

11-2017

Jehovah-Raah

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Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "Jehovah-Raah" (2017). *The Three-in-One File*. 13.
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ARTICLE THIRTY-FOUR: RAAH, THE SIXTH COMPOUND NAME OF JEHOVAH

This is a reference to Jehovah as a shepherd.

- The three roles involved
 - A. He is the Good Shepherd. A reference to His death:

“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep” (Jn. 10:11).
 - B. He is the Great Shepherd. A reference to His resurrection:

“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant” (Heb. 13:20).
 - C. He is the Chief Shepherd. A reference to His second coming:

“And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away” (1 Peter 5:4).
- The three time periods involved
 - A. He *once* was a sacrificial Lamb
 1. As foretold:
 - a. By David

“My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning? For dogs have surrounded Me; the congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. They divide My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots” (Psa. 22:1, 16-18).
 - b. By Isaiah

“He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth” (Isa. 53:7).
 - c. By John the Baptist

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, ‘Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’”(Jn. 1:29).
 - d. By Jesus

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life” (Jn. 3:14, 15).

“From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day” (Mt. 16:21).

“Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, ‘Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again’” (Mt. 20:17-19).

e. By the Father Himself

“Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you” (1 Peter 1:18-20).

“All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (Rev. 13:8).

2. As fulfilled:

“And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink. Then they crucified Him, and divided His garments, casting lots, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: ‘They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots’” (Mt. 27:33-35).

B. He now is a seeking Shepherd

“So He spoke this parable to them, saying: ‘What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’” (Lk. 15:3-6).

“For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Lk. 19:10).

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope” (1 Tim. 1:1).

“Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).

C. He will be both

1. We see Him as a Shepherd in the millennium:

“Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He

will gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and gently lead those who are with young” (Isa. 40:10, 11).

2. We see Him as the Lamb in the Holy City:

“But one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.’ And I looked, and behold in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying: “You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we^e shall reign on the earth.’ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!’ And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!’” (Rev. 5:5-13).

“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, ‘Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb’s wife.’ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. But I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light” (Rev. 21:9-11, 22, 23).

- The overall ministry involved

A. As seen in Psalm 23:

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name’s sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Only eternity itself will reveal how many countless saints have refreshed themselves at its cool and clear spiritual water brook. It has been said the world could ill afford to trade

all its vast libraries of books for these six little verses. The psalm begins with *“the Lord is,”* and ends with *“the Lord forever.”*

No other biblical passage has given more guidance, comfort, strength, and blessed reassurance to the fainthearted, downhearted, and brokenhearted as has this one!

A guest speaker at a local church began by announcing his text would be taken from the 23rd Psalm and asked if anyone in the audience would volunteer to come forward and repeat it. After a brief moment of silence, a little girl walked to the front.

- The speaker: “Honey, can you really repeat this psalm?”
- The little girl, nodding: “Yes, sir.”
- The speaker: “All right, please begin.”
- The little girl, taking a deep breath:
“THE LORD’S MY SHEPHERD, THAT’S ALL I WANT!”

With these words, she walked triumphantly back to her parents.

The speaker: “Folks, you have just heard the 23rd Psalm in a nutshell!” (And so they had.)

Song writer Henry Williams Baker has arranged the words of Psalm 23 in poetic fashion as follows:

*The King of love my Shepherd is,
Whose goodness faileth never;
I nothing lack if I am His,
And he is mine forever.*

*Where streams of living water flow,
My ransomed soul He leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.*

*Perverse and foolish, oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me,
And on His shoulder gently laid,
And home, rejoicing brought me.*

*In death’s dark vale I fear no ill
With Thee, dear Lord, beside me;
Thy rod and staff my comfort still,
Thy cross before to guide me.*

*Thou spread’st a table in my sight;
Thy unction grace bestoweth;
And O what transport of delight
From Thy pure chalice floweth!*

And so through all the length of days

*Thy goodness faileth never:
Good Shepherd, may I sing Thy praise
Within Thy house forever.*

Actually an entire sermon could be easily given over in probing the riches in regard to each of the first five words in Psalm 23.

NOTE:

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

We often hear the expression that he or she is the expert on a given subject, meaning, the person is the ultimate authoritative source, above all others. With this in mind, on no less than thirteen occasions in the New Testament, we read of Jesus making this claim, with each claim preceded by the definite article "*the*." Thus:

1. I am *the* Messiah (John 4:25).
2. I am *the* Bread of Life (John 6:34, 48).
3. I am *the* Water of Life (John 4:14; 7:37).
4. I am *the* Light of the World (John 8:12; 9:5).
5. I am *the* Door (John 10:7, 8).
6. I am *the* Good Shepherd (John 10:9, 10).
7. I am *the* Son of God (John 10:36).
8. I am *the* Resurrection (John 11:25).
9. I am *the* Life (John 11:25).
10. I am *the* Way and the Truth (John 14:6).
11. I am *the* True Vine (John 15:1, 5).
12. I am *the* Alpha and Omega (Rev. 1:8, 11).
13. I am *the* Root and Offspring of David (Rev. 22:16).

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

Some day in the future of all humanity, both saved and unsaved will acknowledge Jesus as Lord.

- *"Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"* (Phil. 2:9-11).

