

THE GOOD SHEPHERD
PART 1
SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON

Say - Welcome to Sabbath School class, let's bow our heads and ask God for understanding as we study today. This lesson focuses on the instructions God gave His people concerning distinguishing the Good Shepherd from a false shepherd.

Say - A shepherd has a very important job for he is responsible for caring for his sheep. Sheep have a special characteristic among animals that it quickly hears and learns the voice of the shepherd and follows no one else. A sheep cannot help itself and so depends entirely on the shepherd for all its needs.

Say - Sheep cannot survive on thistles, thorns, cactus or stony ground but must have places for cool and refreshing rest and an abundance of rich green pasture land and clear cool water.

Say - A good shepherd guards his sheep at all times from predators. The shepherds of the Bible carried a sling to protect his sheep as well as himself from the wild animals. He also carried a rod, or stick, about 30 inches long with a knob on the end and a staff which looked like a walking cane usually with a crook or curve on one end.

Say - The Bible speaks about many followers of God who were shepherds such as Abraham, Lot, Isaac, Jacob, Rachel, Moses, David and the prophet, Amos, as well as many others. Jacob's sons, making up the twelve tribes of the Nation of Israel, had many shepherds among them. From the tribe of Judah came a young boy named David, an ancestor of Jesus, who was a very good shepherd.

Say - The Bible tells us when the shepherd David prepared to leave his sheep to go fight the Philistine, Goliath, he found a "keeper" for his sheep. David never left his sheep unattended for he loved and cared for his sheep day and night, I Sam. 17:20.

Say - King Saul was not sure about David fighting Goliath for he said, "... for thou art but a youth, and (Goliath) a man of war from his youth", I Sam. 17:33. But David explained, "He was a keeper of his father's sheep and one day there came a lion and a bear and took a lamb out of (his) flock". David continued, "I went after him and smote him and delivered (rescued the lamb) out of his mouth".

"When he rose against me, I caught him by the beard and smote him and slew both the lion and the bear", I Sam. 17:33-35.

Say - David continued, "Goliath, the Philistine, will be as one of them (the lion or the bear) because he has defied the armies of the living God", I Sam. 17:36. David said "Moreover, the LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine", I Sam. 17:37.

Say - Just as David was a good shepherd and watched carefully over his sheep, he spoke of the Good Shepherd who watched over him. He said, "The LORD (the one true God) is my shepherd (my teacher, ruler, friend); I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures (for rest): he leadeth me (with care) beside the still (quiet refreshing) waters. He restoreth (repairs) my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness (justly, the way of life pleasing to God) for his name's sake (for His people's welfare). Yea, though I walk through the valley (dense forests, steep valleys or narrow gorges) of the shadow of death (of extreme danger), I will fear no evil (God is not limited by anything): for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort (console, symbolic of power and authority) me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over (blessings abundantly and we may feast with God our Shepherd inspite of the turmoil or enemies around us). Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever (eternal life)" Ps. 23.

Say - The good news is the same shepherd David spoke of in the verses above is Jesus Christ who is the Good Shepherd who cares, guides and feeds all of us who, called of God, have chosen to follow and obey Him! Just as David was a good shepherd over his flock, he became a great king, a just king, over God's flock, the Nation of Israel. We will find out in "Part 2" of this lesson the role David will be given in the soon coming Kingdom of God.

Say - What was our Good Shepherd Jesus Christ like when He walked the earth nearly 2000 years ago? The Bible tells us, "Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues (gathering places), and preaching the gospel (good tidings) of the (coming) kingdom (of God), and healing every sickness and every disease among the people".

Say - The Bible continues, "When he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them (had love and pity for them), because they fainted (had grown weary and were in a hopeless condition),

and were scattered abroad (abandoned and neglected), as sheep having no shepherd (someone to care for them to feed them physically and spiritually) and He began to teach them many things", Matt. 9:35, 36.

Say - He taught them the law of His Father; He taught them the TRUTH about how to have eternal life. He taught them about repentance and baptism and how His Holy Days reveal the "Path of Life" for all mankind. He taught them the importance of His special day, His Sabbath Day, and the "royal law" of how to treat our fellowman and how to love our enemies. He taught His people the rules about clean and unclean meats and how to have a healthy vibrant life, Matt. 5:17, Acts 28:23.

