

# Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

## *The Good Shepherd*

*“Jesus said, ‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.’”*

—The Gospel of John

By Ken Woodley

We are lost.

Doomed.

Wolves are everywhere.

Before us and behind us.

To the left and the right of us.

Above and below.

There is no place where there are not wolves.

And they are ravenous.

They howl like a terrible storm.

Our power lines are down.

Trees tumble.

Limbs are broken.

The sky looks and sounds as if it is being torn to shreds.

Our green pastures are scorched.

The still waters have tidal waves.

And the wolves want more.

They want all of us.

Every bit of us.

We thought we were brave enough, smart enough, faithful enough.

What fools we were to wander off on our own.

The wolves begin taunting us.

‘Where,’ they ask, ‘is your good shepherd now? Ha! Nailed to a cross. Crucified. Dead and buried.’

We open our mouths to reply and that is when we hear your voice.  
“I am their shepherd,” you say to the wolves. “Now and forever.”  
And we are found. We are saved.  
Goodness and mercy surround us.  
You are before us and behind us.  
To the left and to the right of us.  
Above and below.  
There is no place where you are not with us.  
We feel weightless as you revive our souls, anointing our heads with oil. The  
howling is silenced and the sky is made whole.  
The wolves vanish like shadows at noon.  
With you by our side that is all they ever could be.  
Shadows.  
And nothing more.  
We pass through them with you, Jesus, into the undying light of love.