

# Your Compassionate Shepherd

Matthew 9:35-38

*Halifax: 6 March 2005*

Jesus Christ is the Messiah sent from heaven to redeem sinners and establish them in God's righteous kingdom.

- Matthew labours to show us that in His gospel.
  - In the first four chapters, He showed us about the coming of the Son of God to this world, and presented to us His entrance into public ministry.
  - From chapter 5-9, He shows us about the beginning of His public ministry in Galilee—
    - How He revealed Himself as Messiah through His preaching and miracles....
      - His preaching is shown to us in the Sermon on the Mount in chapters 5, 6 & 7
      - And a sampling of His miracles revealed to us in chapters 8 & 9
- Our text today is like a bridge that connects us into the next section of this Gospel—the section that begins in chapter 10.
  - The difference that comes in chapter 10 is that Jesus begins to send forth labourers to help Him in His kingdom work.
    - Up until now He has disciples who follow Him and go with Him,
      - but it is not until now that He calls them to join Him in the actual work of preaching and healing.
    - In our text today, Matthew 9:35-38,
      - we see Jesus showing His disciples the immensity of the work that is to be done and urging them to pray God to raise up labourers to assist in the work.
      - This, of course, is a need that remains to this day.
        - The church cannot be healthy without faithful ministers to proclaim the word, and it is our duty to pray that God would send them forth.
        - The church is full of unfaithful ministers because God's people do not pray for God-sent labourers.
  - It would seem that as Jesus went all about Galilee, He became more and more acquainted with the tremendous need of God's people!
    - He saw first hand their ignorance, confusion, and despair.
      - He saw that it was impossible for Him to minister as widely as He desired, even in Galilee alone, where there were at least three million people.
      - Jesus become more and more aware of the great need as He laboured...

- Remember that though Jesus was God the Son who knows all things,
  - He was also fully man and had to learn things as He went along.
- You must understand that He has two natures—a divine nature and a human nature—
  - and (as our Confession says) these two natures are two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion.
    - In other words, the divine nature was not **converted** into the human—Jesus was truly dependent on His mother’s care as a babe, but as God the Son He was upholding the world by His power...
    - Neither was the divine nature **mixed together** with the human nature so that He was either a very strong man or a very weak God.
      - There was no **composition** of the two natures—such as there is in a composite rock—like granite—made up of quartz and feldspar...
      - Nor was there a **confusion** so that at one moment He was in the divine nature and then shifted back to the human...
        - No... each nature remained perfect and complete.
    - As man,
      - He was just like every other man as far as His body and soul...
        - He was subject to death and tiredness and could only be in one place at a time.
        - His human brain could only contain so many thoughts at once.
          - It was not confused and mucked up by sin, but neither was it capable of knowing what had not been learned—
            - whether by prophetic insight or by observation.
- Consider therefore, that
  - Though He was born perfectly holy;
    - He was not born knowing how many cities there were in Galilee and how needy the people there were there.
  - Though He was born with a readiness to love those who are afflicted;
    - Yet He was not born knowing about all the different kinds of afflictions the people in Galilee suffered.
  - Though He was born without sin and so with a quick understanding;

- Yet He had to learn about the depth of human depravity as He studied God's word and observed the people around Him.
- And so it was that the more Jesus went about among the people, the more He saw their need,
  - and the more He saw their need, the more He was moved with compassion.

Come now, and let us look more closely at how our Lord is revealed to us in our text.

