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The Good Shepherd Of The Sheep
Jn. 10:1-21

It has been said that there are none so blind as those who will not see. The statement is a charge to all of mankind, who for what ever reason they choose to reject, ignore or disregard the evidence or proof that would enable them to make the right decision.

Such has been the proclamation of Jesus regarding the Pharisees as to their spiritual blindness in contrast to the blind man He healed.

The Pharisees were offended at Jesus, for He told them that they were spiritual blind and their answer was one of sarcasm, "Are we blind also?"

This is what prompted the discourse of the Good shepherd which is characterized by three things. 10:1-21

- I. The proclamation of vs. 1-6
- II. The interpretation. vs. 7-13
- III. The application. vs. 14-21

I. The proclamation. vs. 1-6

- A. The connection between the previous chapter and this one is unmistakable.

1. The Jews had excommunicated the blind man from the temple for his witness of Jesus and condemned for being born in sin and attempting to teach the Pharisees. 9:34-35
 2. Jesus sought out the blind man and revealed Himself to him and was brought to worship. 9:35-38
 3. Jesus proclaimed this to be the very purpose for which He had come into the world, that those who do not see may see and those who see may be made blind. 9:39
 * The judgment is the result of each person by their decision of who Jesus is, God is not at fault for people's spiritual blindness!
 4. Jesus responds to their sarcastic question of being blind, that their sin remained because they had physical sight and refused to acknowledge the evidence they could see. 9:40-41
- B.** The common pattern of a miracle or event, followed by a discourse is unmistakable.
1. Jesus cleansed the temple and what follows is the discourse to Nicodemus. Jn. 3:1-21
 2. Jesus speaks with the woman of Samaria and then He gives a discourse to His

15

disciple about the harvest being white.
Jn. 4:33-38

3. Jesus healed the paralytic at the Pool of Bethesda therefore He is sought out to be killed by the Jews and He gives them a discourse about being the One sent by the Father to do His works and the four-fold witness of John the Baptist, the works of the Father, the Scriptures and Moses. Jn. 5:16-47
4. Jesus fed the multitudes and the following day he gave a discourse to the crowd that followed Him for the physical benefit only. Jn. 6:1-14, 22-27
5. Jesus forgave the woman caught in the very act of adultery and then gave a discourse about His valid witness in the treasury of the temple. Jn. 8:13-59
6. Jesus heals the blind man and now he gives the discourse of the Good Shepherd. 10:1-21

C. The cultural setting is unmistakable.

1. The sheepfold was a common place where various sheep were kept for the night be it in a town or some other place. vs. 1
2. The proper entrance was the one door and thieves and robbers did not enter that way. vs. 1

14

3. The shepherd of the sheep entered by the door. vs. 2
4. The door keeper was the one responsible for the caring of the sheep till the shepherd came to lead them out as he called them by name. vs. 3
5. The shepherd is known as the owner by three things. vs. 4-5
 - a. He brings the sheep out as he call) The word for illustration "ore them, leading not driving them.
 - c. His sheep follow him for they know his voice.
 - d. His sheep will not follow a stranger.
 - 1) They will flee from the stranger.
 - 2) They don't know the voice of a strangers.
6. The proclamation is of great importance. vs. 1a-b, 6
 - a. The phrase "Most assuredly" appears twenty-five times in John.
 - b. The phrase means Amen, Amen, affirming the importance of what is going to be said beforehand, in order that it be heeded.
 - c. The authority is of Jesus, "I say to you".
 - 1) He did not quote Moses.
 - 2) He did not quote the religious men of the past.

15

- 3) He did not quote the religious men of the present day.
- d. The proclamation is not a parable.
- 1) The word *illustration* is not the word for parable "parabole" but "paroimia" which means a wayside saying literally.
- a) A parable is an extended metaphor with one central message, not everything is given a meaning and compares or contrast.
- b) An allegory is the use of prolonged metaphors or types with greater details than a parable as figurative language, such as Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress or Paul allegory in Galatians. 4:24
- 2) The word appears five times in the New Testament, four of which are in John, translated figurative language, figure of speech and proverb. 16:25, 29, 2Pet. 2:22
- 3) There is parallelism throughout the discourse.
- a) Twice the phrase "Most assuredly, I say unto you" is stated. vs. 1a-b, 7b-c
- b) Twice the phrase, "I am the door" is stated. vs. 7d, 9a

14

- c) Twice the phrase, "The good shepherd" is stated. vs. 11a, 14a
- d) Twice the word "wolf". vs. 12
- e) Twice the word, "hireling" is stated. vs. 12-13
- f) The good shepherd is contrasted to both the thief and robbers as well as the hireling, which are also mentioned twice. vs. 12
- 4) The outcome was that the Pharisees did not understand the things He spoke to them.
- a) The reason has already been given, they refused to see by personal choice and remained in their sins. 9:38, 41
- b) The use of figurative language was used by Jesus often, be it parables, similes, metaphors or allegories for the purpose of enhancing their understanding not to hinder it.
- c) The rejection of the common knowledge in the illustration would bring greater darkness by their own doing. Matt. 11:25, 13:14-15

This is the proclamation of Jesus to the Pharisees in view of their spiritual blindness!

