

## Message Eleven

# God's Recovery by Life through His Shepherding

RK *Hymns*: 1221, 841

Scripture Reading: Ezek. 34:11-16, 23-31;

John 10:10, 16; 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:2, 4; Heb. 13:20; Rev. 7:16-17

- Ezek 34:11 For thus says the Lord Jehovah, I Myself, even I, will search for My sheep and seek them out.
- Ezek 34:12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day when he is among his sheep which are scattered, so I will seek out My sheep; and I will deliver them from all the places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.
- Ezek 34:13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the streams and in all the inhabited places of the land.
- Ezek 34:14 I will feed them with good pasture, and their dwelling place will be upon the mountains of the heights of Israel; there they will lie down in a good dwelling place, and on rich pasture they will feed upon the mountains of Israel.
- Ezek 34:15 I Myself will shepherd My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, declares the Lord Jehovah.
- Ezek 34:16 I will seek the lost one and bring back the one that was driven away and bind up the broken one and strengthen the sick one; but the fat one and the strong one I will destroy-I will feed them with judgment.
- Ezek 34:23 And I will set up over them one Shepherd, My Servant David, and He will feed them; He will feed them, and He will be their Shepherd.
- Ezek 34:24 And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and My Servant David will be a Prince among them. I, Jehovah, have spoken.
- Ezek 34:25 And I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish evil beasts from the land, so that they will dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.
- Ezek 34:26 And I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing, and I will cause the showers to come down in their season; there will be showers of blessing.
- Ezek 34:27 And the trees of the field will yield their fruit, and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure in their land; then they will know that I am Jehovah, when I break the bars of their yoke and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them.
- Ezek 34:28 And they will no longer be prey to the nations, nor will the beasts of the earth devour them; but they will dwell securely, and no one will make them afraid.
- Ezek 34:29 And I will raise up for them a planting place of renown, and they will no longer be consumed with famine in the land and no longer bear the disgrace of the nations.
- Ezek 34:30 Thus they will know that I, Jehovah their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people, declares the Lord Jehovah.
- Ezek 34:31 And you are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God, declares the Lord Jehovah.
- John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.
- John 10:16 And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- 1 Pet 2:25 For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.
- 1 Pet 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly;
- 1 Pet 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
- Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,

- Rev 7:16 They will not hunger anymore, neither will they thirst anymore, neither will the sun beat upon them, nor any heat;
- Rev 7:17 For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

**I. To shepherd is to take all-inclusive, tender care of the flock— John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28:**

- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.
- A. Shepherding refers to caring for all the needs of the sheep— Psa. 23.
- Psa 23:1 Jehovah is my Shepherd; I will lack nothing.
- Psa 23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; / He leads me beside waters of rest.
- Psa 23:3 He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness / For His name's sake.
- Psa 23:4 Even though I walk / Through the valley of the shadow of death, / I do not fear evil, / For You are with me; / Your rod and Your staff, / They comfort me.
- Psa 23:5 You spread a table before me / In the presence of my adversaries; / You anoint my head with oil; / My cup runs over.
- Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me / All the days of my life, / And I will dwell in the house of Jehovah / For the length of my days.
- B. All the sheep need to be well provided for and well tended to.

**II. In Ezekiel 34 the Lord Himself comes as the Shepherd to search for His sheep and seek them out—vv. 11-31; Luke 15:3-7; Matt. 9:36; John 10:11; 21:15-17; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:3-4:**

- Ezek 34:11 For thus says the Lord Jehovah, I Myself, even I, will search for My sheep and seek them out.
- Ezek 34:12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day when he is among his sheep which are scattered, so I will seek out My sheep; and I will deliver them from all the places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.
- Ezek 34:13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the streams and in all the inhabited places of the land.
- Ezek 34:14 I will feed them with good pasture, and their dwelling place will be upon the mountains of the heights of Israel; there they will lie down in a good dwelling place, and on rich pasture they will feed upon the mountains of Israel.
- Ezek 34:15 I Myself will shepherd My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, declares the Lord Jehovah.
- Ezek 34:16 I will seek the lost one and bring back the one that was driven away and bind up the broken one and strengthen the sick one; but the fat one and the strong one I will destroy-I will feed them with judgment.
- Ezek 34:17 And as for you, O My flock, Thus says the Lord Jehovah, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats.
- Ezek 34:18 Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture and trample down the rest of your pasture with your feet and drink the clear water and foul the rest with your feet?
- Ezek 34:19 Meanwhile My flock must feed on what is trampled by your feet and drink what is fouled by your feet.
- Ezek 34:20 Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah to them, It is I who am about to judge between the fat sheep and the thin sheep.
- Ezek 34:21 Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted all the weak with your horns until you scattered them abroad,

