

Lesson 14:
Discourse on the Good Shepherd

March 10, 2021

John 10:1-21

Discourse on the Good Shepherd
John 10:1-21

AN ALLEGORY ABOUT A SHEPHERD AND SHEEP.
John 10:1-6

10:1-6 – The King James Version uses the word “parable” (verse 6) to describe what Jesus says. (also the ASV)

- Note however that the Gospel of John contains no parables like those found in the other gospels.
- The NKJV uses the word “*illustration*.”
- The NASV uses the expression “*figure of speech*.”

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- The original Greek word translated “parable” in the other gospel accounts is *parabole* which literally means to “throw along side of.”
 - A *parable* is something that is described to be “like” something else.
- The original word here is a different word, *paroima*.
 - Jesus is using a figure of speech known as an “allegory.”
 - An *allegory* is an extended metaphor where the truth is implied by the illustration, but not specifically identified.

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- A “*sheepfold*” was a roofless enclosure where several shepherds would take their sheep at night. The porter was the keeper of the door of the sheepfold.
 - When morning came the shepherds would separate their sheep by simply calling them. The sheep would follow their own shepherd, not the voice of a stranger.
- Jesus is our shepherd and we must follow His voice.
- There are those who are false shepherds. (cf. Ezekiel 34:1-10; Jeremiah 23:1-6)
- Compare with the responsibility of shepherds (elders) of a local church (flock). (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2)

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- The “door” is here spoken of with reference to the sheep.
- NOTE: It becomes a symbol of entrance into protection and shelter, or exit to liberty and plenty.

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- Old Testament prophecies were full of declarations of **false shepherds**. (cf. Ezekiel 34:1-10; Jeremiah 23:1-6; Zechariah 11:4–11)
- But other prophecies spoke of the **true shepherding** of God and His Messiah (Psalms 23; 77:20; Psalms 80:1; 95:7; Jeremiah 31:10; Ezekiel 34:31; Micah 7:14).
- God’s anointed one, the Messiah, was also pictured as the shepherd of His sheep (Isaiah 40:11).

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This same point is made over and over.

- The parable of the Lost Sheep (Matthew 18:12-14; Luke 15:3-7) is the most famous example of this.
- He addressed His disciples as His "little flock" (Luke 12:32), and spoke of the scattering of the sheep (Mark 14:27 and parallels).
- They are also an important aspect of His instruction to Peter at the end of John's Gospel (21:15-17).
- Elsewhere in the New Testament this beautiful metaphor is used of Christ (1 Peter 2:25) and of church leaders (Acts 20:28-30; 1 Peter 5:1-4).

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- Jesus speaks of the religious leaders of His day.
 - *These were so prejudiced they did not understand that they were the robbers of God's sheep.* (cf. John 9:39-41)
 - *The Pharisees had put forth the beggar to be rid of him; the true shepherd puts forth to feed.* John 9:34-35
- The robber is the one who would try to enter the sheepfold at some unsuspected place.

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APPLICATION: JESUS IS THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP. HE IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD. John 10:7-18

10:7-9, "*I am the door*"

- Jesus is the way into the sheepfold. The only way into the peace and safety is through Jesus Christ.
- Note the seven "I AM's" of Jesus. We must accept Jesus for who He claimed to be or else He was a liar.
 - John 6:35 ... *Bread of Life.* John 11:25 ... *Resurrection, Life.*
 - John 8:12 ... *Light of the world.* John 14:6 ... *Way, Truth, Life.*
 - John 10:7 ... *Door of the sheep.* John 15:1 ... *True Vine.*
 - John 10:11 ... *The good shepherd.*
- Fellowship with the Father is obtained and maintained only through Jesus. The true sheep will not follow the voice of strangers.

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APPLICATION: JESUS IS THE DOOR OF THE SHEEP. HE IS THE GOOD SHEPHERD. John 10:7-18

10:10 The thief will seek to come into the sheepfold another way.

- Jesus, the true shepherd, the door of the sheepfold, sacrificed Himself that we might have life, and that "*more abundantly.*" cf. John 3:16.
- Even life in this world takes on new meaning for those who are Christians. (cf. Philippians 4:6-7; 11-13; cf. Matthew 5:5; Ecclesiastes 12:13-14)
 - *When we live life with the judgment in view, this brings life into proper perspective.*

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10:10 – The thief will seek to come into the sheepfold another way.

- The thief has selfish motives. He seeks to kill and destroy.
- David's example provided a fitting illustration of a good shepherd. (1 Samuel 17:34-36)

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10:11-15 – Jesus introduces another character in this allegory.

- "*Hirelings*" were those who pretended to care for the sheep, but when danger approached, they would flee.
 - *These were not concerned about defending the truth or protecting the flock.*
- These were only concerned about their own position or lining their pockets.
- Many false teachers grow in popularity by presenting an appealing message of "*love,*" but prove themselves to be "*robbers*" by failing to "*reprove, rebuke, and exhort*" when error invades God's people. (2 Timothy 4:2-4)

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- The “Good Shepherd” leads by leading, not by driving. cf. 1 Peter 5:2ff
- 1 John 4:1 – False prophets abound. (cf. John 9-10; Galatians 1:6-8; Matthew 7:15-17) They are thieves and robbers.
- Preaching without distinction benefits only the cause of Satan.
 - *Jesus proved His love by a distinctive message. He demonstrated His conviction by willingly laying down His life for His sheep.*

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10:16 Many false teachers use this verse to attempt to find authority for a new revelation.

- Jehovah's Witnesses say the “*other sheep*” are the Kingdom class of 144,000 who will go to heaven, while all other righteous people will live on a perfected earth.
- Mormons claim that the “*other sheep*” are the American Indians about whom they say the Book of Mormon gives a history.
- However, Jesus is the one shepherd and all who enter by Him (the one “*door*”) will become “*one flock*” (not two as these doctrines claim.)