

The Shepherds of God's People

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The Problem of Bad Shepherds

- Their characteristics (Ez. 34:1-4; Zech. 11:15-16)

Ezekiel 34:1-4

¹And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ²
“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of
Israel, prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the
Lord God to the shepherds: “Woe to the
shepherds of Israel who feed themselves!
Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? ³You
eat fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you
slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the
flock. ⁴The weak you have not strengthened, nor
have you healed those who were sick, nor
bound up the broken, nor brought back what
was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but
with force and cruelty you have ruled them.””

Zechariah 11:15-16

¹⁵And the Lord said to me, "Next, take for yourself the implements of a foolish shepherd. ¹⁶For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces."

The Problem of Bad Shepherds

- Their characteristics (Ez. 34:1-4; Zech. 11:15-16)
- Their effect on the flock (Ez. 34:5-6; Jer. 23:1-2)

Ezekiel 34:5-6

⁵So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. ⁶My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.

Jeremiah 23:1-2

¹ “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!” says the Lord. ²Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed my people: “You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,” says the Lord.

The Problem of Bad Shepherds

- Their characteristics (Ez. 34:1-4; Zech. 11:15-16)
- Their effect on the flock (Ez. 34:5-6; Jer. 23:1-2)
- Application for those who have spiritual leadership and influence (Acts 20:28)

Acts 20:28 NKJV

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

God as Shepherd

- Judges the Bad Shepherds (Ez. 34:7-10; Zech. 11:17)

Ezekiel 34:7-10

⁷ “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: ⁸ “As I live,” says the Lord God, “surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock” – ⁹ therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord! ¹⁰ Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them.””

Zechariah 11:17

¹⁷ “Woe to the worthless shepherd, who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm and against his right eye; his arm shall completely wither, and his right eye shall be totally blinded.”

God as Shepherd

- Judges the Bad Shepherds (Ez. 34:7-10; Zech. 11:17)
- Cares for His Flock (Ez. 34:11-16; Is. 40:10-11)

Ezekiel 34:11-13

¹¹ “ `For thus says the Lord God: “Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. ¹² As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. ¹³And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country.””

Ezekiel 34:14-16

¹⁴ "I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. ¹⁵ I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord God. ¹⁶ "I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment.""

Isaiah 40:11

¹¹He will feed His flock like a shepherd;
He will gather the lambs with His arm,
And carry them in His bosom,
And gently lead those that are with young.

God as Shepherd

- Judges the Bad Shepherd (Ez. 34:7-10; Zech. 11:17)
- Cares for His Flock (Ez. 34:11-16; Is. 40:10-11)
- Provides Shepherds for the Local Congregation (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 20:35; Heb. 13:17)

1 Peter 5:1-4

¹The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ²Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

Acts 20:35

In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Hebrews 13:17 NKJV

Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

God as Shepherd

- Judges the Bad Shepherd (Ez. 34:7-10; Zech. 11:17)
- Cares for His Flock (Ez. 34:11-16; Is. 40:10-11)
- Provides Shepherds for the Local Congregation (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 20:35; Heb. 13:17)
- Provides a Perfect Shepherd for the Whole Flock (Ez. 34:23-24)

Ezekiel 34:23-24

²³ "I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them – My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. ²⁴And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken."

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

John 10:7-14

- The sole source of salvation (v. 7-9)

John 10:7-9

⁷Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

John 10:7-14

- The sole source of salvation (v. 7-9)
- Good shepherd vs. Thief (v. 10)

John 10:10

¹⁰ “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

John 10:7-14

- The sole source of salvation (v. 7-9)
- Good shepherd vs. Thief (v. 10)
- Ultimate test – willing to live and die for the sheep (v. 11)

John 10:11

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep."

Jesus, the Good Shepherd

John 10:7-14

- The sole source of salvation (v. 7-9)
- Good shepherd vs. Thief (v. 10)
- Ultimate test – willing to live and die for the sheep (v. 11)
- Good shepherd vs. hireling (v. 12-14)

John 10:12-14

¹² “But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. ¹³The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.”

The Work of Elders as Shepherds

- Feed the flock
- Care for the weak, injured and ill
- Bring back the wandering
- Prevent theft and predation
- Prevent sheep from harming one another
- Lay down his life for the sheep
- Give account for each sheep

1 Peter 2:25 (NKJV)

For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.