- Ezek 34:22 I will rescue My flock, and they will no longer be prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another.
- Ezek 34:23 And I will set up over them one Shepherd, My Servant David, and He will feed them; He will feed them, and He will be their Shepherd.
- Ezek 34:24 And I, Jehovah, will be their God, and My Servant David will be a Prince among them. I, Jehovah, have spoken.
- Ezek 34:25 And I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish evil beasts from the land, so that they will dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.
- Ezek 34:26 And I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing, and I will cause the showers to come down in their season; there will be showers of blessing.
- Ezek 34:27 And the trees of the field will yield their fruit, and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure in their land; then they will know that I am Jehovah, when I break the bars of their yoke and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them.
- Ezek 34:28 And they will no longer be prey to the nations, nor will the beasts of the earth devour them; but they will dwell securely, and no one will make them afraid.
- Ezek 34:29 And I will raise up for them a planting place of renown, and they will no longer be consumed with famine in the land and no longer bear the disgrace of the nations.
- Ezek 34:30 Thus they will know that I, Jehovah their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people, declares the Lord Jehovah.
- Ezek 34:31 And you are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God, declares the Lord Jehovah.
- Luke 15:3 And He told them this parable, saying,
- Luke 15:4 Which man of you, who has a hundred sheep and has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one which is lost until he finds it?
- Luke 15:5 And when he finds it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.
- Luke 15:6 And when he comes into his house, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.
- Luke 15:7 I tell you that in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner repenting than over ninety-nine righteous persons who have no need of repentance.
- Matt 9:36 And seeing the crowds, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were harassed and cast away like sheep not having a shepherd.
- John 10:11 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.
- John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.
- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.
- John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.
- Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,
- 1 Pet 5:3 Nor as lording it over your allotments but by becoming patterns of the flock.
- 1 Pet 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
- A. The Lord brings us out from among the unbelievers to Himself—Ezek. 34:12-13a; cf. Eph. 2:12-13.
- Ezek 34:12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day when he is among his sheep which are scattered, so I will seek out My sheep; and I will deliver them from all the places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.
- Ezek 34:13a And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, ...
- Eph 2:12 That you were at that time apart from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.
- Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who were once far off have become near in the blood of Christ.
- B. He brings us to our own land, signifying Christ as the good land of Canaan—Ezek. 34:13b; cf. Col. 1:12.
- Ezek 34:13b ... and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the streams and in all the

- inhabited places of the land.
- Col 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;
- C. He brings us back to the high mountains, signifying the resurrected and ascended Christ—Ezek. 34:13-14.
- Ezek 34:13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the streams and in all the inhabited places of the land.
- Ezek 34:14 I will feed them with good pasture, and their dwelling place will be upon the mountains of the heights of Israel; there they will lie down in a good dwelling place, and on rich pasture they will feed upon the mountains of Israel.
- D. He brings us back to the streams, signifying the living water of the life-giving Spirit—v. 13; Rev. 22:1; 1 Cor. 12:13; Psa. 36:8.
- Ezek 34:13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the streams and in all the inhabited places of the land.
- Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
- 1 Cor 12:13 For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit.
- Psa 36:8 They are saturated with the fatness of Your house, / And You cause them to drink of the river of Your pleasures.
- E. He feeds His flock by the streams, signifying His feeding us with His riches—Ezek. 34:13; Rev. 22:1-2a.
- Ezek 34:13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries and bring them into their own land, and I will feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the streams and in all the inhabited places of the land.
- Rev 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.
- Rev 22:2a And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life, producing twelve fruits, yielding its fruit each month; ...
- F. He brings us back to the good and rich pasture, signifying Christ as our life supply—Ezek. 34:14; Psa. 23:2; John 10:9; cf. 1 Tim. 1:4.
- Ezek 34:14 I will feed them with good pasture, and their dwelling place will be upon the mountains of the heights of Israel; there they will lie down in a good dwelling place, and on rich pasture they will feed upon the mountains of Israel.
- Psa 23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; / He leads me beside waters of rest.
- John 10:9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved and shall go in and go out and shall find pasture.
- 1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.
- G. He causes us to lie down, giving us inward rest—Ezek. 34:15; S. S. 1:7; Matt. 11:28-30.
- Ezek 34:15 I Myself will shepherd My flock, and I will cause them to lie down, declares the Lord Jehovah.
- S.S. 1:7 Tell me, you whom my soul loves, Where do you pasture your flock? / Where do you make it lie down at noon? / For why should I be like one who is veiled / Beside the flocks of your companions?
- Matt 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.
- Matt 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
- Matt 11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.
- H. He binds up the broken one and strengthens the sick one, signifying His binding up and healing the brokenhearted and sick ones—Ezek. 34:16a; Isa. 61:1-2; Luke 4:18-19; Matt. 9:9-13.
- Ezek 34:16a I will seek the lost one and bring back the one that was driven away and bind up the broken one and strengthen the sick one; ...
- Isa 61:1 The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon Me, / Because Jehovah has anointed Me / To