**I. First, I want you to consider further the compassion that rose in our Lord Jesus as looked upon His needy people.**

- A. You might have thought that a man perfectly holy and without sin would be thoroughly disgusted when He saw the degradation of His fellow human beings.
1. Here He was, perfectly righteous, perfectly sinless, walking amidst the filth and corruption of sinners.
    - Surely He would look upon us with contempt and disdain.
    - But not so!
  2. Verse 36 tells us how He responded, the more He saw of us...
    - Matthew 9:36: "But when he saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd."
    - a. Just think of it! The Lord Jesus! moved with compassion!
      - Isn't that marvellous?
      - Instead of looking at us with a curled lip, He looks upon us with tears!
      - How precious the thought!
      - How different our destiny if it had been otherwise.
    - b. Instead of being repulsed and pushing Himself away, He is drawn to our need.
      - He feels deeply for us in our sin-ravaged condition—not because He has been there Himself, but because of His great love for His neighbour.
      - He longs to restore us and make us whole.
        - In all our affliction, He is afflicted.
        - He is a true neighbour who truly loves us and cares about us.
    - c. This same compassion is echoed again at the end of His ministry...
      - In Matthew 23, He looks down on the city of Jerusalem...

- And instead of seeing the magnificent buildings, He sees the needy multitudes!
- In Matthew 23:37, He cries:
  - Matt 23:37: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing!
  - As a man, Jesus did not know who all would be saved unless the Father choose to reveal it to Him prophetically—
    - but as our brother, He yearned to gather us **all** to Himself.

B. But look at our text again and see **why** it is that He is moved with compassion for His people...

- vs. 36: “because they were weary and scattered, like sheep without a shepherd.”
  - This is the way our mediator has seen the church in all ages—
    - so many without a shepherd—
    - so many lost and perishing!
- 1. He sees us in the place we do not belong—
  - a. As sheep without a shepherd...
    - Sheep are not meant to be on their own—they are not able to survive without a shepherd.
    - They are domesticated animals with no ability to defend themselves...
      - If left on their own, they are easy prey for bears and lions and wolves—
        - They are like a plate of dinner on the table, just waiting to be eaten.
      - And even if there are no predators, they still can’t survive...
        - On their own, they are not even able to find the pastures and the water they need to drink,
          - they will wander aimlessly along until they perish.

TRANS> Sheep are not to be without a shepherd...

- Neither are God’s people!

b. There is a two-fold sense in which this is so.

- 1) First, because God’s people are members of the human race, and no member of the human race was created to be without God as his shepherd.

- a) God created you to be gloriously dependent, just the way Jesus was!
  - Jesus never did anything without the Father...
  - It was His food and drink to do the Father's will.
  - You were made to live by God's counsel
  
- b) A human being cut off from God is even worse than a sheep without a shepherd...
  - He will live a twisted, distorted, aimless life...
  - He will end in destruction and degradation.
  
- c) We were made to be in subjection to God, and when we are not, we are utterly ruined.
  - We lose our whole purpose as human beings and live wasted worthless lives—
    - however much we may try to find purpose and meaning.
  - In the fall, we declared our independence from God and brought total ruin upon ourselves.

TRANS> So the first reason the multitudes Jesus saw were not meant to be without a shepherd was because **no** human is meant to be without God as his shepherd.

- 2) The second reason has to do specifically with the fact that they were God's people...
  - the descendants of Abraham who were called out of the world to worship God through faith.
  - God had redeemed them and gathered them to Himself to be His people!
    - And so, though all men are fallen, they has been reconciled and so were not meant to live apart from Him...
      - but now Jesus looked upon them and saw that they were like sheep without a shepherd...
      - And it deeply troubled Him to see it!
        - It was not right!

TRANS> And so Jesus looks at the church today and He sees many baptised persons who are far away from Himself..

- They are baptised in His name, yet they do not know Him or follow Him!
  - They trust in their works or in the passing pleasures of this world.
  - They are like sheep without a shepherd.