Say - Thankfully our Good Shepherd, Christ, taught us how to determine a good shepherd from a false one as He sat on the Mt. of Olives two days before He died and taught the multitudes. It weighed heavily on His mind. He said, "...take heed that no man deceive you for many (not few) shall come in My name saying I am Christ and shall deceive many, Matt. 24:5.

Christ, the Good Shepherd, said to His flock, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold (symbolic of the spiritual enclosure of God's true people), 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". (Christ is the "door", He is the only divine Shepherd, His way is the ONLY way to eternal life. Anyone who teaches another philosophy or man-made religion other than Christ's and believes they are teaching the truth are deceived. Many religions are mixed with truth and error but our Shepherd teaches us to "Prove ALL things" by the Word of God, I Thes. 5:21 then we will be solidly grounded in "The Way" which leads to eternal life and will not be deceived by a false shepherd.)

Christ continued, "To him the porter (Christ) openeth (called by God to freely come to Him); and the sheep hear his voice (they recognize the true Shepherd): and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out (leads them out of darkness of death into light (truth, life). And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger (false shepherd) will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers (false doctrines)". (Not knowing the true Shepherd, many will follow every wind of doctrine and the only way we will know His voice, His teachings, is if we study and ask God for understanding. When called of God and choose to follow Him and our knowledge is based on the teachings and

laws of God, we become the "elect", no longer dumb sheep and we will no longer be deceived, Matt. 24:24.)

Christ continued, "This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. (The Pharisees were not willing to understand what Christ spoke so He explained it in simple terms for them because they were His people also.) Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: (Christ is not talking about the prophets such as Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, etc. whom God sent to His people but the ones who are self-appointed clergy and say they come in the name of Jesus but do not teach His teachings.) but the sheep did not hear them (because "the spirit of Christ was in them", I Pet. 1:11).

Continuing on, Christ said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved (our goal), and shall go in and out, and find pasture (will find peace, rest, comfort and living water, symbolic of eternal life). The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy (all the false shepherds, but), I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly", (In contrast to them, "follow Me only" He is saying). Why? Read on.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. (Which He already has given His life for His sheep to save them from utter destruction but read on and notice what a false shepherd does.) But he that is an hireling, and not the (good) shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming (someone with false doctrine), and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them (because they are not diligently seeking the truth of God), and scattereth the sheep. (The false shepherd, when bad times come is not going to risk his life for his sheep. He will take off, why is this so? Read on.) The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep (It's that simple).

In contrast, I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep (He loves them, "No greater love than to lay my life down for my sheep", Jn. 17:10), and am known of mine. (How does He know us? If we keep His commandments and keep the covenant/agreement we made with Him when we were baptized and we will know Him if we know and keep His commandments.) And I give unto them eternal life (His spirit); and they shall never perish (no second death), neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand", John 10:1-14, 27, 28.

Say - Today, we do not call our leaders of the flock shepherds, we call them preachers, ministers, Rabbis, or Priests. There are many churches and denominations filled with philosophies of men and

God looks down and sees a "scattered flock, His people, His bride".
What does God think?

Say - God not only calls them false shepherds but says, "You hypocrites, well did Esaias (Isaiah) prophesy of you, saying, this people draweth nigh (near) unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain (useless, He doesn't hear them) they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. (Doctrines mixed with truth and error creates confusion which is why God tells us, "Come out of (Babylon) where the false shepherds and religion of confusion are taught and the way to eternal life is not known).

Say - In our world today, not only are there many denominations and many Gods proclaimed to millions around the world but there are also many different doctrines all teaching different ways to obtain eternal life. But what does the Good Shepherd tell His sheep, His followers? He said, there is, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all", Ephesians 4:5, 6.

Say - When we are under a righteous shepherd/leader, not a false one, it will be a pleasant experience. The Bible says it this way, "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain", 2 Sam. 23:4. "...For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear (respect) Him (and honor His teachings, not change them). "(Just) like as a father pitieth (has loving concern for) his children, so the LORD pitieth (has loving concern for) them that fear him", Psalms 103:1-14.

Say - Thankfully our Good Shepherd has called ministers in the Church of God who teach his flock faithfully the Truth of God. Who teach the only way to eternal life is still proclaimed in God's Holy Days which reveal the "Path of Life" for all mankind.

Say - In "Part 2" we will study what gives us wisdom to follow the Good Shepherd; we will study more about identifying a false shepherd and most importantly the return of Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, to His lost sheep and how He will gently care for all our needs. It is a beautiful story.

