THE LORD IS OUR SHEPHERD

**WE ARE THE SHEEP OF HIS HAND**

**THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD**

 Did you know that God refers to us His children as Sheep and to Himself as the Shepherd? In this Newsletter we will take a close look at the Shepherd and the Sheep. In the O.T. notice how God referred to His chosen people!

**Ps 95:6** - O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. **7** - For He is our God; and we are the people of his Pasture, and the Sheep of his hand.

**Isa 40:11** - He (God) shall feed his Flock like a Shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

 You come to the N.T. in **John 10** and Jesus said: I Am the Good Shepherd, and give my life for my Sheep! I know my Sheep and they know my Voice and they follow me.

 The psalmist David before he ever was anointed King over God’s people to lead them, he was in training out in the fields tending his flock of Sheep to lead them, feed them, to guide and protect them! Many things he learned about their character that parallels the nature of us human beings today. His learning on the mountain sides of caring for the sheep and lambs would eventually bring him to the throne to be a shepherd over Israel.

 I’d like to take the 23rd Psalm that David penned almost 3,040 years ago and relate it to us today. It’s a most loving story that shows an intimate relationship of a caring Shepherd and each of His Sheep! Notice in this psalm, the Sheep is doing the talking, bragging on the Shepherd. In this one psalm which has only 6 verses, David refers to the Lord His Shepherd 13 times, telling how good He is to him. David refers to himself 16 times – **I** - **Me** - **My**. What are you saying David? The Lord is MY SHEPHERD I SHALL NOT WANT. Look at this one word **WANT**, the Hebrew word is Kaw-sare’ which means: “I shall not lack or fail!” What are you saying David? I have made the Lord my Shepherd and He’s going to take good care of me. I won’t have to worry or fret. He won’t let me starve, diminish, weaken, or fail!! He’s my need supplier and my soul provider! HALLELUJAH - I’m not deficient, I’m not empty, forsaken or alone because I am one of His Sheep and I’m blessed to be in the Lord’s Fold!

HELPLESS

 Let’s study their traits and see how much we are like Sheep by nature! No wonder God calls us Sheep! Did you know that Sheep are the most vulnerable and helpless of all livestock? By nature, they have no built-in defense to fight and to protect themselves, they must totally depend upon the Shepherd to take care and defend them. It’s not in Sheep to guide themselves – they are prone to easily go astray by keeping their head down and not looking up! Sheep are timid creatures and at the least sudden sound or sight of trouble, they will bolt and run away.

 I am taking some of my writing in this Newsletter from Phillip Keller’s book entitled: “A Shepherd looks at Psalm 23”. If you have never read this book, you can order it from Amazon, it’s surely worth its weight in gold. Keller was a preacher and lay pastor who owned and raised hundreds of sheep in his career. He had a huge sheep ranch in Africa and later moved to the Rocky Mtn’s in the U.S. and raised sheep there for years.

 Keller said – I have watched and observed my sheep through the years and just like Jesus said – “I have seen their characteristics are just like that of us human beings! By nature, they are stubborn, easily follow others, and are slow to learn. You have to work with them.” He goes on to say that Sheep require endless attention and meticulous care and more detailed direction than all other class of livestock. Being a true Shepherd in his heart, he said – “There is no greater reward, no deeper satisfaction than of seeing my Sheep contented, well fed, safe and flourishing under my care because they are my very life!! There was nothing that comforted and soothed my Sheep more than to hear my voice and to see me and know that I was in their midst!! It brought a peace to them!”

Jesus speaking of Himself, said in **John 10:3** – The Sheep hear His voice and He calleth His own Sheep by name, and leadeth them out and the Sheep follow Him for they know His voice, and a Stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers!

 Dear reader, our Lord and Shepherd calls every one of His children by name! Have you heard Him call you or call for you? Do you know Him and know His voice? Out of all the multiplied millions of God’s Sheep across this world, the Good Shepherd knows you, He sees you and He cares about your condition and welfare! You may feel like you are insignificant, your place in the fold seems obscure and your work not that important. You may feel like you’re hid among the thousands – But God knows right where you are, He sees you and He cares! You are one of His very own! Your calling and place in the fold is special not only to the Lord, but also for the benefit of others! Whether you realize it or not, people are watching you. **Vs. 3** Says - And He (the Shepherd) leads them (His Sheep) out.

THE SHEPHERD’S CALL

 I want to ask you – Has God called you to a specific place of ministry in the fold? You may be little or big! Will you stay in the place that the Shepherd has called you to and remain faithful? Will you listen to His voice, follow and obey Him? **V 4** – Jesus said – And when He putteth forth His own Sheep, He goeth before them. Listen children, The Lord is wanting to lead us out and take us higher in this dark troubling hour! We must come out of the lowlands and the valley’s dark regions. Are you willing to come out of the shadows of doubt and confusion and climb the mountain to be with God? Jesus our Shepherd is desiring to lead us up the mountain to greener pastures to graze in the higher regions of His rich grace. Have you heard Him calling you lately? Can you sense the urgency of the Spirit calling to the Church to go higher as we await the Lord’s return? His voice and Call is echoing out over His flock across this world right now, saying – Come with me, follow me, you’ve got to go Higher, you must go higher and draw nigh to God!! The Church’s final hour in this world is NOW!

**V 4** – And Jesus said – And when He putteth forth His own Sheep, He goeth before them, and the Sheep follow Him, for they know His voice!

