

The Good Shepherd

Key Verse: “*When he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.*”
—John 10:4

Selected Scripture:
John 10:1-18

declared, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.”—John 10:1-3

The “porter” in the foregoing passage seems well to represent the Law Covenant arrangement. Its exacting requirements were fully satisfied by Christ and culminated in his sacrificial death.

Our Key Verse reflects the beautiful intimacy between Christ and his church throughout the Gospel Age. The sheep who obey his voice are pictured as receiving guidance by following the Master’s voice as revealed in the Scriptures. These would be known by the shepherd individually, as he calls them by name and leads them.

IN THIS LESSON, OUR LORD

uses symbolic language to reprove the Pharisees for their failure to help and encourage those depicted as sheep to accept Christ as their true shepherd, and inherit the long promised kingdom of God.—Matt. 23:13

Jesus addressed the Pharisees in this matter, and de-

There have been many false voices in the world that have sought to imitate the Shepherd's call. These have sought to draw away the sheep by using deceptive theories that do not harmonize with the teachings of Jesus or the Apostles. Any attempt to attain salvation through self-righteousness or great works, ignoring the value of Christ's ransom sacrifice on behalf of all mankind, is a distortion of God's plan for human salvation. The Bible declares unequivocally that no individual can have a relationship with the Father without first coming to Christ. He is the satisfaction for the sins of the church, as well as for the whole world.—John 14:6; I John 2:2

Throughout this Gospel Age, Christ has been caring for and blessing his sheep. These are described as a "little flock." (Luke 12:32) The individuals of this class are generally held in disesteem by the worldly-wise.

Nevertheless, there is a future provision made for recovering even those who presently oppose the true sheep of this Gospel Age. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."—John 10:16

The Good Shepherd gave his life as "a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." Thus, he made provision for offering salvation to those who would become his sheep as part of an earthly fold during God's kingdom.—I Tim. 2:4-6

When Christ comes in his glory, during the Millennial reign with his church of the present Gospel Age sheep-fold, he will judge the human family in righteousness. (Matt. 25:31-33) All who then practice willing obedience to the divine arrangements in force at that time, when the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth, will prosper and ultimately gain everlasting life. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Rev. 22:17 ■