

Message Eleven

Shepherds according to God's Heart

Hymns:

Scripture Reading: Jer. 2:8; 3:15; 10:21; 23:1-4; Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:11-31;

John 10:11; Heb. 13:20-21; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:2, 4; Rev. 7:16-17

- Jer. 2:8 The priests did not say, / Where is Jehovah? / And those who handle the law did not know Me, / And the shepherds transgressed against Me, / And the prophets prophesied by Baal / And followed after things that did not benefit them.
- Jer. 3:15 And I will give you shepherds according to My own heart, who will feed you knowledge and understanding.
- Jer. 10:21 For the shepherds are stupid / And have not sought Jehovah; / Therefore they have not prospered, / And all their flock is scattered.
- Jer. 23:1 Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture, declares Jehovah.
- Jer. 23:2 Therefore thus says Jehovah the God of Israel concerning the shepherds who shepherd My people, You have scattered My flock and driven them away and have not visited them; I will visit upon you the evil of your deeds, declares Jehovah.
- Jer. 23:3 Then I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their pasture; and they will be fruitful and multiply.
- Jer. 23:4 And I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they will no longer fear or be dismayed, nor will any be missing, declares Jehovah.
- Isa. 40:11 He will feed His flock as a Shepherd; / In His arm He will gather the lambs; / In His bosom He will carry them. / He will lead those who are nursing the young.
- 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.
- John 10:11 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the 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,
- 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. 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.
- 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.

OUTLINE

I. **Jehovah spoke through the prophet Jeremiah concerning the shepherds, the rulers—Jer. 2:8; 10:21:**

- Jer. 2:8 The priests did not say, / Where is Jehovah? / And those who handle the law did not know Me, / And the shepherds transgressed against Me, / And the prophets prophesied by Baal / And followed after things that did not benefit them.
- Jer. 10:21 For the shepherds are stupid / And have not sought Jehovah; / Therefore they have not prospered, / And all their flock is scattered.

A. The shepherds, the rulers, transgressed against Jehovah; they did not seek Jehovah, and their flock was scattered—2:8; 10:21.

Jer. 2:8 The priests did not say, / Where is Jehovah? / And those who handle the law did not know Me, / And the shepherds transgressed against Me, / And the prophets prophesied by Baal / And followed after things that did not benefit them.

Jer. 10:21 For the shepherds are stupid / And have not sought Jehovah; / Therefore they have not prospered, / And all their flock is scattered.

B. The shepherds destroyed and scattered the sheep of Jehovah's pasture—23:1-2.

Jer. 23:1 Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture, declares Jehovah.

Jer. 23:2 Therefore thus says Jehovah the God of Israel concerning the shepherds who shepherd My people, You have scattered My flock and driven them away and have not visited them; I will visit upon you the evil of your deeds, declares Jehovah.

C. Jehovah promised that He would gather the remnant of His flock and bring them back to their pasture and that He would raise up shepherds over them who would shepherd them, and they would be fruitful and multiply—vv. 3-4.

Jer. 23:3 Then I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the lands where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their pasture; and they will be fruitful and multiply.

Jer. 23:4 And I will raise up shepherds over them who will shepherd them, and they will no longer fear or be dismayed, nor will any be missing, declares Jehovah.

D. Jehovah promised to give Israel shepherds according to His own heart; such shepherds would give the people of God proper knowledge and understanding of God—3:15.

Jer. 3:15 And I will give you shepherds according to My own heart, who will feed you knowledge and understanding.

II. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament reveal Christ as the Shepherd according to God's heart—Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:11-31; John 10:11; Heb. 13:20-21; 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:4; Rev. 7:16-17:

Isa. 40:11 He will feed His flock as a Shepherd; / In His arm He will gather the lambs; / In His bosom He will carry them. / He will lead those who are nursing the young.

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.
- John 10:11 I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd lays down His life for the 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,
- 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. 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. 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.
- 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 the mighty One, the ruling and judging One, Christ comes to be a Shepherd; He cares for His flock by ruling and correcting His sheep and by feeding His flock, gathering the lambs in His arm, carrying them in His bosom, and leading those who are nursing the young—Isa. 40:10-11; Matt. 2:6; 9:36.
- Isa. 40:10 Behold, the Lord Jehovah will come as a mighty One, / And His arm will rule for Him. / Behold, His reward is with Him, / And His recompense before Him.
- Isa. 40:11 He will feed His flock as a Shepherd; / In His arm He will gather the lambs; / In His bosom He will carry them. / He will lead those who are nursing the young.