- They wander aimlessly without God’s truth and are easy prey to the wolves.
2. Jesus describes these sheep as “weary and scattered.”
- a. Probably the word “**weary**” in the New King James should be replaced with the word **harassed**, since that translates the word that is found in majority of the manuscripts.
    - When Jesus looks at His covenant people, when He looks out at the multitudes of the baptised—
      - He sees that many of them are harassed by their own teachers!
- 1) Look around at the church today and you will see the same thing.
    - You see God’s covenant people harassed because they are led to worthless pastures, foul waters, and left to dangerous predators.
    - They are not led to feed on the bread of life and to drink the living water.
      - The gospel they so desperately need is withheld from them by the wolves who have come into the church as ministers!
  - 2) These wolves come with their false promises and false doctrines!
    - Instead of calling them to repent of their sins and believe on the Lord Jesus,
      - They say,
        - “You are good people and God loves you the way you are. You don’t need a Saviour dying for you. You don’t need to repent.”
      - Or they say,
        - “Here, follow these rules, do these things and you will be saved. Pray this prayer or perform this ritual and all will be well for you.”
      - Or they divert them...
        - Leading them to all sorts of social activities, political activities, even worship activities, but never setting forth Christ.
  - 3) Do you not see it?
    - God’s sheep are harassed when those who ought to be leading them to Christ instead lead them away from Him!
      - They are harassed because there is no relief for their guilt in these things.
      - They are harassed because there is no future and no hope in a false gospel.

- They are sheep that are being led to destruction.
- b. And the second word, translated **scattered** in the NKJ, is literally a word that means **thrown down...**
- 1) The idea seems to be that instead of being brought to their true shepherd, they are lying helpless on the ground.
    - Instead of being gathered to Him as they should be,
      - they are tossed about with every wind of doctrine and are lying helplessly apart from Him...
      - They are paralysed like the man that was brought to Jesus on the stretcher, but nobody carries them to Jesus.
        - They are left lying in the wilderness.
  - 2) What a terrible thing for God's people not to be gathered to Christ!
    - For those in the church to be strangers to Him who is the Head and Saviour of the church!
    - Do you not see them lying helplessly?
    - a) There is one who has gone astray,
      - but the false shepherds do not care!
        - They will not go after the one who has wandered into sin and call him to repentance.
        - They will ignore the sin and pretend that it does not matter.
      - This is why it is so important for your protection that you join a church where the elders will discipline you if you need to be disciplined!
    - b) There is another laden with guilt... helplessly wounded.
      - But the false shepherd does not lead that one to Christ who died for our sins...
        - Oh no, instead he is given the rosary—or prayers to some saint!
        - or told that there is no reason for guilt and sent to a psychiatrist to cure it with medications or therapy.
    - c) Jesus sees his sheep lying helpless...
      - He sees them seeking blessing in all the wrong ways...
      - When they don't have Him, they look to find life in other things:

- One says, “Romance will make me happy,” and gives himself over to a life of immorality...
- Another says, “Wealth will make me blessed,” and so falls into an aimless life of covetousness, greed, and selfishness.
- Another turns to wine for relief,
  - and yet another to an unbiblical divorce.
- This is what happens to the sheep when they are not instructed in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

TRANS> Jesus looks at these harassed and helpless sheep and He has compassion on them!

- He will not leave them to lie that helpless before the wolves!
  - Oh no, not Jesus!
    - He has compassion and He will gather every one of them into His fold.
    - He will not allow even one of His sheep to perish!
    - He will snatch them from the wolves and from the paw of the lion and the bear.
    - He will heal all their wounds and make them whole...
    - He will feed them with the bread of life and give them living water to drink.
- And that leads to our second point...

## **II. Secondly, I want you to see how in His great compassion, Jesus Himself becomes our shepherd, ministering to His people’s needs as He is able!**

A. Compassion is not sincere unless it is also willing to do whatever it can to help.

1. The following illustration shows what an empty thing compassion is when it never goes beyond mere empathy.
  - a. There you are, an old woman out on a cold rainy night and your tire goes flat.
    - You pull over into an empty parking lot and begin to try to figure out how to change the tire.
    - After studying the owner’s manual,
      - you think you know what to do,
      - so you get out in the pouring rain and begin struggling to take the spare out of the trunk.
  - b. How happy you are to see a car pull up with a strong young man.
    - But instead of getting out to help, he only offers sympathy...



- He cracks his window and begins to tell you how deeply he feels for you in your terrible situation.
- He goes on and on about the rain and the heavy tire and how old you are, but never gets out of his car to help.
- He watches you struggle and finally get the tire out...
  - Then he sees you in the pouring rain beginning to loosen the lug nuts:
    - “Oh but you are getting so wet,” he sympathises, but he does not even get out to hold the umbrella for you.
  - Next he sees you struggle to turn the wrench and comments how sad it is that you are not able to turn it...
    - but he does not get out to help—
    - All he does is tell you how deeply he feels for you.

