

He Makes Me Lie Down in Green Pastures

Just the sound of the word *inoculation* makes my heart pound and my palms sweaty. I hate shots. Period. Most people do. I am convinced, that that is because of how they give them to us when we are too young to have a say so.

Babies get them in multiples. No single inoculation. In fact, the pediatrician groups them by time frame such as 2 months or 6 months. There is no real name given. Just bring them in for the “6-month” inoculations.

Our grandson, Elijah, had this personality altering 6-month event. His mommy and daddy were out of town (by design I believe). So his Nanny took him. I asked her after the appointment if he cried. (Is that a stupid question or what?) She said he was very brave (so I would be a proud grandfather), but yes, he screamed.

That evening when it was time for him to go to bed, he was very fussy. He had been stabbed in both of those tiny precious thighs numerous times. He was running a slight fever (and this is *good* for him?). I took him to our bed and laid him down. Then I slid in next to him and tried to comfort him. He wasn't really crying, just soft moans. It was obvious that under those “Scooby –Doo” Band-Aids, both legs ached. No real tears, just overall discomfort. So I reached my arm around him and gently pulled him right up against my chest, very close. And I whispered to him that I would go have a talk with the mean doctor the next day.

I promised Elijah that he would feel much better after a good night's sleep. He could not understand any of the words. It was simply the sound of my voice. I slipped my thumb into his pudgy little hand. As he started to dose, something startled

him (maybe pain?). His eyes flew open and he looked over at me. I gently squeezed his hand and whispered to him. He actually sighed, relaxed and closed his eyes again. His Pappy was there, and he felt safe, secure, protected, loved.

Psalm 23:2 says, "He makes me lie down in green pastures." In the original language, the concept is that the Shepherd *causes us to lie down and lean against* Him. Take a minute, close your eyes, and fill your mind with this picture. The Shepherd gently *makes* the sheep lie down. And then He doesn't walk away with a trite "hope you feel better." No. The Great Shepherd then *lies down* next to the sheep. He gets down in the plush green grass with one of His tired, hurting flock.

Then He goes a step further. He puts His everlasting arm around the sheep and pulls it against His chest. He whispers the sheep's name. Comforts it. Encourages it. Holds it firmly, but gently. And when that sheep is relaxed, secure and resting, assured of His protection and love, the Shepherd goes and finds another sheep in need of tender mercy. And the process starts all over again, sheep after sheep after sheep. Get the picture?

This week, as you journey in your Christ walk, you may need to *lie down* in His green pasture.

Has life pounded you? Are you worn out from trying to keep up with the "cares of the world"? Do you feel like you can't get your next breath? Money is tight. Troubles at home. Exhausted in the battle. Afraid. Worried. Not sure how or even if you can go another day.

Get your mind around this. *You* are His sheep. He loves *you*. He has not forgotten you. He knows where you are. The Great Shepherd *knows your name*. Intimately. Take some time to get alone and in the peacefulness of that solitude allow Him to *cause you to lie down, lean against Him*.

Feel that? It is His arm pulling you close. Stay there. Relax.

Breathe. You are secure, protected, loved. He will stay there with you. No hurry. Don't rush. Your times are in His hands. And that is a very good place to leave them.

Prayer Power for the Week

This week, take time to get alone with God and in that solitude allow Him to pour His love and comfort on you. Be still in His presence and know that He is God and that you are secure in Him. Thank Him for the assurance of His faithfulness and that He'll never leave you nor forsake you. Then place your cares one by one into His capable hands.

Continue to pray that revival would ignite our churches, spread throughout our nation and around the world. Pray that God will send laborers into His ripe harvest fields and that many will heed the call. Pray for the families of those lost in the Malaysian 777. Include the Ukraine as you pray for the nations, and once again, remember Israel, our troops, the persecuted church worldwide, and our national, spiritual and civic leaders. (Psalm 46:10; Heb. 13:5; Psalm 23)