- bring good news to the afflicted; / He has sent Me to bind up the wounds of the brokenhearted, / To proclaim liberty to the captives, / And the opening of the eyes to those who are bound;
- Isa 61:2 To proclaim the acceptable year of Jehovah / And the day of vengeance of our God; / To comfort all who mourn;
- Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to announce the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to send away in release those who are oppressed,
- Luke 4:19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, the year of jubilee."
- Matt 9:9 And as Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man sitting at the tax office, called Matthew, and He said to him, Follow Me. And he rose and followed Him.
- Matt 9:10 And as He was reclining at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and reclined together with Jesus and His disciples.
- Matt 9:11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, Why does your Teacher eat with the tax collectors and sinners?
- Matt 9:12 Now when He heard this, He said, Those who are strong have no need of a physician, but those who are ill.
- Matt 9:13 But go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners.
- I. The Lord exercises righteous judgments among us, clearing away all the unjust things— Ezek. 34:17-22; Col. 3:15.
- Ezek 34:17 And as for you, O My flock, Thus says the Lord Jehovah, I will judge between one sheep and another, between the rams and the male goats.
- Ezek 34:18 Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture and trample down the rest of your pasture with your feet and drink the clear water and foul the rest with your feet?
- Ezek 34:19 Meanwhile My flock must feed on what is trampled by your feet and drink what is fouled by your feet.
- Ezek 34:20 Therefore thus says the Lord Jehovah to them, It is I who am about to judge between the fat sheep and the thin sheep.
- Ezek 34:21 Because you pushed with flank and shoulder, and butted all the weak with your horns until you scattered them abroad,
- Ezek 34:22 I will rescue My flock, and they will no longer be prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another.
- Col 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.
- J. Christ is the real David, the real Shepherd, set up as the one Shepherd to feed us and cause us to be filled and satisfied— Ezek. 34:23:
- Ezek 34:23 And I will set up over them one Shepherd, My Servant David, and He will feed them; He will feed them, and He will be their Shepherd.
1. He takes care of us, including all our problems and responsibilities and every aspect of our living—Psa. 23.
 

Psa 23:1 Jehovah is my Shepherd; I will lack nothing.

Psa 23:2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; / He leads me beside waters of rest.

Psa 23:3 He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness / For His name's sake.

Psa 23:4 Even though I walk / Through the valley of the shadow of death, / I do not fear evil, / For You are with me; / Your rod and Your staff, / They comfort me.

Psa 23:5 You spread a table before me / In the presence of my adversaries; / You anoint my head with oil; / My cup runs over.

Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me / All the days of my life, / And I will dwell in the house of Jehovah / For the length of my days.
  2. The issue of the Lord's caring for us as our Shepherd is that we obey Him as our King and come under His kingship— Rev. 7:17.
 

Rev 7:17 For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.
  3. As we experience the Lord's shepherding and remain under His kingship, we enjoy

His covenant of peace and are no longer subject to spiritual troubles and disturbances—  
Ezek. 37:25a.

Ezek 37:25a And they will dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers dwelt; ...

[Ezek 37:26a I will also make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them. ... ]

4. Under His shepherding, all the evil beasts, evil persons, are kept away from the Lord's recovered people—34:25b; cf. Acts 20:28-29; Phil. 3:2-3.

Ezek 34:25b ... so that they will dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.

Acts 20:29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

Phil 3:2 Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the concision.

Phil 3:3 For we are the circumcision, the ones who serve by the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh,

5. He breaks the bars of all our yokes, including the yokes of sin and the world, and delivers us from all kinds of slavery—Ezek. 34:27b.

Ezek 34:27b ... then they will know that I am Jehovah, when I break the bars of their yoke and deliver them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

6. He promises that we will not be prey to the enemy and that we will dwell in peace and safety—vv. 28a, 25b.

Ezek 34:28a And they will no longer be prey to the nations, nor will the beasts of the earth devour them; ...

Ezek 34:25b ..., so that they will dwell securely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.

- K. He causes us to become a source of blessing to others so that they may be supplied with Him as the showers of blessing and as the planting place of renown—vv. 26-27a, 29; Zech. 10:1; Ezek. 36:35.

