



Nuggets 20: Like a Shepherd Lead Us

After my father breathed his last, I closed his eyes. That reminds me of a story about the kind of Shepherd we have. Jacob was an old man when he heard that his long-lost son Joseph was not dead but had become second ruler in Egypt. Joseph wanted Jacob to bring his whole family to Egypt where Joseph could care for them during the famine.

This would be hard for Jacob at his age. Familiar surroundings and friends are security for the elderly. God had promised this land to Jacob and his descendants. What would happen if he left it? Jacob had wanted to be buried here. And his sons had deceived him before. Was Joseph really alive? Jacob set out in fear and doubt. When he reached Beersheba, he worshiped and sought God's help. God appeared to him and said, "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there. I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. And Joseph's own hand will close your eyes." God was very aware of Jacob's fears. He came at just the right time to answer every doubt and give Jacob the strength he needed.

Paul was also getting old when he came to the large, wicked city of Corinth. It seemed an impossible job to evangelize it. Paul was tired. He carried the scars of stonings and beatings he had suffered for Christ in other places. There would be the usual opposition from unbelieving Jewish leaders. He had almost no helpers and no financial support. He worked one regular shift making tents and another teaching the gospel. At that point Jesus appeared to Paul and said, "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." God already knew who Paul's converts would be. How different Paul felt when he started the next day!

Genesis 46:1-4; Acts 18:1-11; Psalm 23; 103:13,14; Matthew 11:28-30; 1 Peter 5:7; Isaiah 40:28-31

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