

STUDY NOTES ON THE PARABLE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD: -

- Jesus tells the Parable in John 10:1 – 6, and then in VS. 7 – 16. He gives some explanation to parts of this Parable. This Parable is totally focussed on our Lord Jesus' Christ and His saving role as the Good Shepherd, who is tenderly caring for His sheep. It is a Christ centred Parable.

THE PARABLE ITSELF: -

John 10:1 – 6: - “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.”

JESUS' EXPLANATION OF THE PARABLE: -

John 10:7 – 16: - “Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.”

- There is ONLY one door into the sheepfold, and whoever attempts to enter into it by another way, is a thief and a robber – VS. 1. All those who came before Christ, are thieves and robbers – VS. 8. Jesus said in VS. 10, that the thief is come for no other reason but to steal, kill and destroy the flock. All the other religious systems and their so called holy men or teachers, who came before Jesus Christ, came out of “thin air” – they came out of no where, and were self appointed religious teachers. But Jesus Christ the true Messiah came in fulfilment of 1, 500 years of specific Bible prophecy, to fulfil it to the very letter. That is how we know that Jesus of Nazareth is indeed the true Messiah or Christ. He fulfilled Bible Prophecy.

Luke 24:25 – 27: - “Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”

Luke 24:44 - 47: - “And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and

in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”

- Who ever enters in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep – VS.2. Jesus specifically identified Himself as being the Door of the Sheepfold – VS. 7 & 9. Let us never lose sight of this simple, but foundational New Testament teaching: -

Jesus Christ is the ONLY way to God; He is the ONLY Mediator between God and humanity. He is the Door that leads to salvation!

John 1:51: - “And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.”

John 14:6: - “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

1st Timothy 2:5 & 6: - “For *there is* one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.”

- To the Shepherd, the porter or gatekeeper opens the door of the sheepfold – VS. 3.
- The sheep hear the voice of the Shepherd, and He calls His own sheep by name, and they follow Him, because they know or recognise His voice. The sheep will NOT follow the voice of a stranger, but they will flee from a stranger’s voice. They do not know or recognize a stranger’s voice – VS. 4 & 5. The sheep of the flock do not hear or listen to the voices of the thieves and robbers who came before Christ – that is, the false religious systems and so called holy teachers before Christ – VS. 8.

John 10:27 & 28: - “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand.”

- If any person enters in through the Door – that is, through the Good Shepherd, they shall be saved, and they shall go in and out of the sheepfold, and find pasture, because the Good Shepherd is leading the flock, going before them – VS. 3, 4 & 9.

The Good Shepherd is Jesus Christ – who laid down His life for His Sheep: -

- The Good Shepherd comes so that His sheep might have a more abundant life, and gives His Own life for the sheep – VS. 10, 11, 14 & 15.

Jesus is clearly recognised through the Old and New Testament Scriptures as being the Shepherd.

Psalms 23:1 – 6: - “The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”

Isaiah 40:10 & 11: - “Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong *hand*, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward *is* with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry *them* in his bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.”

Hebrews 13:20 & 21: - “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

1st Peter 2:25: - “For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

1st Peter 5:4: - “And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

- The Good Shepherd – our Lord Jesus Christ, laid down His life for the sheep. Christ suffered and died for our sins.

John 10:17 & 18: - “Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.”

Isaiah 53:4 – 6: - “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

Romans 4:24 & 25: - “But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.”

1st Corinthians 15:3 & 4: - “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

1st Peter 3:18: - “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

- The sheep hear the voice of the Good Shepherd – VS. 4. Christ speaks to us – His voice is heard through the Holy Scriptures which witness or testify of Christ.

John 5:39: - “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”

1st Peter 1:10 & 11: - “Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace *that should come* unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”

- The Good Shepherd leads His flock into pasture – VS. 4 & 9. The Shepherd’s Psalm records the truth that the Lord as our Shepherd, leads the flock into the paths of righteousness, for His name’s sake.

Psalm 23:1 - 3: - “The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.”

Jesus' name means Saviour from our sins.

Matthew 1:21: - “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”

The following Scriptures clearly reveal that the Inspired definition or standard of Righteousness, and that is all of God's Commandments. The Righteous have God's Law within their heart. If we hearken unto God's Commandments, then our righteousness will be like the waves of the sea. We have an Inspired definition of a Righteous person – they do righteousness. Those who are IN Christ, walk after the Spirit and not the flesh, and have the Righteousness of God's Law fulfilled within their lives. The Son of God, loves righteousness, but hates iniquity or lawlessness, which is the opposite to righteousness.

Psalm 119:172: - “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments *are* righteousness.”

Psalm 37:30 & 31: - “The mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his tongue talketh of judgment. The law of his God *is* in his heart; none of his steps shall slide.”

Isaiah 48:17 & 18: - “Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I *am* the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way *that* thou shouldest go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.”

Luke 1:5 & 6: - “There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.”

Romans 8:1 - 4: - “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

Hebrews 1:8 & 9: - “But unto the Son *he saith*, Thy throne, O God, *is* for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness *is* the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, *even* thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”

NOTE: - In VS. 9, the Greek word that has been translated as “iniquity” in the KJV, is the word **ἀνομία** – “**anomia**” - Strong's Greek Number 458. It is defined as “lawlessness” - Walter Bauer's Greek – English New Testament Lexicon, 2nd Edition, 1979, p. 71.

“Lawlessness” is defined as: -

“LAWLESSNESS, n. The quality or state of being unrestrained by law; disorder.” – Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary.

1st John 2:29: - “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.”

1st John 3:7: - “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”

It should come as no surprise, that Jesus publicly taught against a Lawless doctrine, and taught obedience to all Ten of the Righteousness Commandments, in His Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:17 – 19: - “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”

WE NEED TO LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD!

- The hireling – that is, the under shepherd who tends to the flock. He is paid to do so, but has no real care for the sheep, and as soon as any predators approach to savage the flock, he abandons them to the mercies of the predators – VS. 12 & 13.

The following exhortation from the Apostle Peter gives Inspired counsel how a true under shepherd should tend to the flock – in the very opposite manner to the hireling.

1st Peter 5:1 – 4: - “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

- Jesus prophesied that He had other sheep who were not of this sheepfold, who will hear His voice, and He will bring them into the one sheepfold. A day would come when there will be one sheepfold and one Shepherd – VS. 16.

This is a prophecy of the future ingathering of the Gentiles into the fold of Christ.

John 11:49 – 52: - “And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.”

Genesis 49:10: - “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*.”

Isaiah 56:8: - “The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather *others* to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.”

Ephesians 2:11 – 20: - “Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but

fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone* .”

- Let us follow the voice of the Good Shepherd – our Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures, here in this present world, and by the wonders of His enabling grace, He will lead us to the living waters, in the eternal Kingdom of God.

Revelation 7:17: -“For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”