Ezek 34:26 And I will make them and the places around My hill a blessing, and I will cause the showers to come down in their season; there will be showers of blessing.

Ezek 34:27a And the trees of the field will yield their fruit, and the earth will yield its increase, and they will be secure in their land; ...

Ezek 34:29 And I will raise up for them a planting place of renown, and they will no longer be consumed with famine in the land and no longer bear the disgrace of the nations.

Zech 10:1 Ask rain of Jehovah / At the time of spring rain, / Of Jehovah who makes the lightning, / And He will give them showers of rain, / To everyone herbage in the field.

Ezek 36:35 And they will say, This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are fortified and inhabited.

- L. Through the experience of His shepherding, we have God's presence; we are His and He is ours in our fellowship with Him in oneness for the mingling of God and man—34:30-31.

Ezek 34:30 Thus they will know that I, Jehovah their God, am with them, and that they, the house of Israel, are My people, declares the Lord Jehovah.

Ezek 34:31 And you are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God, declares the Lord Jehovah.

### **III. Christ is the good Shepherd, the great Shepherd, the Chief Shepherd, and the Shepherd of our souls— John 10:9-17; Heb. 13:20-21; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2:25:**

John 10:9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved and shall go in and go out and shall find pasture.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

John 10:11 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 10:12 He who is a hireling and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.

John 10:13 He flees because he is a hireling and it does not matter to him concerning the sheep.

John 10:14 I am the good Shepherd, and I know My own, and My own know Me,  
 John 10:15 Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.  
 John 10:16 And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.  
 John 10:17 For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.  
 Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,  
 Heb 13:21 Perfect you in every good work for the doing of His will, doing in us that which is well pleasing in His sight through Jesus Christ; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.  
 1 Pet 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.  
 1 Pet 2:25 For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

A. As the good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus came that we might have life and have it abundantly—John 10:10-11:

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have it abundantly.

John 10:11 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

1. He laid down His soul-life, His human life, to accomplish redemption for His sheep that they may share His zoe life, His divine life—vv. 11, 15, 17.

John 10:11 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.

John 10:15 Even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

John 10:17 For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

2. He leads His sheep out of the fold into Himself as the pasture, the feeding place, where they may eat freely of Him and be nourished by Him—v. 9.

John 10:9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved and shall go in and go out and shall find pasture.

3. The Lord has formed the Jewish and Gentile believers into one flock (the church, the Body of Christ) under His shepherding—v. 16.

John 10:16 And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must lead them also, and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one flock, one Shepherd.

B. God raised up from the dead “our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant”—Heb. 13:20:

Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, He who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, in the blood of an eternal covenant,

1. The eternal covenant is to consummate the New Jerusalem by shepherding.

2. The eternal covenant is the covenant of the new testament to gain a flock, which is the church issuing in the Body of Christ and consummating in the New Jerusalem.

3. As the great Shepherd, the Lord is making real to us the contents of the new covenant—8:8-13.

Heb 8:8 For finding fault with them He says, "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, and I will consummate a new covenant upon the house of Israel and upon the house of Judah,

Heb 8:9 Not according to the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by their hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the Lord.

Heb 8:10 For this is the covenant which I will covenant with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will impart My laws into their mind, and on their hearts I will inscribe them; and I will be God to them, and they will be a people to Me.

Heb 8:11 And they shall by no means each teach his fellow citizen and each his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all will know Me from the little one to the great one among them.

Heb 8:12 For I will be propitious to their unrighteousnesses, and their sins I shall by no means remember anymore."

Heb 8:13 In saying, A new covenant, He has made the first old. But that which is becoming old and growing decrepit is near to disappearing.

C. As the Chief Shepherd, Christ shepherds His flock through the elders of the churches—1 Pet. 5:4:

1 Pet 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

1. Without the elders' shepherding, the church cannot be built up.

2. The elders' shepherding should be Christ's shepherding through them.

D. As the Shepherd of our souls, the pneumatic Christ oversees our inward condition, caring for the situation of our inner being—2:25:

1 Pet 2:25 For you were like sheep being led astray, but you have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

1. He shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our soul and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our inner being.

2. Because our soul is very complicated, we need Christ, who is the life-giving Spirit in our spirit, to shepherd us in our soul in order to take care of our mind, emotion, and will and our problems, needs, and wounds.

3. As the Shepherd of our souls, the Lord restores our soul and gives rest to our soul—Psa. 23:3a; Matt. 11:28-30.

Psa 23:3a He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness ...

Matt 11:28 Come to Me all who toil and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

Matt 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matt 11:30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.

