



Daily Manna for day

July 12, 2021

Prepared for you by

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Jeremiah 23:1-6

¹Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! says the LORD. ²Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who shepherd my people: It is you who have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. So I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. ³Then I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they shall not fear any longer, or be dismayed, nor shall any be missing, says the LORD.

⁵The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

One summer morning a couple years ago there was a slight ruckus outside the bathroom window. Mama Grouse, excitedly clucking at her half-dozen chucking chicks, was desperately trying to gather them back to her. The chicks widely exploring the woods and back yard were not about to be deterred from their adventures.

As I read Jeremiah's words that image bounced back into my brain. "I will bring [the remnant of my flock] back to their fold." Jeremiah decries Israel's shepherds "who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" The people of Israel, neglected by their shepherds, were wandering loose; to them God speaks through Jeremiah the word of promise to gather them back.

There are days, don't you know, when we could all use the enfolding arms of a shepherd, a friend, a partner to gather us back into the fold of love, of compassion, of grace. Marty Haugen captures the image for me (ELW, #532):

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken,
Gather us in, the blind and the lame;
Call to us now and we shall awaken,
We shall arise at the sound of our name.