

CHRIST BEFORE THE MANGER

Lesson 3

Christ the Shepherd

We conclude our study this week of "Christ Before the Manger" by looking at Christ as Shepherd. In the course of our study, we will discover the significance of this imagery within both the Old and New Testaments. If we can understand the significance of the Shepherd as it is used in the Old Testament, we can better understand Christ and the impact He had on the Jews of the day as they related this imagery from their Torah (the Old Testament) with respect to what Christ was saying about Himself.

As we approach our celebration of Christmas, it is especially appropriate to look at Christ as our Shepherd and what both the Old and New Testaments have to say about Him in this capacity.

With this in mind, let's look at some very insightful verses and pray that the Holy Spirit will enlighten us in ways that we have never seen before, as we discover the deeper truths about our Savior from the "scriptures" -- the Old Testament.

For this lesson, let's consider the following passages and what they reveal to us about Christ as our Shepherd.

1. Read all of John 10:1-42. What a powerful chapter, full of great truths! Answer the questions below, and be sure to cite the verse, or verses, where your answer was found. Remember, we are using the Bible to interpret the Bible, not our opinion, or someone else's opinion; so make sure that you cite your answer with verses.
 - a. Does Jesus claim to be Christ in this passage?
 - b. Does Jesus claim to be God in this passage?
 - c. Does He claim to be the Good Shepherd?
 - d. What does he say that he will do as the Shepherd?
 - e. Does this passage speak to the security of all those who believe in Christ?
2. What do the verses below each say about Christ as a shepherd?
 - a. 1 Peter 5:4
 - b. Hebrews 13:20
 - c. Matthew 2:6
 - d. Matthew 18:10-14

3. What does the Old Testament tell us about the Shepherd and Christ's coming?
 - a. Ezekiel 34:23
 - b. Ezekiel 37:22
 - c. Ezekiel 37:24
 - d. Zechariah 11:4-14
 - e. Zechariah 13:7
4. What did Christ himself say about these prophecies?
 - a. John 10:8
 - b. John 10:11
 - c. John 10:14
5. Is Christ the Shepherd evident in Psalm 23?
6. Comment regarding Christ as the Shepherd in the following:
 - a. Isaiah 40:11
 - b. Jeremiah 31:10
 - c. Ezekiel 34:11-12
7. There are more references in the Old Testament about shepherds. Read the following passages and comment regarding their potential reference to Christ.
 - a. Psalm 100:3
 - b. Psalm 95:6-7

As we can see from our brief study, the image of Jesus the Christ as the creator and shepherd of His people has been an integral part of the Biblical text beginning in Genesis and continuing all the way through Revelation.

A thorough analysis and comparison of John 10 and Psalm 23 provides much insight into our great Redeemer and Shepherd. As our Shepherd, he protects us, cares for us, watches over us, and leads us. What better Redeemer could we have than the Greatest Shepherd of all?

Recognizing this imagery during the time of the Manger, the Jews were quick to pick up on Jesus' teaching about the Shepherd, and Christ's role in shepherding His people as the one and only Son of God. Looking through the eyes of the Old Testament picture of a shepherd, we gain a deeper understanding of Christ and our relationship to Him.

As we approach the eve of the celebration of His birth, let us, His sheep, worship Him and God the Father, who sent Him to save us and to watch over us as our Good Shepherd.

Merry Christmas everyone! May God bless you richly during this Christmas season as we continue to study His Holy Word together.

In Christ,

Wes