II. The interpretation. vs. 7-13

- A. There are many different interpretations of the discourse of the Good Shepherd.
1. There is the attempt to give every element a meaning which confuses or contradicts the main theme of salvation. vs. 9-10
 2. There are attempts to see much more than is there, therefore saying more than it says.
 3. There is the simple pattern of the Lord's teaching that I believe makes the discourse understandable.
 - a. Jesus proclaimed a truth first.
 - b. Jesus then interpreted that truth.
 - c. Jesus made application of the truth.
 4. There is literal and figurative language mixed in the discourse.
- B. The interpretation is provided by Jesus.
1. He declares that He is the door of the sheep. vs. 7
 - a. Jesus is talking to the Pharisee, "them".
 - b. Jesus once again qualifies the importance and authority, "I say to you".
 - c. Jesus proclaims the third "I AM". vs. 7, 9
 - d. The shepherds out in the wilderness would corral the sheep into a cave or

- enclosure and then they would lay across the opening as the door for any of the sheep to get out or a wolf to get in.
2. He declares that all who ever came before Him are thieves and robbers. vs. 8
 - a. If Jesus is the door and there is only one door to the sheepfold, then we are safe in assuming that He is referring to all who have had access to the sheep of Israel apart from hope in Him, the promised Messiah.
 - b. Though the statement certainly applies to all in the past to that present day, it seems to be limited to those religious men of His day by the present tense "are" not "were".
 - c. The Pharisees and others who were rejecting Him were those who did not have the right to the sheep.
 - 1) The word thief "kleptes" implies subtlety and trickery.
 - 2) The word robbers "lestes" connotes violence and plundering.
 * This word is used for Barabas who was freed by Pilot instead of Jesus.
 3. He declares that He is the door to salvation. vs. 9
 - a. Jesus already said He was the door to the sheep of Israel. vs. 7d

15

- b. Jesus now defines the purpose of the door, namely salvation!
- c. Jesus describes the quality of salvation in two ways.
 - 1) The person will be saved from the judgment of God's wrath, for their sins.
 - a) The paralytic was told to sin no more lest a worse thing come upon him. 5:14
 - b) The adulterous woman heard the words, "Neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more. 8:11
 - c) Jesus is the true light that lights every man that comes into the world, He is the light of the world. 1:9, 8:12, 9:5
 - d) Jesus is the Savior of the world, the way the truth and the life and no man comes to the Father but by Him for there is no other name given under heaven and earth whereby men must be saved because there is one God and one the only mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. Jn. 4:42, 14:6, Acts 4:12, 1Tim. 2:5
 - 2) The person "will go in and out", which means that he or she will have a sense of safety, freedom and access to God. Heb. 4:14-16

14

- a) Freedom from the sins of the past. Ps. 103:12
- b) Freedom from sin nature by the new divine nature. 2Pet. 1:3-4
- c) Freedom from deeds and acts of sin the enslaved us. Rom. 6:15-23
- 3) The person "will find pastures", which indicates he or she will be called, led, fed and protected by the Shepherd Jesus.
- 4. He declares the contrast between the coming of the thief and Himself. vs. 10
 - a) The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy for self benefit.
 - 1) That is why the thief and robber come in any other way than the door.
 - 2) That they might:
 - (a) Steal what is not theirs.
 - (b) Kill whatever sheep would cry and give them away.
 - (c) Destroy what they can not take.
 - b) The Messiah comes that the sheep may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly with a self-less benefit.
 - 1) The life is spiritual and eternal life.
 - 2) The life is enjoyed here and now with abundance of benefits and richness of life, through a God sourced quality of life.

