

Are you a sheep?

We have the option of placing ourselves into the position of a sheep under Jesus our shepherd.

Jesus said a lot about Him being a shepherd, and made it clear that we, as His children, were His sheep. What could that mean to us?

Later in this lesson you will see many of the advantages of being a sheep as outlined in Psalm 23.

John 10:1-17,

1 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 “But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 “To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

4 “And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

5 “Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”

Notice that the shepherd calls his sheep out of their evening sheepfold. There are many flocks of sheep in this sheepfold overnight. Often the sheepfold is a cave as we have seen in Israel. However when each shepherd calls his sheep out, only those who belong to him respond.

6 Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

7 Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 “All who *ever* came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

9 “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

Now Jesus also identifies Himself as the door to the sheepfold. The only way we can come to God is through Jesus and His blood covenant. When we do He will lead us to green pastures.

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.

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

I am not sure how many shepherds give their lives for the sheep, but Jesus sure did. It amazes me to think that God the creator of all, Jesus our shepherd, actually became a lamb for us!

John 1:29,

“29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

12 “But a hireling, *he who is* not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.

Verse 12 shows us the extreme danger if we do not become sheep to Jesus. Bad shepherds cause their sheep to suffer. If you do not choose Jesus by default you are under the control of your old nature and the satanic world and demons.

13 “The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.

14 “I am the good shepherd; and I know My *sheep*, and am known by My own.

15 “As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

16 “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.

Verse 16 demonstrates our need for outreach and missions to the unsaved.

17 “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.”

John 10:27, 28,

“27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

28 “And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”

Notice His sheep hear His voice. I believe that we must submit to Jesus as our shepherd in order to hear His voice.

Matthew 25:32, 33,

“32 “All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides *his* sheep from the goats.

33 “And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.”

Be sure to not live life as a “goat.”

More about sheep.

Sheep are dumb.

Humans were designed to not live by their own power and intellect. The Tree of Life was and is the Word of God speaking. The Tree of The Knowledge of Good and Evil, if depended upon, will cause us to “die.” Even if we are born again and on our way to Heaven, many attempt still live here without the Tree of Life. It is now called rhema, which is God’s personal voice, not just logos, which represents the entire Word of God, but not in a personal sense. We were designed to be “sheep.”

Sheep are totally under the care and authority of the shepherd. They cannot make their own decisions nor are capable of making life work. Sheep get into big trouble. They get lost, and then have horrible insects attack them; they cannot find their own food and water. They wander from the shepherd and their flock into dangerous lands.

I am not saying that we become like robots under the hand of God. He inhabits us and longs to put His desires into our hearts so that our decisions are lined up with His plan for our lives.

Sheep love back. God has a craving to not only love us, but to also be loved by us in return. I believe that the shepherd was satisfied when the sheep came to him and cuddled. We cuddle with God when we “keep” His commandments according to John 14:21.

John 14:23,

“23 Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will **keep** My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.”

Keep means to safeguard and protect not just to simply obey – which is part of it.

Keep: reserve observe preserve hold fast to attend to carefully, take care of to guard metaph. to keep, one in the state in which he is to observe to reserve.

Shepherds pay for and own their sheep. Shepherds expect a profit from their sheep. While Jesus does not utilize us for profit in the same way the human shepherds did, He does use us to bring His Kingdom to earth, and He did purchase us.

Jesus paid for us by His Blood!

Acts 20:28,

“28 “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.”

If we submit ourselves as sheep to Jesus as outlined in John 10, we will reap the advantages shown here in Psalm 23.

David was a shepherd and he knew first hand about the relationship between sheep and shepherd,

Psalms 23:1-6

“1 A Psalm of David. The LORD *is* my shepherd; I shall not want [to cause to be lacking].

When the Lord is really our shepherd, we can trust Him to care for us.

2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

Pastures that are green contain everything that a sheep needs. A sheep needs to drink from still waters, not a rushing river. The sheep feel no fear with still waters.

3 He restores my soul;

He heals our inner wounds that we received when we were rejected and experienced other horrible things in life. Not only does He heal us, but also He lives inside of us so that our lives are whole and we can help others

3 He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.

We are made righteous by His abiding in us and by His sacrifice on the Cross bearing our sins. It is all about the Blood Covenant with Him. But also He leads us to live a life of holiness and sanctification now.

Now notice; He makes us righteous just before we walk through the valley of the shadow of death. That way whatever enemy we are confronted with there is already defeated. Jesus is with us, and in us! Therefore we should not fear.

4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You *are* with me;

When He leads us through our paths of righteousness, normally we will then go through the valley of the shadow of death (notice it is not really death, only a shadow).

While in Israel we noticed that the valleys [they are called wadis) are very deep and dangerous. In old times thieves would ambush the travellers and steal their possessions and even kill them. There was no defense. But with Jesus we have on the breastplate of righteousness. Enemies will confront us, and we even go through harsh warfare in the valley.

But remember that this gives us the anointing we need to bring in His Kingdom here. Look at verse 23:5 below – the anointing hits us and then runs over to others. Missions and outreach to the lost.

4 Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

Rod. The rod was used to fend off or even kill the enemy animals that would try to attack the sheep. It was a comforting instrument for the sheep to see. It was a rod of authority.

Strong concordance definition for rod. club (of shepherd's implement) truncheon, scepter (mark of authority).

Staff. The staff is a symbol of concern, the compassion that a shepherd has for his sheep. It is a long slender stick with a crook or hook on one end. It is used to rescue the sheep when they are in trouble and to guide them. It is used to draw a baby sheep to its mother for milk. It is also used to bring a sheep close for personal examination. It was also a comforting instrument for the sheep to see.

Strong concordance definition for staff. support (of every kind),

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

Table here means the king's table for private and sacred uses. I believe that this could represent the table at which the blood covenant was experienced or even remembered like when we take communion.

5b You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over.

While we are in our valleys in the very presence of our spiritual enemies, He anoints us with His oil. That oil then runs over to help others in need with the anointing He gives to us.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.”

Goodness and mercy, or the fabulous unconditional love of Jesus is sure. The word mercy is checked, which is like agape, the unconditional fabulous love of God. We are promised to abide in the house of Lord eternally after the war(s).

Dwelling in the house of the Lord suggests spiritual intimacy which is something God is hungry for with us.



Luke 15:4-7,

“4 “What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?”

5 “And when he has found *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 “And when he comes home, he calls together *his* friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!’

7 “I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”