

# THE *Good Shepherd's Heart*

— LIVING PARABLES —

The Voice of My Beloved Ministry Publication



## Welcome back to the The Good Shepherd's Heart: Living Parables!

These parables are an account of my real-life encounters with the Good Shepherd, which are by His divine design, and contain the heavenly jewels of revelation, wisdom and priceless lessons in leadership and stewardship that He has graciously taught me. These encounters began soon after arriving in Ireland in late September 2015. They take place on the countless prayer walks we have done, walking the beautiful farmland and coastal shores in County Kerry. They are what I call Living Parables where the Master Teacher has me walk something out in the natural, then makes me very aware He is there to teach me a spiritual lesson, wanting me to see another facet of His beautiful Good Shepherd's heart.

Have you at times felt as if there is no way of escape—not knowing where your help will come from? Are the traps and snares of the enemy making you feel as if you are taking one step forward, only to find that you have taken a few steps backwards, despite your best efforts? Do you feel as if life's constant battles are pushing you further into despair, where at times you feel hopeless and just want to give up?

May you hear the Good Shepherd's voice reassuring you that He has not forgotten, nor forsaken you. For He will not pass you by in your time of need. Instead, He is a very present help in trouble and knows how to rescue. And, often when we least expect it and in ways that are not our ways!

In His loving Mercy,

Tracy Hogan



## Living Parable: A Very Present Help in Trouble!



After a couple of hectic months of writing and publishing *Touching the Heart of God — Clean Hands and A Pure Heart*, I felt as if I could finally catch my breath. We were in the final stages and the finish line was in sight! During a quiet moment, I had wondered if I would have any more encounters with the Good Shepherd? A couple of days later, the Good Shepherd answered that thought, when I was least expecting it, for that thought had quickly escaped my mind.

It was a cool, breezy, July summer's day. The skies were overcast with a threat of rain. Despite that fact, I was anxious to walk and pray with the only One Who can take what Satan means for evil in our lives, and turn it around and work it for our good. As I headed out the door, I asked, "Which way, Lord, should we go?" It was quickly decided to go in a way that we had not been in a while. It is a route that navigates narrow back roads that cut across farm land, all the while ascending and descending into the valley below that overlooks the sea, taking you to the coast road and eventually into the forest.

The cooler weather felt good to my weary mind and tired body, and I was enjoying the pace and the freedom of having this time with the Lover of my soul. I settled into a familiar rhythm with my heart beating to the rhythm of His, and my feet in unison with His footsteps. All the while marveling at the beauty of His hand that surrounded me.

About forty-five minutes into our walk, as we approach the top of the hill that takes you into the valley below, we come across a precious lamb who is caught in the wire fencing. At first, I thought, "Awe, she will work her way free" as they do so often, and was going to keep going. As I started to pass her by, I felt a pull in my heart that stopped me in my tracks. This lamb now had my full attention. Looking at her situation, there was no way that I could leave her in that entangled predicament, for I did not know when help would come to set her free. I thought to myself, "It should be easy enough to get this lamb free." And decisively said, "Let's do it, Lord!"

I quickly climbed over the gate to find this was not going to be as easy as I thought, seeing her situation now from the other side. The lamb had managed to get herself on top of a steep bank and there was

very little ground to get a firm step. To make matters worse, on the opposite side, where her head was sticking out facing the road, there was a steep drop into a deep ditch. So approaching her from that side was not an option.

While evaluating how to free her, I could see this was going to take not only the wisdom of the Lord, but His strength too. For I would have to carefully tread on what little ground there was on that steep bank in order to get a solid footing, while holding onto the fence for balance. So much for easy!

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As I got behind the lamb, she became frightened and started thrusting herself into the fence. Her hope was to bust through to the other side to escape my presence. When she realised that was not working, she would then violently pull her head backwards trying to free herself. It was painful to watch her struggle. Wanting to calm her, I gently placed my hand on her back, while speaking words of peace and loving reassurance that I was there to help and not harm her. It was hard to calm her long enough to maneuver her horns—one by one through the wire, in order to free her. Her thrusting back and forth, at times, caused me to lose my balance. Yet, I was determined to hold on to the only One Who can rescue us.

I tried different approaches to guide her head backwards through the wire fence, all to no avail. Every time I guided her head in the way that it needed to go, she would push it further forward—the opposite way! We were not making any progress. As I rested for a moment, my eyes fell upon her mamma, who was watching from below. Her gaze was intense as she

stared at me. Initially, she stayed at a safe distance, but soon moved so she was only a few feet away. I could see she was greatly concerned for her beautiful one, wanting her to be free. I assured mamma too, that I was not there to hurt, but to help. She patiently watched and waited, never moving or taking her gaze off of me.