15

5. He declared the contrast between the hireling and Himself. vs. 11-13
- a. He is the good shepherd. vs. 11
- 1) The word good "kalos" means excellent, beautiful, noble with the idea of efficiency, fidelity and loveliness.
* This is the fourth "I AM"!
- 2) He gives His life for the sheep.
* Jesus states this five times. vs. 11, 15, 17, 18 (2x's)
- b. The hireling is not the shepherd. vs. 12-13
- 1) He does not own the sheep.
2) He sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees.
3) He allows the sheep to be caught by the wolf and scattered.
4) He acts like this because he is a hireling and does not care for the sheep. vs. 13
- c. The entire Old Testament and New is full of the imagery as well as the warnings of false and wicked shepherds.
- 1) The people of God are called the sheep of His pasture. Ps. 23, 74:1, 78:52, 80:1, 100:3
- 2) There are stern warnings to the wicked shepherd who scatter the flock and feed themselves and the promise

14

- of raising up shepherds to feed them. Jer. 23:1-4, Ezk. 34:1-10, 11:31
- 3) There is the prophecy of the foolish and worthless shepherd of the Anti-Christ. Zach. 11:7-14
- 4) The New Testament is no different in the used of the metaphor and warnings. Matt. 9:36, 15:24, 18:11-13, 20:31, Mk. 6:34, 14:27, Lk. 12:32, 15:3-7, Acts 20:29, 1Pet. 1:1-4

This is the interpretation by Jesus to the Pharisees regarding their spiritual blindness!

III. The application. vs. 14-21

- A. The good shepherd's relation to the sheep. vs. 14-16
1. The good shepherd knows His sheep. vs. 14
- a. The shepherd is all knowing, omniscient, having predestined, justified and sanctified them.
- b. The good shepherd is known by His sheep by virtue of the spiritual birth, even as children know their own parents.
2. The good shepherd's relation to the sheep is as the one to the Father. vs. 15
- a. It is family knowledge that is intimate.

15

- b. It is sacrificial as Jesus lays down His life for the sheep.
- 3. The good shepherd has other sheep that are not Jews. vs. 16
 - a. The word "fold" has been primarily used for Israel in our text, as Jesus is addressing the Pharisee.
 - b. The other sheep "*must*" be brought in, the word means obligation and absolute necessity.
 - c. These other sheep will hear His voice, as the sheep from Israel have as the paralytic and blind man, who He sought out and found.
* As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God, even to those who believed in His name. 1:12
 - d. The composite of the two folds is the product of the church under the leading of One shepherd, the good Shepherd, Jew and Gentile one in Christ. Eph. 2:11-18, 3:1-7
- B. The good shepherd's relation to the Father. vs. 17
 - 1. The Father loves the Son, Jesus. vs. 17a
 - 2. The reason is because Jesus lays down His life for the sheep. vs. 17b
 - 3. The purpose of laying down His life is so that He may take it up again. vs. 17b

14

- C. The good shepherd's relation to His death. vs. 18
 - 1. No one takes His life from Him but He lays it down of himself.
 - a. Jesus was never a victim, He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God to the gruesome death on the cross. Acts 2:23
 - b. Jesus was not killed by man but laid His life down, He dismissed His spirit when the appointed time came by saying, "It is finished", and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit. 19:30
 - c. Jesus was not powerless in the grave for He had power to raise His life up again even as He declared, "Destroy this temple and in three days, I will raise it up again", this He was saying about the temple of His body in the resurrection. 2:20-21
 - d. Jesus was not acting alone but in one with the Father, having received this very commandment from Him having submitted Himself to the incarnation and willfully limited Himself for a time, only doing the works of the Father as He had stating all along.
- D. The good shepherd's relation to the hearers. vs. 19-21

15

1. The conclusion was that there was a division among the Jews because of His sayings. vs. 19
 - a. This was a common outcome. 6:52, 7:43, 9:16
 - b. The Jews primarily identify the Pharisees whom Jesus had addressed Himself to. 9:40-41, 10:7
 - c. The surrounding people were divide also without doubt thought out text is not stated.
2. The many in the crowd were convinced Jesus had a demon and sarcastically told the other, "Why do you listen to Him?" vs. 20
 - a. This was not the first time they had said He had a demon. 7:20, 52, 8:48
 - b. This was not the first time they had treated Him sarcastically. 7:35, 8:41
3. The others in the crowd were judging that the words Jesus spoke were not of one who had a demon and validated their statement by their observation, "Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"
* The answer is rhetorical, NO!!!
4. The obvious conclusions that are implied in the discourse directly and indirectly are
 - a. The blind man's testimony is valid, Jesus did heal him and He is Messiah.

14

- b. The blind man was one of the sheep of Jesus for he heard and responded to His voice.
- c. The Pharisees were blind spiritually and they were still in their sins.
- d. The person alone must examine the words of Jesus and decide for themselves who He is and it will determine their eternal destiny by their choice.

This is the application by Jesus to the Pharisees regarding their spiritual blindness!

Conclusion

The discourse of the good shepherd that was declared to the Pharisees is laid out in a three-fold progression of good inductive bible study which helps us understand it by three things.

- I.** The proclamation, what was said!
- II.** The interpretation, what it means!
- III.** The application, how it applies to people and life!