When I was studying for this lesson and Newsletter, I searched on my phone about Shepherds and their Sheep and it showed a little boy that looked about 12 years old that had a flock of Sheep. I guess his father had trained him. A Pastor friend came to visit and asked the boy to take him out to the edge of the field to see if the Sheep would come to him when he would call for them. The pastor had a staff in his hand and the boy said – Go ahead and call for them but they won’t listen to you! The Pastor friend said to him – you mean if I call to them, they won’t come to me? The little boy looked up and said NO SIR! You mean no matter what I say when I holler, they won’t listen and come? NO SIR!

The boy said – go ahead! The man raised his voice and hollered and hollered different words and sounds in different ways, waving his staff in the air and not one sheep raised its head to look up. He told the boy – they won’t come to me, now you call them! That little 12 year old boy raised his voice and began to holler and call – Come Sheep, and it brought tears to my eyes as the Sheep every one threw their head up from grazing and began to trot to come to him. One sheep was even lying down on the ground when the boy called and it got up and came with the rest. Then the camera showed the boy walking on a path and the sheep following him.

O would to God that every Child of God knew the Shepherd’s voice more clearly!! It would save them from a lot of pitfalls and dangers! O that we all were more sensitive to His Spirit! You might say to me – How can I learn and know the Shepherd’s voice preacher? If you will earnestly pray, seek God’s face and spend quality time in reading and meditating in the Word of God and hunger after the Lord, you will hear His voice Calling you, leading you and comforting you!! O to hear and know the Shepherd’s voice and obey would sure keep many souls from error and trouble!

THE VOICE OF STRANGERS

**John 10:5** – Jesus said – And a Stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the **voice** of Strangers.

 I’m going to tell you – there are a lot of different churches, with different doctrines, there are many ministers and different Folds out there with a lot of various beliefs but if they don’t truly know Jesus and have His Spirit in their hearts they are STRANGERS! Without the Spirit of Christ, you are none of His Sheep. Listen, there are many who follow others because they have charisma and charm and have swelling words of oratory, and there are many who have great talent and musical ability to entertain, BUT they are **Strangers** to God and His precious Holy Spirit! THERE IS NO ANOINTING!! There are many who have joined themselves to the Church but have not been born again!

 Notice that Jesus said His Sheep know not the **Voice** of a **Stranger**! Do you know and have you ever looked up the word Stranger in the original Greek to see what it means? This word in Greek is

Allotrios which means a foreigner, Not Kin to the family of God – Belonging to another with an alien language that is hostile to the Divine Holy Ghost.

 God wants you to know that His people, Christs’ Church have their own language – their words and their speech is different than this world’s. God’s saints are marked and known by their speech! Their language is Holy, and pure, their words are Heavenly, they uplift and exalt our Lord Jesus Christ, the true Church and believers’ language is spiritual, it builds up the Kingdom of God and brings Him Glory, it edifies others in love. To be a true Sheep in God’s pasture, Your words will be wholesome and clean! I’m telling you – This good Holy Sanctified way is the best way, it’s the only true and safe way to be in the Lord’s fold! Strangers and aliens to God’s covenant are not allowed!

DON’T WANDER AWAY FROM THE SHEPHERD

 Children, can you say – Thank you Lord that I am in your Fold! If you will remain faithful and stay in the fold, the Good Shepherd will lead you. As in the natural, sheep have their fences and their borders to stay within their perimeter under the watchful eye of the Shepherd.

 God too, has given us borders and certain guidelines in His Holy Word to keep us safe and separate from the evil influence of this world. He has given us boundaries and convictions that will keep us in check, and if you wander outside the boundary of the Bible, you are getting on the enemy’s territory. To get out of God’s will now in this hour, you will fall victim to grievous wolves that will deceive you and take you down! Many good people have went outside the fence line and have never made it back to that good satisfying place in the fold they once knew and enjoyed.

THE THIEF IS COMING

**John 10:7** - Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, (Truly, Truly) I say unto you, I Am the Door of the sheep.

 **8** All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

 **9** I Am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

 **10** The **thief** cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Dear reader, if Jesus is the Door to the Sheepfold, don’t you think we must stay inside the Door? In

**V 10** – Jesus warned and said that the Thief is coming, he will come and is coming to steal and to kill and destroy, but the only way he can destroy you, he has to first come and **steal from you**! Can I tell you – he’s out to steal your desire and commitment. He’ll take away your prayer life and your reading God’s Word and fill it with other things and interests. He’ll steal your dedication to Church and you’ll lay out and begin missing services. He’ll influence you with things and with people to draw you away from the Shepherd. He’ll steal your love for others and you’ll lose your desire to come and fellowship and worship the Lord with your brothers and sisters who love you and care! God’s true people, His Sheep and Lambs really do love you and care and want you in the fold! What good is a fold without a Shepherd? And what good is one lone Shepherd in an empty field without an obedient fold?

**John 10:11** - I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

You can never say that Jesus doesn’t love you and He doesn’t care! You are so important to Him that He gave His life to save you! He does not want to ever lose you! It would break His heart to see you wander off and walk away! Will you stay in the Fold? Will you stay near the Shepherd? Will you stay with precious brothers and sisters who care?

**John 10:27** – Jesus said - My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

 **28** And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

 **29** My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. To all my readers whom I love and minister to every month: Stay in the Fold, stay with the Shepherd, remain Faithful for He is your life, your keeper and guide!! May God Bless everyone is my earnest prayer! ***Written by: Tommy Romans May 2024***