

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

John: Believing On The Christ, The Son Of God, For Eternal Life

Part XXVI: Trusting In Christ For His Illuminating Contrast Of False And True Spiritual Shepherds (John 10:1-21)

I. Introduction

- A. The Apostle John wrote in John 1:11 that when Jesus came unto His people Israel, they generally did not trust in Him, and a significant reason for this rejection was the darkness in their spiritual leaders, or "shepherds."
- B. John 10:1-21 shows Jesus illuminated this fact in teaching that is very instructive for our era (as follows):

II. Trusting In Christ For His Illuminating Contrast Of False And True Spiritual Shepherds, John 10:1-21.

- A. Following His critique of the Pharisees on their spiritual blindness that had led them errantly and abusively to excommunicate the healed man in John 9:18-41, Jesus gave the John 10:1-19 discourse on the Good Shepherd.
- B. This discourse *exposed* the *contrast* between Israel's false shepherds and the true shepherding work of Jesus:
 - 1. Jesus contrasted Israel's false shepherds with His ministry by a *morning* shepherding scene, John 10:1-5:
 - a. John 10:1-2 presented Jesus as Israel's true shepherd Who in the morning entered the walled enclosure that would hold several flocks of sheep at night and that was guarded by a doorkeeper to protect the flocks at night to keep thieves and predators out of the safe enclosure, Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 309.
 - b. Israel's false shepherds had climbed the wall in violation of the Law to get to the sheep to serve their selfish interests where Jesus had come to Israel righteously, and the Father, the Porter, had opened to Him.
 - c. The sheep would heed the voice of the true shepherd and not false shepherds, so as a shepherd called out to his flock, his flock would separate from the other sheep that did not belong to him, with the man's own flock following him out to pasture, *Ibid.* Similarly, those in Israel who followed Jesus belonged to God where those who did not were unbelievers, not part of the true spiritual flock of God, John 10:3-5.
 - 2. Jesus contrasted Israel's false shepherds with His ministry by a *daytime* shepherding scene, John 10:6-10:
 - a. Those who heard Jesus' morning shepherding illustration did not understand it, so He began to contrast Israel's false shepherds with His ministry by using a daytime shepherding scene, John 10:6-7a.
 - b. As such, when a shepherd led his sheep out to the daytime pasture, he brought them to an enclosure near the pasture by which the sheep could either exit for food or enter for protection from dangers and fears the sheep faced, and the shepherd would act as the door to the enclosure to protect the sheep, *Ibid.*, p. 310.
 - c. Jesus thus likened His ministry to that of the true shepherd through whom God's people could enter or exit for safety or pasture needs opposite the false shepherds who were only thieves and robbers that took destructive advantage of the flock for gain, John 10:7b-10a. Only under Jesus' ministry did God's people have abundant spiritual life in striking contrast to Israel's plight under false shepherds, John 10:10b.
 - 3. Jesus contrasted Israel's false shepherds with His ministry by an *evening* shepherding scene, Jn. 10:11-18:
 - a. As evening fell, animal predators lurked about, threatening the sheep and their shepherd, *Ibid.* A false, selfish shepherd like a hired hand would flee if facing a life-threatening lion where a good shepherd would protect the sheep, risking his life to fight the predator of the flock (as David did, 1 Samuel 17:34-36), *Ibid.*
 - b. Accordingly, Israel's false shepherds had selfishly abandoned the task of protecting God's flock where Jesus would even give His life on the cross to save that flock from sin and hell, John 10:11-15, 17-18.
 - c. Jesus further said He had other sheep He needed to bring into His current fold, "the Gentiles who would believe and, with converted Jews, form one spiritual body (Eph. 2:16)," Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to John 10:16. This prediction did **not** condone the ecumenical union of Christians with lost religious folk as is often taught as that violates the John 10:4 picture of the *separating* of the *true* from the *false flock!*
- C. Tragically, when Jesus gave this discourse, the spiritually blind, lost men of Israel could only debate whether He had a demon and was insane or whether He was of God since He had healed the blind man, John 10:19-21.

Lesson: *Jesus contrasted the shepherding practices of Israel's false religious leaders with His ministry, noting the false shepherds assumed leadership unbiblically, they selfishly abused the flock and failed to protect it where Jesus assumed His shepherding role Biblically under the Father's leading, He nurtured the flock and even selflessly gave of His life for the preservation of the flock and furthermore expanded it to include all other true believers.*

Application: *(1) May we trust in Christ for eternal life, finding in Him abundant life. (2) May we who lead God's flock today NOT do as Israel's leaders did in selfishly seizing leadership roles unbiblically, abusing the flock and leaving it unprotected, but like Jesus selflessly stick to our Biblical assignments to nurture and protect God's flock.*