

THE SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP

INTRODUCTION

- I. Biblical history has been filled with accounts of shepherds and sheep.
 - A. Abel (in the first family) was a “keeper” of sheep (Gen. 4:2).
 - B. Abraham (the patriarch) possessed many sheep among all his animals. Gen. 12:16
 - C. Genesis is filled with episodes where sheep were involved.
 - D. The Passover observance involved taking lambs from the sheep which were killed, and their blood applied to the doorposts and to the lintels.
 - E. David the king was a shepherd boy before becoming king, and wrote much about such.
 - E. The Lord and His people were often described under the figure of a shepherd and sheep. Psa. 100:3; Jer. 23:1
 - F. Lambs were offered in *sacrifice* for the sins of the Israelites, to portray the sacrifice of Jesus, the Lamb of God. Isa. 53:6-7; cf John 1:29; 1 Pet. 1:18-19
- II. The New Testament portrays Jesus as Shepherd OVER sheep. 1 Pet. 2:25
 - A. Once, He is called the “chief shepherd.” 1 Pet. 5:4
 - B. Once, Jesus is called “the great shepherd.” Heb. 13:20
 - C. Twice, Jesus is called “the shepherd of the sheep.” Heb. 13:20; John 10:2, 14
 - D. Thrice, Jesus is called “the good shepherd.” John 10:11, 14
- III. In this lesson, we shall consider Jesus as “**the shepherd of the sheep.**”

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, Jesus is the Good Shepherd AT THE CROSS.

- A. Jesus was to be smitten as the Shepherd when on the cross. Matt. 26:26-31
- B. Jesus as the Shepherd gave His life for the sheep. John 10:11-15; Heb. 13:20; Matt. 26:28

II. 2nd, Jesus is the Good Shepherd IN THE WORDS HE SPEAKS.

- A. The sheep of Christ hear **only the voice** of the Shepherd, and NOT the voice of strangers. John 10:2-5; cf 3:30-31; Luke 6:46
 1. If we hear the voice of the Shepherd, we shall live spiritually. John 5:25
 2. If we hear the voice of the ONE Shepherd, we shall be in the ONE fold, which is the “flock”, or the “church.” John 10:16
 3. If we hear the voice of the ONE Shepherd, we will follow HIM. John 10:27
 4. If we are interested in **truth**, we will hear the voice OF truth—JESUS. John 18:37
- B. We must **NOT** follow the voice of Moses, Elijah, or men while following the voice of Jesus. Matt. 17:1-5; 15:9; John 12:48; 1 Cor. 11:1
 1. We are not to hear and obey the voice of the Pope of Rome.
 2. We are not to hear the voice of John Calvin or Martin Luther.
 3. We are not to hear the voice of Joseph Smith.
 4. We are not to hear the voice of Billy Graham, Franklin Graham, or Joel O’steen.
- C. We are not to hear the the apostle Paul if he does not himself follow Christ. 1 Cor. 11:1
 1. If we follow Christ as he follows Christ, we will all speak the same thing. 1 Cor. 1:10
 2. If we are free to follow the voice of our choice, there would be nothing but mass confusion. 1 Cor. 14:33

3. If every so-called "shepherd" spoke to one assembly of sheep at the same time, think how confusing it would be for the sheep.

III. 3Rd, Jesus is the Great Shepherd AT THE EMPTY TOMB.

- A. He is described such by the apostle Paul. Heb. 13:20
- B. Think of the implications of this.
 1. Had Jesus not DIED for our sins, He would not have gone TO the tomb.
 2. Had He not gone TO the tomb and been raised, the gospel would not be complete, and we would have no risen Savior, a "great shepherd." 1 Cor. 15:1-4
- C. Not only was Jesus the Great Shepherd at His OWN EMPTY TOMB, but He will be the Great Shepherd of ALL EMPTY TOMBS when He comes again. John 5:28-29
 1. The cemeteries will all come to life as bodies are raised.
 2. The mass graves in Iraq and other places where thousands have been buried by dictators, will bring forth abundance of bodies before the earth is burned up.

II. 4th, Jesus is the Chief Shepherd OVER THE CHURCH.

- A. Paul states that the BLOOD of the Shepherd was used to **purchase** the church, or to make it possible. Acts 20:28
 1. This passage alludes to the figure of the "flock," which is used figuratively for "sheep." Matt. 26:31; Luke 2:8; John 10:16
 2. JESUS is the "chief shepherd" over the flock. 1 Pet. 5:1-4
- B. The elders in a local congregation are undershepherds, while **only** Christ is THE chief shepherd over ALL the flock, or congregations, or local churches OF Christ. Col. 1:18

CONCLUSION

- I. Finally, Jesus is the Chief Shepherd; of HIS SECOND COMING. 1 Pet. 5:4
 - A. 1st, Peter refers to the second coming, saying "when the chief shepherd shall appear." cf 1 John 2:28; 3:2
 - B. 2nd, Peter refers to the "crown of glory", which He shall bestow in the day of judgment. Matt. 25:31-33; cf 2 Tim. 4:8
- II. Is Christ YOUR Shepherd?

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