MEMORY VERSE

"WHEN HE SAW THE MULTITUDES, HE WAS MOVED WITH
COMPASSION ON THEM...
THEY WERE SCATTERED ABROAD AS SHEEP HAVIN NO SHEPHERD
... HE BEGAN TO TEACH THEM MANY THINGS" Matt. 9:35, 36.

MEMORY VERSE FOR TOTS

"HE HAD COMPASSION ON THEM..."
MATTHEW 9:35, 36

"COPY AND PASTE ON LINK BELOW" FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
A "SLING" AND "GOLIATH".

<http://www.christiananswers.net/dictionary/sling.html>

PLEASE FIND AN APPROPRIATE PICTURE TO COMPLEMENT THE
STORY OR MEMORY VERSE AND BELOW ARE THE MEMORY VERSES
TO BE CUT OUT AND PLACED WITH THE PICTURE FOR THE SABBATH
SCHOOL NOTEBOOK.

MEMORY VERSE

"WHEN HE SAW THE MULTITUDES,
HE WAS MOVED WITH COMPASSION ON THEM...
THEY WERE SCATTERED ABROAD AS SHEEP HAVIN NO SHEPHERD
... HE BEGAN TO TEACH THEM MANY THINGS"
Matt. 9:35, 36.

MEMORY VERSE FOR TOTS

"HE HAD COMPASSION ON THEM..."
MATTHEW 9:35, 36

BELOW IS THE SABBATH SCHOOL LESSON FOR TOTS

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

YOUNG DAVID WAS A GOOD SHEPHERD; HE LOVINGLY CARED FOR
HIS SHEEP;
HE PROTECTED THEM FROM THE LIONS AND THE BEAR WHILE
THE SHEEP AND NEW BABY LAMBS WERE FAST ASLEEP.

BUT ONE DAY AN INNOCENT LITTLE LAMB, A LION HUNGRILY
GRABBED FROM YOUNG DAVID'S FLOCK;
AFTER THE LION DAVID RAN AND GRABBED THE LITTLE LAMB FROM
THE JAWS OF THE LION, THERE WAS NO TIME TO TALK!

ANOTHER DAY ENEMIES OF ISRAEL, THE PHILISTINES, WERE
CHARGING ON ISRAEL TO MAKE WAR;
THEIR CHAMPION FIGHTER, GOLIATH, EVERYONE WAS AFRAID OF
EXCEPT FOR DAVID, HE WONDERED WHAT FOR.

DAVID SAID, "AGAINST GOLIATH I'LL TAKE A STAND FOR THE GOD
OF ISRAEL HE HAS DENIED";
"THE GOD WHO RESCUED ME OUT OF THE PAW OF THE BEAR WILL
DELIVER ME AND GOLIATH HE SHALL DIE"!

THE DAY OF BATTLE HAD COME AND IN THE VALLEY DAVID AND
GOLIATH SQUARED OFF;
"GOLIATH, YOU COME TO BATTLE WITH A SWORD AND A SPEAR
BUT I'VE COME TO YOU IN THE NAME OF GOD OF ISRAEL".

OUT CAME A STONE FROM THE SLING DAVID CARRIED AND ROUND
AND ROUND IT SPUN;
GOLIATH FELL WITH HIS FACE TO THE GROUND; WHEN THE BATTLE
WAS OVER, DAVID, THE ISRAELITE, HAD WON.

YOU SEE DAVID HAD A GOOD SHEPHERD TOO WHO WATCHED OVER
HIM LOVINGLY EVERYDAY;
HIS NAME IS JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD, WHO WILL GUIDE YOU
AND ME TO ETERNAL LIFE, HE IS THE ONLY WAY!

COMPASSION AND KINDNESS AND HOW TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES
JESUS THE GOOD SHEPHERD TAUGHT;
HIS HOLY DAYS, THE "PATH OF LIFE" THEY SHOW, HE TAUGHT US TO
KEEP THEM WHILE THE FALSE SHEPHERDS SAY, NOT.

I'LL NOT FOLLOW THE FALSE SHEPHERDS OF THE WORLD FOR
THE TRUTH OF GOD THEY DO NOT KNOW;
I WILL STAY IN THE TRUE SHEPHERD'S FOLD AND NO FALSE
DOCTRINE TO ME CAN THEY SHOW. By B. R. B.