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

This little word opens the door to that blessed truth known as the doctrine of the present tense.

“You, LORD, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. They will perish, but You remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Heb. 1:10, 11; 13:8).

“Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am’” (John 8:58).

Question: How can we be assured (some twenty centuries later) that Jesus can still forgive and cleanse us from our sin? That He even today desires to guide us? To provide comfort in the hour of our great sorrow? Very simple—He used to do these things and He never changes!

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

Hopefully, Jesus is real to the pastor, to moms, dads, sons, daughters, friends, etc. But is He **my** shepherd?

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD

“Know that the LORD, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture” (Psa. 100:3).

The Father has assigned a number of offices for His beloved Son to occupy. Among them would be that of a (1) Prophet, (2) a Priest, (3) a King, (4) a Redeemer, (5) a Judge, etc. But surely as sheep the most comforting role is that of a Shepherd!

B. As seen in John 10

Here are some key points Jesus stressed during His Good Shepherd sermon, as found in John 10 –

- He knows His sheep (John 10:3, 14, 27) – *“He calleth his own sheep by name”* (John 10:3). Paul the apostle amplified upon this in a later epistle:
“But God’s firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: The lord knows those who are his,” and *“Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity”* (2 Tim. 2:19).
- He is known by His sheep (John 10:4, 14, 27) – *“The sheep follow him, for they know his voice”* (John 10:4).
- He leads His sheep (John 10:3).
- He is the only true Shepherd – *“All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them”* (John 10:8).
- He lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:17-18) – *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep”* (John 10:11).

In the Old Testament the sheep died for the shepherd. In the New Testament the Shepherd will die for the sheep. Homer Kent wrote:

“Many shepherds died while defending their flocks. There were knives and clubs of robbers to be faced, as well as the attacks of wild animals. In their cases, however, death was always unintended. Christ, on the other hand, was also to die

for his sheep in order to save them, but he was going to do so voluntarily. He would 'give his life.' His sheep were in danger of the greatest kind. *"All we like sheep have gone astray"* (Isa. 53:6). Jesus was thus predicting his own death, which would occur the following spring." (*Light in the Darkness*, p. 140).

- He lays down His life for the sheep (John 10: 17-18) – *"No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father"* (John 10:18).
- He imparts life to the sheep (John 10:9-10) – *"I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture"* (John 10:9).
"I came that they may have life" (John 10:10).
- He imparts abundant life to the sheep – *"And that they might have it more abundantly"* (John 10:10).
- He imparts eternal life to the sheep – *"I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand"* (John 10:28, 29).

Note the "life" and "abundant life" phrases here:

1. The first (life) speaks of that peace *with* God in Romans 5:1.
2. The second (abundant life) refers to that peace *of* God in Philippians 4:7.

The phrase "no man" is not found in the Greek text. It reads rather, "No thing." In other words, not even the believer himself can remove himself from the Father's hand. Paul later built a marvelous case for this. (See Rom. 8:33-39.)

- He is approved by the Father (John 10:15).
- He is loved by the Father (John 10:17).
- He is authorized by the Father (John 10:18)
- He is one with the Father (John 10:30, 38).
- He is the Son of the Father (John 10:36).

Recently I was asked to offer the benediction here at Liberty University Commencement ceremonies, invoking God's blessing upon some six thousand graduates. On that occasion, I felt led to use the words of Dorothy Thrupp's beautiful hymn of dedication, *Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us*, but changing the word "us" for "them," "our" for "their," etc. Here then was my prayer:

*Savior, like a shepherd lead them,
Much they need Thy tender care;
In Thy pleasant pastures feed them,
For their use Thy folds prepare:
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!*

Thou hast bought them, Thine they are.

*They are Thine, do Thou befriend them,
Be the guardian of their way;
Keep Thy flock, from sin defend them,
Seek them when they go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
Hear, O hear them, when they pray.*

*Thou hast promised to receive them,
Poor and sinful though they be;
Thou hast mercy to relieve them,
Grace to cleanse and power to free.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
Early let them turn to Thee.*

*Early let them seek Thy favor,
Early let them do Thy will;
Blessed Lord and only Savior,
With Thy love their bosoms fill.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus!
Thou hast loved them, love them still.*

One closing thought: This unique approach works just as well at a wedding service!

In fact, during April, 1961, following our wedding vows, Sue and I stood at the altar and listened to the soloist as he sang those words. So then, after a half century of marriage, both of us can testify that God has indeed honored each glorious word!

John Peterson has written a beautiful song in regard to this, titled, *Shepherd of Love*:

*Shepherd of love
You knew I had lost my way.
Shepherd of love,
You cared when I'd gone astray.
You sought and found me,
Placed around me
Strong arms that carry me home.
No foe can harm me,
Or alarm me,
Never again will I roam.
Shepherd of love,
Savior and Lord and guide*

*Shepherd of love,
Forever I'll stay by Your side.*

*You sought and found me,
Placed around me
Strong arms that carry me home.
No foe can harm me,
Or alarm me,
Never again will I roam.*

*Shepherd of love,
Savior and Lord and Guide
Shepherd of love,
Forever I'll stay by Your side.
Forever I'll stay by Your side.*

(John W. Peterson)