Matt. 2:6 "And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you the least among the princes of Judah; for out of you shall come forth a Ruler, One who will shepherd My people Israel."

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.

B. Ezekiel 34:11-31 prophesies that the Lord Himself will come as the Shepherd to search for His sheep and seek them out:

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.

1. As the Shepherd, the Lord will gather His people, His sheep, out of the nations and bring them back to the land of Canaan, which typifies the all-inclusive Christ as the allotted portion of God's people, to dwell on the high mountains, signifying the resurrected and ascended Christ—vv. 11, 14.

Ezek. 34:11 For thus says the Lord Jehovah, I Myself, even I, will search for My sheep and seek them out.

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.

2. When the Lord Jesus comes as the Shepherd to care for us, He comes also as the King to govern us; 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 and His throne within us—vv. 23-24.

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.

- C. 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.

1. As the good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus came that we may have life and may 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.

- a. 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.

b. 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.

c. 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.

2. 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,

a. 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.

b. As the great Shepherd, the Lord is making real to us the contents of the new covenant and is leading us into the experience and enjoyment of all the positive matters revealed in the book of Hebrews—8:8-13; 1:1-3; 2:9-18; 5:6-10, 14; 7:16, 22, 24-26; 13:1, 8, 12-15.

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.

Heb. 1:1 God, having spoken of old in many portions and in many ways to the fathers in the prophets,

Heb. 1:2 Has at the last of these days spoken to us in the Son, whom He appointed Heir of all things, through whom also He made the universe;

Heb. 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Heb. 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little inferior to the angels because of the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death on behalf of everything.

Heb. 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Heb. 2:11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of One, for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brothers,

Heb. 2:12 Saying, "I will declare Your name to My brothers; in the midst of the church I will sing hymns of praise to You."

Heb. 2:13 And again, "I will trust in Him." And again, "Behold, I and the children whom God has given to Me."

Heb. 2:14 Since therefore the children have shared in blood and flesh, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same, that through death He might destroy him who has the might of death, that is, the devil,

Heb. 2:15 And might release those who because of the fear of death through all their life were held in slavery.

Heb. 2:16 For assuredly it is not to angels that He gives help, but He gives help to the seed of Abraham.

Heb. 2:17 Hence He should have been made like His brothers in all things that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in the things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Heb. 2:18 For being tempted in that which He Himself has suffered, He is able to help those who are being tempted.

Heb. 5:6 Even as also in another place He says, "You are a Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedec."

Heb. 5:7 This One, in the days of His flesh, having offered up both petitions and supplications with strong crying and tears to Him who was able to save Him out of death and having been heard because of His piety,

Heb. 5:8 Even though He was a Son, learned obedience from the things which He suffered.

Heb. 5:9 And having been perfected, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,

Heb. 5:10 Being addressed by God as a High Priest according to the order of Melchizedec;

Heb. 5:14 But solid food is for the full-grown, who because of practice have their faculties exercised for discriminating between both good and evil.

Heb. 7:16 Who has been appointed not according to the law of a fleshy commandment but according to the power of an indestructible life.

Heb. 7:22 By so much Jesus has also become the surety of a better covenant.

Heb. 7:24 But He, because He abides forever, has His priesthood unalterable.

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Heb. 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,

Heb. 13:1 Let brotherly love continue.

Heb. 13:8 Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, yes, even forever.

Heb. 13:12 Therefore also Jesus, that He might sanctify the people through His own blood, suffered outside the gate.

Heb. 13:13 Let us therefore go forth unto Him outside the camp, bearing His reproach.

Heb. 13:14 For we do not have here a remaining city, but we seek after the one to come.

Heb. 13:15 Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name.

3. 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.
- a. Without the elders' shepherding, the church cannot be built up—v. 2.
 - 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;
 - b. The elders' shepherding should be Christ's shepherding through them.
4. 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.
- a. He shepherds us by caring for the welfare of our soul and by exercising His oversight over the condition of our inner being.
 - b. Because our soul is very complicated, we need Christ, who is the life-giving Spirit in our spirit, to shepherd us in our soul, to take care of our mind, emotion, and will and of our problems, needs, and wounds.
 - c. 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. 23:3 He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness / For His name's sake.
 - 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.
5. In eternity future Christ will be our eternal Shepherd guiding us to springs of waters of life—Rev. 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. 7:17 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.
 - b. The waters of life will be supplied, and the water of tears will be wiped away—v. 17b.
 - 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.
 - 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.

