

JEREMIAH ON SHEPHERDS

Lesson Nine

“Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of my pasture!” declares the Lord. Therefore this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend my people:

“Because you have scattered my flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,” declares the Lord. “I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the Lord. 23:1-4

Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding. 3:15



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Precious Julia watching over a little one. I love the look on her face: a shepherd's look.

Jesus defines what a good shepherd is: Sacrificial. Devoted. Fearless. Protective.

Lessons and Questions

From the testimony of Jeremiah, the example of David, and the life of Jesus, we learn that God highly values good shepherds.

Unfortunately for the people of this time, good shepherds were nowhere to be found. Rather than being sacrificial, they were selfish; rather than being devoted, they were despots; rather than being fearless, they were fake; rather than being protective, they were pernicious. As a result, the people suffered, wandered, scattered, and many died. In Jeremiah 50:6,7, God says:

“My people have been lost sheep; their shepherds have led them astray and caused them to roam on the mountains.

They wandered over mountain and hill and forgot their own resting place.

Whoever found them devoured them; their enemies said, ‘We are not guilty, for they sinned against the Lord, their verdant pasture, the Lord, the hope of their ancestors.’”

God asks His followers to be good shepherds. He told Simon Peter to feed and care for His sheep in John 21:15-17. Thus being a good shepherd is an expression of love for God, a clear way we can respond to His love.

Is your love for God evident in the way you treat people?

Would the people closest to you describe you as being filled with the fruit of the Spirit (love,

joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, listed in Galatians 5:22,23)? What a good shepherd you would be if you were like that!

Do you think **God** would say that you are a good shepherd? Pray with Him about this, and listen to Him. This is important!

In what ways can you grow as a shepherd of God’s people? What are your strengths now as a shepherd?

Consider how Jesus tends our souls. What does the scripture mean when it calls God our “verdant pasture”?

“God, Shepherd of our souls, we long to love you deeply. Truly You are our resting place, our safe place, our good pasture. When we wander, seek us; when we stray, find us. We ask for You to be our shelter and our first love. Thank You, Abba Father! Amen.”