TRANS> That is a wretched kind of compassion!

2. Jesus knows nothing of this kind of compassion!

- He cannot have compassion without doing all He can to help.
- a. Verse 35 illustrates how Jesus flies into action when He sees needs...
  - It describes what we have seen of Him in Matthew’s gospel over the last several weeks...
    - He did not sit around and feel sorry for His people...
      - Matt 9:35: “Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.”
- b. Notice the details in this verse!
  - 1) First you see that Jesus went to **all** the cities as well as to the villages!
    - The Jewish historian Josephus tells us that there were over 200 cities and villages in Galilee!
    - A city was distinguished from a village in that the city was walled and the village was unwalled...
      - Jesus went to both—to minister to both small and great.
      - His great compassion caused Him to do all the good He could wherever He could.
  - 2) Second, notice **what** He did!
    - He preached and He healed!

- This is what the people truly needed from Him...
  - They needed to receive the gospel of salvation that was being withheld from them by their leaders...
    - They needed to be shown the way of forgiveness and eternal life...
    - And they needed to be delivered from the misery of sin.

3) And so Jesus spent Himself doing good for His people...

- In this way He demonstrated His compassion...
  - And He showed them His authority over sickness that they might know that He was the Messiah who was well able to deliver them from death and judgement.
  - Jesus led them to Himself as the true shepherd they all so desperately needed.
  - He showed them that He was the Messiah who had come to save.

B. And I say that in His many deeds of mercy Jesus showed us all that He is a compassionate shepherd!

1. Here is the One who did not stop with these gracious healings and exorcisms...

- but who is so full of compassion that He was willing to go beyond this and do all that was necessary to take away our sins!
  - The compassion He showed in the miracles revealed His nature as the one who would do all He could for His people...
  - And He had a lot more that He had come to do than a few healings!
- The death penalty had been passed against the whole human race because of sin...
  - but this compassionate shepherd came to give His life in place of the sheep!
  - He came without sin of His own, promising to lay down His life for us and for our sins—
    - that we might be forgiven!
    - He would take the death penalty upon Himself that we might live!

2. His compassion was so great that He left the glories of heaven to come down to earth to do this!

- There is no contempt or harshness in Him, but tenderness and kindness.
  - There is no compassion like this compassion—to leave the place of perfect happiness and comfort to suffer misery for others who had no right to it!

- To enter such suffering for those who wickedly despised Him and spurned Him.
3. And we see also how He succeeded!
- Just as He succeeded in healing the sick and feeding the hungry when He was here on earth...
  - So we see that in offering Himself for our sins, God fully accepted Him!
    - He demonstrated this by raising Him from the dead and setting Him at His right hand to reign!
      - Thus Jesus has been exalted as Lord and Saviour of all!
      - As the good shepherd, He laid down His life for His sheep, and God fully accepted His offering to take away our sins.
      - By faith in Him and His sacrifice, we may freely come to God.

TRANS> This is true compassion!

- This is compassion that acts!
  - This is compassion that does all it can to help!
    - Oh aren't you ashamed! How far short we all come!
    - Jesus had done so much for us and we do so little for others.

C. And what makes Jesus' compassion so wonderful is the fact that He is able to do **so much** for the objects of His compassion!

