

Psalms 78:71

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.

Analysis

From following the ewes great with young he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance. This concluding verse parallels v. 52—as God guided Israel like a flock, now David guides Israel as shepherd-king. **From following the ewes great with young** (me'achar alot hevi'au, מֵאַחַר עֲלוֹת הַבָּיִאוּ) details David's shepherd experience—caring for nursing ewes requires special tenderness and skill, qualities needed for leading God's vulnerable people.

To feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance uses shepherding vocabulary for kingship. **Feed** (lir'ot, לִרְעוֹת) means shepherd, pasture, tend. **Jacob his people** and **Israel his inheritance** emphasize that David shepherds God's possession, not his own. The king is under-shepherd; Yahweh remains the true Shepherd-King. David's role anticipates Jesus, who feeds God's flock with true bread (John 6:35).

The psalm's conclusion answers its opening concerns—despite Israel's faithlessness, God preserves a remnant through His sovereign choice of Davidic kingship centered in Zion. This hope sustains Israel through exile and ultimately finds fulfillment in Jesus, David's heir who shepherds God's people eternally.

Historical Context

David's reign (1010-970 BC) brought Israel to its zenith—military victories, national unity, preparation for temple worship. His shepherd-heart showed in his

prayer life (Psalms) and his leadership combining justice with mercy. Though imperfect, David foreshadowed Christ perfectly fulfilling the shepherd-king role.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does viewing leadership as shepherding rather than dominating change your approach to influence and authority?
2. What specific 'ewes great with young'—vulnerable, needy people—has God called you to tend with special care?
3. In what ways does Jesus fulfill the Davidic shepherd-king role perfectly, and how should this affect your trust in His leadership?

Interlinear Text

מֵאַחֲרַיִם	עַל	וְהָבִיא	לְרִעּוּת	בְּיַעֲקֹב
From following	the ewes great with young	he brought	him to feed	Jacob
H310	H5763	H935	H7462	H3290
עַמּוֹ	וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל	נַחֲלָתוֹ:		
his people	and Israel	his inheritance		
H5971	H3478	H5159		

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 5:2 (References Israel): Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD said to thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel.

Isaiah 40:11 (Parallel theme): He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

Psalms 28:9 (Parallel theme): Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

1 Chronicles 11:2 (References Israel): And moreover in time past, even when Saul was king, thou wast he that leddest out and broughtest in Israel: and the LORD thy God said unto thee, Thou shalt feed my people Israel, and thou shalt be ruler over my people Israel.

Genesis 33:13 (Parallel theme): And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die.

1 Peter 5:2 (Parallel theme): Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;