HOLD ON TO THE SHEPHERD

For out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Matt 2:6 (KJV)

 Jesus tells us in the book of John that he is the Good Shepherd. The words used in our text today “that shall rule” comes from a word that means “to be a shepherd.” This word takes on the full meaning of a shepherd so that when it is said that he shall rule the people, it includes the meaning of guarding, guiding, folding, and feeding. I’m not sure that anyone could have fully comprehended who was really laid in Bethlehem’s manger. Did the shepherds know that he who lay in the manger was really their shepherd? Did they know that the angels who gave them the headlines from Heaven that night were under the complete rule of Bethlehem’s babe?

 Isaiah saw this one to come as our shepherd.  He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young (Isaiah 40:11 (KJV). Jesus has carried us in his arms. In his arms we are safe from harm. We find rest in his arms. We find comfort in his bosom and we will never go astray if we follow his gentle lead. Do you think that God gets as much joy from holding us as we do our children or grandchildren? Isaiah gives us the picture that the Lord wants to hold us and love us and lead us.

 Jesus told Peter that if he loved him to feed his lambs and feed his sheep. The sheep and lambs were human souls that Jesus put him in charge of. I believe that Peter did what Jesus told him. Years later we find Peter referring to Jesus as the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls (I Peter 2:25). Peter learned from the master how to care for the sheep. It also seems that Peter learned to love Jesus more and more. This is how and what we learn from Jesus starting at new birth. The birth of Jesus shows us the place where the shepherd does some of his shepherding. It is a safe place. The stable is a sheltered place. It was a place where all could come and find comfort. We still go to Jesus to find comfort for our souls.

 It would be nice to know what the sheep might say about their shepherd. I know that Balaam’s donkey talked but we do not have many animals that talk. If the sheep could talk, I think they would have bragged on David. The sheep would have said that Moses was faithful to them. When it comes to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, we are his sheep and we know his voice. We too are given a voice to use in worship and praise for our Shepherd. David used his voice, though he was a shepherd, he proclaimed the Lord was his Shepherd and he could want no more. We do have the greatest shepherd of all! He will do to hold on to!!!

Yours in Christ,

Brother Randy Burtram