1. Truly, when He becomes your shepherd, it is impossible to lack any good thing.
- He simply will not allow it to be so!
    - He directs divine power and grace to bless you and there is nothing lacking in it!
  - It may seem like it to you,
    - but even your sufferings and afflictions in this life are preparing you for the glory He has prepared for you!
      - They are an essential part of His plan to bring a rich and full blessing to you if you are His.
      - You have all things in Jesus Christ.
2. And so you can say with David:
- Psalm 23:1 The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.
    - Remember that the word “**want**” here means “**lack**”—
      - you lack absolutely nothing if He is your shepherd—

- and shame on you if you think you do lack something!
- The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You *are* with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.
- If He is your shepherd, you have everything—

TRANS> But when Jesus looked out on the multitudes,

- He saw that there were many who were appointed for salvation who had not yet trusted in Him.
  - He knew that He could not possibly minister to all of them while He was on earth—there were too many.
    - Yet, He knew that somehow the gospel must be brought to them.
  - He knew that the harvest that God had promised Him was plentiful,
    - and He knew that the gospel must be brought to every one of them or they would perish.
  - Jesus simply would not allow that to happen...
    - John 6:37-39: All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.
    - It is impossible that any one of the elect should perish whom the Father has appointed for salvation...
      - In John 10, Jesus says,
        - John 10:16: And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.
        - Jesus will absolutely not fail to get the gospel to each one of them.
- Jesus could not personally carry the gospel to them all,
  - But He will send the gospel to them by His servants...
    - He will raise up a company of Ambassadors to carry the message for Him to every one of His sheep.
    - He will stir up compassion like His compassion in His disciples...

### **III. And so thirdly, I want you to see how Jesus stirs up compassion for the lost in all who are His disciples.**

A. In verse 37-38, He tells His disciples:

- Matthew 9:37-38: “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the labourers are few. Therefore, pray the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into His harvest.”

- Jesus stirs up compassion in us by showing us the need!

1. First, He tells us that there are many that will be saved—

- He says, “the harvest is plentiful.”

a. We need to know that God is planning to save many people.

- If we don't realise this, we will not be stimulated to pray.
- If we think His mercy is narrow and small, we will despair of even trying and crawl into our holes to rot away.

b. Certainly it is true that even the very best harvest has a lot of chaff among the wheat...

- A good crop of corn will also have stalks and tassels and husks, but it will also have a lot of corn!
- Certainly there were many among the multitudes who would never believe, but there were also many that would believe.
  - Just as a farmer would be foolish if he gave up farming because there were too many stalks and husks,
    - so one working in the spiritual harvest must not give up because there are so many in the church that do not believe.
    - The corn grows among the stalks and the husks.

c. And you should be encouraged to know that there are surely many people around you that God will save.

- You should yearn for them the way Jesus does...
- You should be moved with compassion when you see so many covenant people feeding on false teaching...
  - You should yearn for them to hear the truth!
  - Jesus assures you that there are many lost sheep who will be saved, no matter what they may look like now.
    - Does your heart not go out to your neighbour and all those around you who do not know Christ?

- Does your heart not go out to those across the world who have not heard the gospel?

TRANS> Jesus gives you reason to hope that some of them will be saved.

2. Secondly, Jesus calls you to pray for them because the labourers are few.
  - a. When you see many false teachers who are not bringing the gospel,
    - It should stir you up to have compassion for those people and to pray!
  - b. Pray that the gospel will get to them with full power, clarity and effectiveness!
    - True yearning for them will lead to true praying.
    - It is not just that they need to hear a sermon or two—they need to be nurtured up in the word of God so that they might continue in the word of Christ.
      - Pray that they would become Jesus' disciples.
  - c. And since Jesus can't personally disciple them all, He tells you to pray in particular that He would send forth labourers into the harvest.
    - This is the way the multitudes will be nourished in the gospel.
    - Jesus will send labourers to carry the word to them, to care for their souls, and to shepherd them in His name.
      - Their whole ministry will be to take the word of Christ and give it to those in need...
      - And through this labour, Christ will gather in His elect to His kingdom from the four corners of the earth.
  - d. You must pray that He will send them out!
    - If they are not sent by Him, they will not be true to the gospel and will only harass the multitude with false doctrine—
      - They will only add to the problem.
      - And so the prayer is not just for labourers, but for labourers that are sent by the Lord of the harvest!
        - Those that know it is His harvest and who lead the sheep to Him for salvation.

TRANS> And so Jesus inspires compassion in all who are His disciples by first showing them that the harvest is plentiful and by secondly calling them to pray that He would send forth labourers.

