

“Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us – Scripture Allusions – Verse 2”

14 June 2020

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The Good Shepherd Seeks and Saves Lost Sheep - Copyright David Padfield - Used under license

"How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave ninety and nine, and go into the mountains, and seek that which is gone astray?" (Matthew 18:12 1599 Geneva Bible)

This article describes the scripture allusions for verse 2 of the children's hymn, "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us." In verse 2 the hymn teaches us that Jesus befriends us, guards our way, keeps watch over us, defends us from sin, and seeks us when we go astray.

In the first article in this series, [Ref. 1](#), we learned about the background for the hymn text author, Dorothy A. Thrupp, and the hymn tune composer,

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William B. Bradbury. We also discussed the Biblical truths in verse 1 - that Jesus is our great Shepherd who leads us, cares for us, feeds us, and protects us. Jesus has redeemed us ("bought us"), and we belong to him ([Ref. 1](#)).

Consider. At what time or times in your life did Jesus seek you when you had gone astray? In what ways does Jesus guard you and defend you from sin?

Verse 2 for "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us"

"We are Thine, Thou dost befriend us, be the Guardian of our way;
Keep Thy flock, from sin defend us, seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Hear, O hear us when we pray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Hear, O hear us when we pray."
-- Dorothy A. Thrupp (1779-1847, [Ref. 2](#))

To see the lyric sheet for all four verses of "Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us" on one page, [click here](#). The lyrics are provided by Timeless Truths ([Ref. 3](#)).

The Bible verses cited below are linked to the BibleGateway.com website and are quoted from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless noted otherwise ([Ref. 4](#)).

Scripture Allusions - Verse 2

"We are Thine, Thou dost befriend us, be the Guardian of our way"

This first line in verse 2 declares that we belong to Jesus, that he befriends us, and then asks Jesus to guard our way.

We are Thine. We now belong to Jesus because he has redeemed us. The Apostle Paul wrote to Titus about "our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds" ([Titus 2:13-14 NASB](#)). This phrase, "We are Thine," continues the theme of redemption that the author stated at the end of verse 1 ([Ref. 1](#), [Ref. 3](#)).

Thou dost befriend us. Not only has Jesus given his life in the past to show us that he is our friend (John 15:13), he also loves us and treats us with close personal affection now in the present (Ref. 5). Jesus told his disciples, and he tells us who believe in him and follow him now, "I have called you friends" (John 15:15). Because Jesus is our Friend and we are his friend we love him and we keep his commandments (John 14:15, John 15:14).

Be the Guardian of our way. In this phrase, we ask Jesus to be our spiritual "guard rails" and keep us on the right path. Jesus said, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come" (John 16:13, Ref. 6).

"Keep Thy flock, from sin defend us, seek us when we go astray."

The three phrases in this line continue the image of the good Shepherd and what he does to protect his flock, his sheep. All three phrases are in prayer-like language.

Keep Thy flock. In the phrase, "keep Thy flock," we ask Jesus, our Shepherd, to guard and protect us with *personal interest and vigilance* (Ref. 7). We learn the meaning of "keep" from a famous verse about the birth of the Savior. "And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2:8). The Greek word in Luke 2:8 for *keeping* means *guarding, protecting, and exercising unbroken vigilance* (Ref. 7).

From sin defend us. Jesus defends us from sin through the word of God and the Holy Spirit whom he has sent to indwell those who believe in Christ. Jesus said, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you" (John 14:16). David described the importance of memorizing and remembering scripture so he could apply it to guard himself from sin (Psalm 119:9-11). Jesus remembered and quoted scripture to defend himself from the devil when the devil tempted him (Matthew 4:1-11). The Apostle Paul instructed believers about the importance of the word of God coupled with truth and faith to "extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one" (Ephesians 6:13-17).

Seek us when we go astray. When we go astray (off course), Jesus will come looking for us. Jesus said, "How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave ninety and nine, and go into the mountains, and seek that which is gone astray?" (Matthew 18:12 1599 Geneva Bible). The Greek word for *astray* (used twice in this verse) means "*get off-course; to deviate from the correct path (circuit, course), roaming into error, wandering; (passive) be misled*" (Ref. 8). Note the interesting parallel in Genesis when the Lord God came walking in the garden seeking Adam and Eve after they had sinned (Genesis 3:8-9).

"Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Hear, O hear us when we pray." (Phrase repeated)

The hymn text reminds us to pray in child-like trust to our Savior who protects us, defends us, and seeks us when we go astray. The request to God, "Hear my prayer," is common in the Psalms. David prayed, "O God, hear my prayer; give ear to the words of my mouth" (Psalm 54:2). "Hear my prayer, O Lord; give ear to my pleas for mercy!" (Psalm 143:1).

John the disciple of Jesus wrote to believers in Christ, "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that *if we ask anything according to his will he hears us*" (1 John 5:13-14, italics added).

Listen and Sing Along

Click on this YouTube link - Solo piano meditation on the hymn "Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us" with sing-along lyrics. Recorded by Rick Betts - March, 2011.

Prayer

Thank you, Jesus, for seeking us and finding us when we have gone astray. Thank you, Good Shepherd, for leading us and guarding us in the way that leads to eternal life (John 10:27-28).

References

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