makes me lie down in (fresh, tender) green pastures;
He leads me beside the still and restful waters *
He refreshes and restores my life -- my self;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness (uprightness and right
standing with Him -- not for my earning it, but) for His names sake.
Yes, though I walk through the (deep, sunless) valley of the shadow
of death, I will fear or dread no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod (to protect) and Your staff (to guide), they comfort me
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; my (brimming) cup runs over.
Surely or only goodness, mercy and unfailing love shall follow me
all the days of my life;
And through the length of days, the house of the Lord (and His presence)
shall be my dwelling place.

* Revelation 7:17— For the Lamb Who is in the midst of the throne will be their
Shepherd, and He will guide them to the springs of the water of Life;
and God will wipe every tear away from their eyes.

Ezekiel 34:11-31 "For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search for my sheep and look after them. ¹² As a shepherd looks after his scattered flock when he is with them, so will I look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on a day of clouds and darkness. ¹³ I will bring them out from the nations and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them into their own land. I will pasture them on the mountains of Israel, in the ravines and in all the settlements in the land. ¹⁴ I will tend them in a good pasture, and the mountain heights of Israel will be their grazing land. There they will lie down in good grazing land, and there they will feed in a rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵ I myself will tend my sheep and have them lie down, declares the Sovereign LORD. ¹⁶ I will search for the lost and bring back the strays. I will bind up the injured and strengthen the weak, but the sleek and the strong I will destroy. I will shepherd the flock with justice. ¹⁷ "As for you, my flock, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will judge between one sheep and another, and between rams and goats. ¹⁸ Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture? Must you also trample the rest of your pasture with your feet? Is it not enough for you to drink clear water? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet? ¹⁹ Must my flock feed on what you have trampled and drink what you have muddied with your feet? ²⁰ "Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says to them: See, I myself will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. ²¹ Because you shove with flank and shoulder, butting all the weak sheep with your horns until you have driven them away, ²² I will save my flock, and they will no longer be plundered. I will judge between one sheep and another. ²³ I will place over them one shepherd, my servant David, and he will tend them; he will tend them and be their shepherd. ²⁴ I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the LORD have spoken. ²⁵ "I will make a covenant of peace with them and rid the land of wild beasts so that they may live in the desert and sleep in the forests in safety. ²⁶ I will bless them and the places surrounding my hill. I will send down showers in season; there will be showers of blessing. ²⁷ The trees of the field will yield their fruit and the ground will yield its crops; the people will be secure in their land. They will know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hands of those who enslaved them. ²⁸ They will no longer be plundered by the nations, nor will wild animals devour them. They will live in safety, and no one will make them afraid. ²⁹ I will provide for them a land renowned for its crops, and they will no longer be victims of famine in the land or bear the scorn of the nations. ³⁰ Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them and that they, the house of Israel, are my people, declares the Sovereign LORD. ³¹ You my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are people, and I am your God, declares the Sovereign LORD."

The Shepherd's Promise:

For His sheep:

1. will search for the sheep
2. will look after the sheep
3. will rescue the sheep
4. will bring them out
5. will bring them into their own land
6. will pasture them
7. will tend them in good pasture
8. will tend them so they will lie down
9. will search for the lost
10. will bind up the injured
11. will strengthen the weak
12. will destroy the strong
13. will shepherd the flock with justice
14. will judge between sheep and goats, rams
15. will judge between fat and lean sheep

For His people:

16. will save His flock
17. will place one shepherd over them
18. will make a covenant of peace
19. will rid the land of wild beasts
20. will send down showers of blessing
21. will break the bars of their yoke
22. will rescue them from slavery
23. will make them live in safety
24. no one will make them afraid
25. will provide fertile, abundant land
26. will protect them from famine
27. will be their God