I tried again to free her beloved one, and got hopeful. For one of her horns slid through the wire fence where it belonged. But just as quickly, the lamb thrust forward, causing it to be on the wrong side. It was one step forward, two steps backwards. And, because the bank was steep, I had to crouch low to keep my footing and use one hand to position myself with the wooden post so that I would not topple over backwards. This rescue was taking much longer than anticipated and I was getting tired and frustrated. I started to think that I might have to leave this lamb and believe that somehow, she will get herself free. Yet, despite my fatigue and frustration, my heart would not let me give up and leave her.

I tried one more time—again, to no avail! I said, *“Lord, I need Your help. I have no strength or abilities, but thank God, it is all about Your strength and abilities.”* I asked for the angels to come and to guide this precious little lamb’s head strategically through that wire, until she was free. I kept reassuring her that I was there to help. She would still push with all her might trying to go through the wire fence. Each time, I gently spoke, *“Peace, peace, peace be still,”* she would calm down. I would then wait a few moments, before making another attempt.

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I tried again. Finally, one horn through the wire fence—hope restored! Determined not to lose the ground gain, I strategically placed my hand on her forehead and neck, while keeping her head steady, speaking, *“Freedom, freedom, freedom, freedom”* over her. And freedom came! In that moment, she bounced backwards, leapt to the ground below and ran to her

waiting mamma! Hungry and thirsty, she had a long overdue feed. It was a joyous moment to see her finally where she belonged and at peace. As I watched them make their way across their fields, she never looked back, but her mamma did, as if to say, *“Thank you!”*

It was in that moment, the Good Shepherd became more real to me than the fields, the sheep and the lambs around me! For the Lord, once again, set me up perfectly to experience His ever so noble, beautiful Shepherd’s heart that does not want to give up on us. Instead, He wants to rescue and free us, knowing that we are not capable to set ourselves or others free, no matter how hard we may try. And while in our struggles, He patiently waits for just the right moment to set us free!

Beloved, are you like that precious little lamb, finding yourself caught on a steep bank with a deep ditch on the other side staring you in the face, where it feels as if there is no way of escape and not knowing where your help will come from? Are the traps and snares of the enemy making you feel as if you are taking one step forward, to find that you have taken a few steps backwards, despite your best efforts? Do you feel as if life’s constant battles are pushing you further into despair, where at times you feel hopeless and just want to give up?

Or, maybe, you are like that mamma sheep desperately wanting your loved one to be free from harmful lifestyle choices—spiritual and physical ones, that are bringing them further into captivity and self-destruction? For you know those choices are keeping them separated from the Lord and from those who love them. And, despite your attempts to lead them in the right way, painfully, you realise there is nothing that you can do in your own abilities to save them. For their deliverance will come, when they surrender to the only One—Yeshua, Who can save, heal and set their captive soul free.

Beloved, be of good cheer, the God of hope and encouragement—the Good Shepherd, knows how to rescue. In our affliction, He is afflicted. He has not forgotten, nor forsaken you, or your loved one. Your prayers are not in vain! He is a very present help in a time of trouble. For He will not pass by in your hour of need. When we lean on His abilities, He is ever close—closer like no other. Yet, because His ways can be unfamiliar, they can make us feel uncomfortable. They can sometimes feel frightening, if His perfect love



has not been perfected deep within our souls, to cast out all that we may fear.

But, when we have the revelation that it was never about our abilities, but about His strength and abilities working in and through us, we will come to that place where we can be still and know that He is God. And in that place, we surrender our will for His, one step at a time. We will experience the healing that our souls need to follow the Lamb wherever He may lead. We will follow Him wholeheartedly in whatever He asks us to do, as He leads us or our loved one out of captivity.

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Our trials are meant to restore us back to Original Intent. Back to that same place of intimate fellowship that Adam and Eve had with the Father and Son, in the Garden before the fall of man. Our trials are not meant to destroy us, but transform us into His character to qualify us to be the Bride of Messiah. In this late hour, may we not waste our tears, trials and afflictions. May we quickly surrender our will for His, that His eternal plans can manifest in and through our lives, until Messiah has been formed completely within our souls. Yeshua is coming for a Bride, who has made herself ready. A Bride who follows Him wholeheartedly—with undivided devotion. May we be found worthy of the call to die to self, that we may rule and reign with Him in the Millennium Reign, and for all of eternity—all to the Lamb's glory. AMEN!

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble [Luke 4:18, Psalm 46:1]. AMEN!*



*The Voice of My Beloved*  
A Call to the Nations Ministry

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