III. In His heavenly ministry the Lord Jesus continues the shepherding that He began in His earthly ministry—Heb. 13:20-21:

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.

A. In John 21:15-17 the Lord commissioned Peter to feed His lambs and shepherd His sheep in His absence, while He is in the heavens; this was to incorporate the apostolic ministry with Christ's heavenly ministry to shepherd God's flock:

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. What He was doing in the heavens, the apostles did on earth to carry out His heavenly ministry—Heb. 13:20-21; John 21:15-17.

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.

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.

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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.

2. Regarding shepherding, the apostolic ministry cooperates with Christ's heavenly ministry—vv. 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.

B. The apostle Paul is a pattern of shepherding the saints in cooperation with Christ's

shepherding in His heavenly ministry—Heb. 13:20-21; 7:25-26; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; Acts 20:20:

- 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,
- 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.
- Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.
- Heb. 7:26 For such a High Priest was also fitting to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,
- 1 Tim. 1:16 But because of this I was shown mercy, that in me, the foremost, Jesus Christ might display all His long-suffering for a pattern to those who are to believe on Him unto eternal life.
- 2 Cor. 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassions and God of all comfort,
- 2 Cor. 1:4 Who comforts us in all our affliction that we may be able to comfort those who are in every affliction through the comforting with which we ourselves are comforted by God.
- Acts 20:20 How I did not withhold any of those things that are profitable by not declaring them to you and by not teaching you publicly and from house to house,

1. Paul shepherded the saints as a nursing mother and an exhorting father—1 Thes. 2:7-8, 11-12.

- 1 Thes. 2:7 But we were gentle in your midst, as a nursing mother would cherish her own children.
- 1 Thes. 2:8 Yearning in this way over you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us.
- 1 Thes. 2:11 Just as you know how we were to each one of you, as a father to his own children, exhorting you and consoling you and testifying,
- 1 Thes. 2:12 So that you might walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

2. Paul shepherded the saints in Ephesus by teaching them “publicly and from house to house” (Acts 20:20) and by admonishing each one of the saints with tears even for as long as three years (vv. 31, 19), declaring to them all the counsel of God (v. 27).

- Acts 20:20 How I did not withhold any of those things that are profitable by not declaring them to you and by not teaching you publicly and from house to house,
- Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, remembering that for three years, night and day, I did not cease admonishing each one with tears.
- Acts 20:19 Serving the Lord as a slave with all humility and tears and trials which came upon me by the plots of the Jews;
- Acts 20:27 For I did not shrink from declaring to you all the counsel of God.

3. Paul had been enlarged in his heart to have the intimate concern of the ministering life—2 Cor. 7:2-3; 1 Thes. 2:8; Phil. 2:19-20.

- 2 Cor. 7:2 Make room for us; we have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one.
- 2 Cor. 7:3 I do not say this to condemn you, for I have said before that you are in our hearts for our dying together and our living together.
- 1 Thes. 2:8 Yearning in this way over you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us.
- Phil. 2:19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged by knowing the things concerning you.
- Phil. 2:20 For I have no one like-souled who will genuinely care for what concerns you;

4. Paul came down to the weak ones' level so that he could gain them—2 Cor. 11:28-29; 1 Cor. 9:22; cf. Matt. 12:20.

2 Cor. 11:28 Apart from the things which have not been mentioned, there is this: the crowd of cares pressing upon me daily, the anxious concern for all the churches.

2 Cor. 11:29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is stumbled, and I myself do not burn?

1 Cor. 9:22 To the weak I became weak that I might gain the weak. To all men I have become all things that I might by all means save some.

Matt. 12:20 A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench until He brings forth justice unto victory.

5. As a lover of the church in oneness with the church-loving Christ, Paul was willing to spend what he had, referring to his possessions, and to spend what he was, referring to his being, for the sake of the saints in order to build up the Body of Christ—Eph. 5:25; 2 Cor. 12:15; 11:28-29.

