

# **“The Shepherd King”**

*The Present Truth* – March 8, 1900

E. J. Waggoner

To-day we are going to talk of another who, like Moses, was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ, both in his life as a shepherd, and afterwards in the high position to which God called him as leader and ruler of His people.

The “Shepherd Psalm” (Psalm 23), is one of the first that little children learn to love. You know it well, do you not? In it David sings joyfully of some of the beautiful lessons that his shepherd life taught him of the care of the true Shepherd of Israel for all His flock.

Although God had chosen David to be a great king, his early life was not spent among the great of earth in the king’s court, but among the fields and hills of Bethlehem where he was born. Even his birth in Bethlehem was a foreshadowing of Him who was to be born in the stable of the Bethlehem inn, and cradled in the manger.

This was well understood by the children of Israel for you will remember that when Herod asked the priests where Christ was to be born, they answered:

“In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet,  
“And thou Bethlehem, land of Judah,  
Art in no wise least among the princes of Judah:  
For out of thee shall come forth a governor,  
Which shall be Shepherd of My people Israel.”

The Good Shepherd, He who feeds the Lord’s flock, came out of Bethlehem. . . . Bethlehem means “the House of Bread,” and out of it comes He who is to feed the flock of God.

Here David was born, and when he was old enough he kept his father’s sheep. He loved the sheep, and watched and fed and led them very carefully. When he was afterwards telling King Saul something of his shepherd life he said:

“When there came a lion, or a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock, I went out after him, and smote him, and slew him, and delivered it out of his mouth; and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.”

In these experiences God was proving him and preparing him for a greater work. “While David was thus living in the retirement of his humble shepherd’s life, the Lord God was speaking about him to the prophet Samuel,” and one day the young shepherd had a great surprise. He was startled by the call of a messenger who told him that the prophet had come to Bethlehem and wished to see him.

Wondering what the prophet could want with him, he hastily obeyed the call. As he came into the presence of Samuel, God spoke to the prophet, and said: "Arise, anoint him; for this is he." "Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him from among his brethren."

We will speak of this anointing another time, perhaps. It was to teach David that God had chosen him to be the king of Israel, and that God would prepare him by his Holy Spirit, of which the oil was a symbol, for the great work that He had appointed for him to do.

"He chose David also His servant,  
And took him from the sheepfolds;  
From following the ewes that give suck He brought him,  
To feed Jacob His people, and Israel His inheritance."

He who had faithfully fed and guided the sheep, was to feed and guide God's great flock of Israel, and the lessons learned among his sheep taught him how to do this.

But David was only a type of the one true Shepherd of Israel, who also came forth out of Bethlehem. Of Him God said, He "shall feed My people Israel." He Himself is "the Bread of Life," the true bread which came down from heaven to give life to the world. All who eat of this Bread share His everlasting life and live and feed upon Him for ever.