

**March 13, 2025: (originally prepared by Jeff Waldvogel for March 3, 2022)**



25AE59AA.mp3

*“He shall feed His flock like a shepherd...” (Isaiah 40:11)*

The natural question as we reflect upon this verse is - “How does a shepherd feed his flock?” The caring shepherd provides a beautiful image to consider. David writes of the Lord, his shepherd, that he “prepares a table (*mesa*) before me.” The preparation of this table meant seeking out a verdant pasture, adding in salts and minerals to the soil, and removing weeds and poisonous plants. This preparation was done with the utmost care so that the sheep would be fully nourished only with what is good for them - and protected from that which could harm. With such care our Shepherd tends to us, His flock.

In composing this aria, one can sense that Handel takes care to communicate this truth in the most tender and gentle way possible. The musical line draws our thoughts and emotions towards Christ’s meek and lowly heart for us. While we revel in this love, we remember that He earned the title of “Good Shepherd” by laying His life down for us. He can only feed, and gather, and carry, and lead us because “he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2:8b).” What a Wonderful Savior!

In John 10, Jesus said “My Sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life.” We are known by our Heavenly Shepherd and he guides us to our eternal home. May we hear his voice clearly, and follow him closely, all of our days.