

The Table Is Set

Promise: that the Lord himself regathers and restores lost sinners

Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg

Jeremiah 23:1-6; Ps 23; Ephesians 2:11-22; Mark 6:30-44

(Eighth Sunday after Pentecost, 7/18/21)

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. – Ps 23:5

Lead In – When the host gets ready to receive special guests for a feast, much care goes into the preparation of the meal. Great attention is also spent in the setting of the table. For instance, fine linen is used for the table cloth and for the folded napkins. Fine china dishes, saucers, and cups are used. Sterling silver utensils are set properly. Crystal glassware is used. A centerpiece may be chosen, perhaps a floral arrangement. And candles are lit. ... Wait until you hear who the host is this morning, and who this host considers his honored guests...

I. On Reading the Bible, Especially the Old Testament

- A. The free employ of images and motifs...
- B. Relax, enjoy, it takes time and consistent priority...

II. Getting Straight Who Is Scattering the Sheep

- A. Church hoppers and the blame on pastors...
- B. The scattering taking place addressed here...
- C. The kings get blamed, but not all the blame...

III. The Beautiful Promise of Gathering and Restoration

- A. The Lord himself gathers, and sets shepherds...
- B. Raising up for David a righteous *tshmach*...
- C. The two advents of the long awaited Messiah...

Parting Shot – The full restoration comes with Christ's Second Advent, which is also described as *the Wedding Feast of the Lamb*. And guess who the host is? Our Heavenly Father with the Bridegroom, his Son. And who are the honored guests? Those washed in the blood of the Lamb and attired in the wedding garments of salvation. The full feast is to come, but in the meantime a foretaste of that feast is prepared and set. ... For he prepares a table...

Images and Themes: Shepherding and sheep, Horticulture with stumps, stems, shoots, and branches; and, The Exodus...

Dt 6:7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Js 1:8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night...

Cl 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

Dt 30:1-3 "And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you, and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you, and return to the LORD your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, then the LORD your God will

Jeremiah 23:1-6 ESV

Regathering and Restoring the Sheep

¹"Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD. ²Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: "You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the LORD. ³Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD.

⁵"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.'

⁷"Therefore, behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when they shall no longer say, 'As the LORD lives who brought up the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt,' ⁸but 'As the LORD lives who brought up and led the offspring of the house of Israel out of the north country and out of all the countries where he had driven them.' Then they shall dwell in their own land."

restore your fortunes and have compassion on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.

Is 11:11 In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.

1Pe 5:2-3 Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

Is 11:1 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. (cf. 2Sa 7:16)

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Psalm 23

¹The LORD **is** my shepherd;*
I shall not **be** in want.

²He makes me to lie down
in green pastures*
and leads me **beside** still waters.

³He **revives** my soul*
and guides me along right pathways
for his name's sake.

⁴Though I walk through the valley
of the shadow of death,
I shall **fear** no evil;*
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they **comfort** me.

⁵You spread a table before me
in the presence of those who **trouble** me;*
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is **running** over.

⁶Surely your goodness and mercy
shall follow me all the days **of** my life,*
and I will dwell
in the house of the **LORD** forever.

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