

Sixteenth Day: 'In the Paths of righteousness.'

by J. Wilbur Chapman

The Lord's guidance is always the right way, even in difficult times, and leads us home.

Scripture: Psalm 23:2, Psalm 23:4, John 10:3, 1 Corinthians 10:13

Topics: "Divine Guidance", "Good Shepherd"

Description

J. Wilbur Chapman preaches about the comforting guidance of the Good Shepherd, illustrating how the Shepherd leads His sheep through various terrains and challenges, always towards the ultimate destination of home. The metaphor of being led in sheep-tracks or wagon ruts emphasizes the diverse paths God may lead us on, but assures that following His guidance will always lead us to safety and comfort in His fold.

Transcript

In another verse we were told that the Shepherd led beside still waters, and the inference might have been that, when the feet were cut, or the muscles strained by the clamber up the rocky mountain track, or that, when the course lay amid deep, damp glens, overshadowed by heavy forests and overhanging rocks, that at such times the sheep was following his own wild way, outside the tender guidance of its Lord. And so the Psalmist takes up the metaphor again, and tells us that there are other walks by which the Shepherd is leading us to our home. Not always beside the gentle streamlet flow, but sometimes by the foaming torrent; not always over the delicate grass, but sometimes up the stony mountain track; not always in the sunshine, but sometimes through the valley of the shadow of death. But which-ever way it is, it is the right way and it is the way home."

John McNeill says it is literally, " He leadeth me in the sheep-tracks." If this be so, he leads in many different ways, from many different directions, but always in every way to the fold.

But the word "paths," says Rev. Ford C. Ottman, has another meaning in the Hebrew: it is literally wagon ruts. David had a fine reason for the use of this term. In the Holy Land the roads were not good, and the wagon wheels were constructed so as to meet this difficulty. These wheels were perhaps eighteen to twenty inches in width; and, as wheel after wheel would pass over the ground, it would wear a smooth path, and many a time David leading his sheep home would take to the wagon ruts because it was the easiest path for himself and his sheep. But all this is as nothing when compared with the way in which the Lord will lead us if we but yield absolutely to his leadership.

"Jesus, day by day
Near us in life's way,
Naught of dangers will we reckon,
Simply haste where thou dost beckon.
Lead us by the hand
To our Fatherland.
Thus our path shall be
Daily traced by thee.
Draw thou nearer when 'tis rougher;
Help us most when most we suffer;
And, when all is o'er,
Ope to us thy door."

SUGGESTIONS FOR TODAY.

1. You can bear the trials of the day because the way, though thorny, leads home.
2. You can endure the hardships of the passing hour, for strong souls always graduate from suffering into glory.
3. You can meet your temptations, fierce though they be, for God has with the temptation provided the way of escape.
4. This way is our good Shepherd, who goes before in every way of darkness and of trial, and leads us home.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/j-wilbur-chapman/sixteenth-day-in-the-paths-of-righteousness/>

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