#### **IV. John 21, a chapter on shepherding, is the completion and consummation of the Gospel of John; shepherding is the key to the Gospel of John:**

John 21 be omitted.

A. The Gospel of John is a book on Christ coming to be our life by cherishing and nourishing us; to cherish people is to make them happy, pleasant, and comfortable (Matt. 9:10; Luke 7:34), and to nourish people is to feed them with the all-inclusive Christ (Matt. 24:45-47).

Matt 9:10 And as He was reclining at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and reclined together with Jesus and His disciples.

Luke 7:34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.

Matt 24:45 Who then is the faithful and prudent slave, whom the master has set over his household to give them food at the proper time?

Matt 24:46 Blessed is that slave whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

Matt 24:47 Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions.

B. After His resurrection, the Lord shepherded Peter and commissioned him to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep; this is to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ's heavenly ministry to take care of God's flock, the church, which issues in the Body of Christ— John 21:15-17:

John 21:15 Then when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Feed My lambs.

John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? He said to Him, Yes, Lord, You know that I love You. He said to him, Shepherd My sheep.

John 21:17 He said to him the third time, Simon, son of John, do you love Me? Peter was grieved that He said to him the third time, Do you love Me? And he said to Him, Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You. Jesus said to him, Feed My sheep.

1. The apostles were commissioned by the ascended Christ to cooperate with Him to carry out God's New Testament economy—1 Tim. 1:4; Eph. 1:10.

1 Tim 1:4 Nor to give heed to myths and unending genealogies, which produce questionings rather than God's economy, which is in faith.



- Eph 1:10      Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him;
2.    Regarding shepherding, the apostolic ministry cooperates with Christ's heavenly ministry, doing on earth what He is doing in the heavens.

**V. First Peter 5:2 speaks of shepherding the flock of God according to God:**

- 1 Pet 5:2      Shepherd the flock of God among you, overseeing not under compulsion but willingly, according to God; not by seeking gain through base means but eagerly;
- A.    *According to God* means that we live God.
- B.    When we are one with God, we become God and we are God in our shepherding of others.
- C.    To shepherd according to God is to shepherd according to God's nature, desire, way, and glory, not according to our preference, interest, purpose, and disposition.
- D.    To shepherd according to God is to shepherd according to what God is in His attributes—1 John 1:5; 4:8, 16.
- 1 John 1:5      And this is the message which we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.
- 1 John 4:8      He who does not love has not known God, because God is love.
- 1 John 4:16     And we know and have believed the love which God has in us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God and God abides in him.
- E.    In order to shepherd according to God, we need to become God in life, nature, expression, and function:
1.    We need to be filled to the brim with the divine life, enjoying the Triune God as the fountain, the spring, and the river to become a totality of the divine life, even to become the divine life itself— John 4:14; Col. 3:4.
- John 4:14      But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water springing up into eternal life.
- Col 3:4        When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
2.    We need to become God in His attributes of love, light, righteousness, and holiness—1 John 3:2; 2 Pet. 1:4.
- 1 John 3:2      Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.
- 2 Pet 1:4      Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.
3.    We need to be the reproduction of Christ, the expression of God, so that in our shepherding we express God, not the self with its disposition and peculiarities— John 12:24.
- John 12:24     Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless the grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it abides alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.
4.    We need to become God in His function of shepherding the flock of God according to what He is and according to His goal in His economy—Psa. 23:6b; Eph. 4:12, 16; Rev. 21:2, 10-11.
- Psa 23:6b      ... And I will dwell in the house of Jehovah / For the length of my days.
- Eph 4:12      For the perfecting of the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ,
- Eph 4:16      Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.
- Rev 21:2      And I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.
- Rev 21:10     And he carried me away in spirit onto a great and high mountain and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,

Rev 21:11 Having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, as clear as crystal.

## **VI. For eternity we will have the experience and enjoyment of Christ as our eternal Shepherd—7:16-17:**

Rev 7:16 They will not hunger anymore, neither will they thirst anymore, neither will the sun beat upon them, nor any heat;

Rev 7:17 For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

A. As our eternal Shepherd, Christ will lead us into Himself as the springs of waters of life so that we may enjoy the eternal dispensing of the Triune God—v. 17a.

Rev 7:17a For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; ...

B. The waters of life will be supplied, and the water of tears will be wiped away—v. 17b.

Rev 7:17b ... and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

C. Under Christ's shepherding in eternity, there will be no tears, no hunger, and no thirst—only enjoyment—vv. 16-17.

Rev 7:16 They will not hunger anymore, neither will they thirst anymore, neither will the sun beat upon them, nor any heat;

Rev 7:17 For the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and guide them to springs of waters of life; and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.