

**He Leadeth Me - - Psalm 23:2-3****~Other Speakers G-L: Hymn Stories:**

"He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul." - Psalm 23:2-3

Becoming a Christian is a thrilling experience--that time when one initially trusts in the redemptive work of Christ and becomes aware of a personal relationship with his Creator. Then there is also the glorious anticipation of spending an endless eternity with our Lord in heaven. But one of the joyous blessings of the Christian journey is simply to awaken each day realizing with childlike trust that our heavenly Father is guiding each step we take. And regardless of where life leads, "still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me."

Although the author of this gospel hymn, Joseph Henry Gilmore, was highly respected in his day in both religious and educational circles, today he is best remembered for this one gospel hymn hurriedly written when he was just twenty-eight years of age. He related this story:

"I had been speaking at the Wednesday evening service of the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia about the truths of the 23rd Psalm, and had been especially impressed with the blessedness of being led by God Himself. Later that evening, the wonder and blessedness of God's leading so grew upon me that I took out my pencil, wrote the text just as it stands today, handed it to my wife and thought no more of it."

Without her husband's knowledge, Mrs. Gilmore sent the quickly written text to the Watchman and Reflector Magazine, where it first appeared the following year. William Bradbury, the composer of the music, discovered Joseph Gilmore's text and wrote the fitting melody to match the words.

Three years later, in 1865, Joseph Gilmore went to Rochester, New York, as a candidate for pastor of the Second Baptist Church. He related:

"Upon entering the chapel I took up a hymnal, thinking, 'I wonder what they sing here?' To my amazement the book opened up at 'He Leadeth Me,' and that was the first time I knew that my hurriedly written lines had found a place among the songs of the church."

When the First Baptist Church building of Philadelphia was demolished in 1926, it was replaced at the busy Broad and Arch intersection by a large new office building with a prominent bronze tablet containing the words for the first stanza of "He Leadeth Me." The inscription states: "This is in recognition of the beauty and fame of the beloved hymn, and in remembrance of its distinguished author."

Even in the details of life, recognize God's leading hand. Determine to trust Him more fully in the future.