Eph. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her

2 Cor. 12:15 But I, I will most gladly spend and be utterly spent on behalf of your souls. If I love you more abundantly, am I loved less?

2 Cor. 11:28 Apart from the things which have not been mentioned, there is this: the crowd of cares pressing upon me daily, the anxious concern for all the churches.

2 Cor. 11:29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is stumbled, and I myself do not burn?

IV. Those who shepherd the flock of God should shepherd according to God—1 Pet. 5:2:

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. To shepherd according to God is to shepherd according to what God is in His attributes—Rom. 9:15-16; 11:22, 33; Eph. 2:7; 1 Cor. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:12.

Rom. 9:15 For to Moses He says, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion."

Rom. 9:16 So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.

Rom. 11:22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but on you, the kindness of God, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off.

Rom. 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and untraceable His ways!

Eph. 2:7 That He might display in the ages to come the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

1 Cor. 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

2 Cor. 1:12 For our boasting is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in singleness and sincerity of God, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and more abundantly toward you.

B. 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.

C. In order to shepherd according to God, we need to become God in life, nature, expression, and function—John 1:12-13; 3:15; 2 Pet. 1:4:

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

John 1:13 Who were begotten not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:15 That everyone who believes into Him may have eternal life.
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.

1. 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 1:18; Heb. 1:3; 2:10; Rom. 8:29; Gal. 4:19.

John 1:18 No one has ever seen God; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

Heb. 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Heb. 2:10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and through whom are all things, in leading many sons into glory, to make the Author of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Rom. 8:29 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers;

Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

2. 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—Eph. 4:16; Rev. 21:2.

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.

3. When we are one with God, we become God in life and nature and are God in our shepherding of others—1 John 5:11-12; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 Pet. 5:2.

1 John 5:11 And this is the testimony, that God gave to us eternal life and this life is in His Son.

1 John 5:12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

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.

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;

V. The shepherding that builds up the Body of Christ is a mutual shepherding—1 Cor. 12:23-26:

1 Cor. 12:23 And those members of the body which we consider to be less honorable, these we clothe with more abundant honor; and our uncomely members come to have more abundant comeliness,

1 Cor. 12:24 But our comely members have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the member that lacked,

1 Cor. 12:25 That there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same care for one another.

1 Cor. 12:26 And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member is glorified, all the members rejoice with it.

A. 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.

- B. All believers, regardless of their stage of spiritual growth, need shepherding.
- C. All of us need to be under the organic shepherding of Christ and be one with Him to shepherd others—1 Pet. 2:25; John 21:16.

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.

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.

- D. We need to shepherd the flock of God according to the Father's loving and forgiving heart and according to the Son's seeking, finding, and shepherding spirit—Luke 15:4-24, 32.

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.

Luke 15:8 Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one silver coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek carefully until she finds it?

Luke 15:9 And when she finds it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I lost.

Luke 15:10 In the same way, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner repenting.

Luke 15:11 And He said, A certain man had two sons.

Luke 15:12 And the younger of them said to the father, Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me. And he distributed to them his living.

Luke 15:13 And not many days after, the younger son, having gathered everything together, went abroad to a distant country and there squandered his estate by living dissolutely.

Luke 15:14 And when he had spent all, a severe famine occurred throughout that country, and he began to be in want.

Luke 15:15 And he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed hogs.

Luke 15:16 And he longed to be satisfied with the carob pods which the hogs were eating, and no one gave him anything.

Luke 15:17 But when he came to himself, he said, How many of my father's hired servants abound in bread, but I am perishing here in famine!

Luke 15:18 I will rise up and go to my father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you.

Luke 15:19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.

Luke 15:20 And he rose up and came to his own father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion, and he ran and fell on his neck and kissed him affectionately.

Luke 15:21 And the son said to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.

Luke 15:22 But the father said to his slaves, Bring out quickly the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet.

Luke 15:23 And bring the fattened calf; slaughter it, and let us eat and be merry,

Luke 15:24 Because this son of mine was dead and lives again; he was lost and has been found. And they began to be merry.

Luke 15:32 But we had to be merry and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life, and he was lost and has been found.

E. We are both sheep and shepherds, shepherding and being shepherded in mutuality; through this mutual shepherding, the Body builds itself up in love—Eph. 4:16.

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.