- This was His plan...

- He was getting ready to send out the labourers, so He first stirred His people to pray for labourers.
- He usually works this way—
  - When He is ready to do a work, He first stirs up a desire in His people to pray for that work.
  - Then when He does it, they give Him the glory...
    - They have pled for it with much importunity so that when it happens, they do not think it just happened...
      - they know that it was God’s hand.

B. But the only time Jesus’ call for us to pray for labourers is effective is when we see His compassion that is behind that call!

1. We will never yearn for the salvation of the multitude until we first see how **He** yearns for them!
  - a. You know how this works—
    - Passion for a cause is contagious!
    - You might read about a child that was seriously injured in the paper and say, “Oh, that’s too bad...”
      - but if you meet that child’s mother and she is very distressed, it stirs you up to be more distressed about it all...
      - The compassion in the mother causes you to be more compassionate.
  - b. So it is, if you see how greatly Jesus’ compassion is stirred when He sees the multitude, harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd...
    - When you see Him lamenting over them...
      - When you see Him spending Himself to go all over Galilee to minister to them...
      - When you see Him even going to the cross to save them...
    - When you are really gripped with His deep yearning for them!
      - It will be impossible for you not to yearn for them also.
      - His yearning is not groundless...
        - Unless they come to Jesus, unless they learn of Jesus, they will all go to Hell...
        - He is the only way of salvation and they must come to Him and continue in Him if they are to be saved.
        - If He is yearning for them, can you be indifferent about them?

2. I say, you will do what you can for them!
  - a. And the best thing you can do is pray that God will send faithful labourers to them!
    - That is what Jesus calls you to do!
    - And of course, you should pray for those who are already labouring—
      - that they would be faithful and true and dedicated and sincere—
      - that their work would be effectual to bring many to salvation.
  - b. And then you should also do what else you can...
    - Bring them to hear the preaching of God's word...
    - Urge them not to be occasional hearers, but to devote themselves to doctrine as if their life depended upon it...
      - because their life does depend on it.
      - They must be connected to Jesus by faith or they cannot be saved.
  - c. And let me encourage you not to become discouraged.
    - The disciples had to watch the 5000 families walk away from Jesus who had come with nothing but belly religion in John 6...
      - After that, they saw their Lord betrayed by one of their own number, arrested by the Jews, delivered over to Pontius Pilate and crucified.
        - It looked like there would be no harvest.
          - But it was after all these things that the 3000 believed at Pentecost.
          - This was followed by tens of thousands more in Jerusalem...
          - And even more among the Gentiles!
      - There are seasons in church history that have known only a tiny remnant who faithfully devoted themselves to prayer...
        - but always, the harvest finally came.
          - God raised up the labourers out of nowhere it would seem—
            - and He marvellously caused the people to hear.
            - Sometimes it was years later, but still, God heard and God answered.
        - Do not grow weary as Israel did when they came to the land of Canaan and would not go in.
          - No matter how insurmountable it may seem to take the world for Jesus Christ, the harvest is truly plentiful.



- Your Lord is pleased when you pray with Him in the wilderness.
  - He will make the wilderness blossom.
  - He has compassion for His people and not one whom he Father has given Him will perish.
    - Pray that He will send forth labourers into His harvest.
    - Pray for Mark Blaauw, Rudy de Vries, David Martinez, Hassan, Ken, and many others who are studying for the gospel ministry!
    - And pray for those who are already there—
      - For Jack Whytock who is coming to speak to us tonight about the work He is doing...
      - For David Els on the Presbytery prayer Calendar today...
      - And for me as I minister God's word in Halifax.

Hear what the Lord says about His people!

- 23 "I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd.
- 24 "And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.
- 25 "I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.
- 26 "I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing.
- 27 "Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.
- 28 "And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make *them* afraid.
- 29 "I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore.
- 30 "Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, *am* with them, and they, the house of Israel, *are* My people," says the Lord GOD.'" "
- 31 "You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you *are* men, *and* I *am* your God," says the Lord GOD.