

John 10:1-21 – The Good Shepherd

The beginning of chapter 10 is a continuation of chapter 9. The Pharisees thought that they were fine the way they were. They thought that they were seeing and not blind. Jesus said that because they thought that they were fine (not blind) that their sin remained. There were three groups of people in the Old Testament who were set apart by God. The priests and Levites were set apart to serve God and attend to the temple and the sacrifices. After God rejected Saul as king, God promised that David's kingdom would not end (2 Samuel 7:8-17). God set apart descendants of David to be king over Israel. The third group of people were prophets. These people were individually called and set apart to speak God's words. They came from different tribes and backgrounds. Jesus was Prophet, Priest and King. The Pharisees didn't necessarily belong to any of these groups. Who died and made them king? They appointed themselves as religious leaders of the Jews. In chapter 8, Jesus said that their father was the devil and that, like the devil, they were murderers and liars. In chapter 10, Jesus called them out as illegitimate leaders who were stealing, killing and destroying the flock of God.

Read John 10:1-6.

The first thing we need to establish in this passage is whether or not this is a parable or an allegory? A parable or metaphor has one point. An allegory can have multiple points. If this is a parable / metaphor then there is only one question to ask. What is the one point of this passage? The word that John used was not the word "parable" that is used by the other three gospels. I take this passage as an allegory like "Pilgrim's Progress". (10:6)

The second question we should ask is why is Jesus talking about a shepherd and sheep? Before Jesus came, who was the most famous shepherd in all of Israel's history? What promise did God make to that shepherd?

This passage mentions a shepherd, sheep, a sheepfold, a door, a doorkeeper and thieves. What is true of a good shepherd and his relationship to his sheep? What role does the doorkeeper play? Who are the thieves and robbers? What is true of these thieves and robbers? What is the meaning of this allegory?

How did the people react to Jesus' discussion of the shepherd and his sheep? (10:6)

Read John 10:7-21.

What "I am" statement did Jesus make in verses 7 and 9? What is the significance and meaning of this statement? This statement should not be confused with the other "I am" statements that Jesus made in this passage.

What was the second “I am” statement which Jesus made in verses 11 and 14? What is the significance and meaning of this statement?

Jesus mentioned thieves and robbers in verses 8 and 10. Are the thieves and robbers in contrast to Jesus as the door or Jesus as the shepherd? Who are the thieves and robbers who came before Jesus? What three things do the thieves and robbers do?

Why did Jesus come according to verse 10?

In verse 12, the hired hand is introduced into the shepherd and sheep allegory. How is a hired hand different from a shepherd who owns the sheep? Who do the hired hands represent?

What is true of the Good Shepherd? (10:11, 15, 17, 18)

How is Jesus’ relationship with the Father like Jesus’ relationship with his sheep? (10:14-15)

What is the meaning of the “other sheep” which will be united into one flock with one shepherd? (10:16-17)

What is the significance of Jesus saying that no one will take his life from him? What does it mean that Jesus will lay down his life for the sheep and then take his life again? (10:17-18)

How did the people react to Jesus? What impact did the healing of the man born blind have on some of the people? (10:19-21)