

Introduction: The Shepherd's Responsibilities

Last week I did what was considered to be my shepherdly duties, in protecting the congregation from what I considered to be a toxic teaching...a theory that was ultimately infecting the congregation, creating confusion and division.

Because of our position against such a belief, I have heard the following being said about me personally:

- I am planting seeds of hate and prejudice – against this view that others support.
- I don't trust our people to attend other congregations or churches.
- I don't trust God to guide His flock.
- One person even stated - “We are His flock, not some organizations”

Keep in mind that these comments are coming from people who have no shepherd that they have placed themselves under.

Why am I telling you these things?

Because it is possible that you may hear them, and I would rather it be from me than through a grapevine that may not produce the best fruit.

Sheep without a shepherd can be a very dangerous thing.

1. timid, fearful, easily panicked

2. dumb stupid, gullible

3. very vulnerable to fear, frustration, pests, hunger

4. easily influenced by a leader, by the shepherd

5. stampede easily, vulnerable to mob psychology

6. little or no means of self-defense; can only run

7. easily killed by enemies

8. the shepherd is most effective, calming influence

9. jealous, competitive for dominance

10. constantly need fresh water, fresh pasture

11. have very little discernment in choosing food or water

12. best water source is early morning dew

13. perverse, stubborn - will insist on their own way , even eating poisonous plants or drinking dirty water

14. easily "cast" - flipped over on their back, unable to right themselves

will die of starvation if not turned over by shepherd; helpless

15. frequently look for easy places to rest

16. don't like to be sheared, cleaned

17. too much wool can cause sheep to be easily "cast"

18. creatures of habit; get into "ruts"

19. need the most care of all livestock

20. need to be "on the move"; need a per-determined plan, pattern of grazing

21. totally dependent of shepherd for every need

22. need "rod and staff" guidance

Today, I want to look at the role of a shepherd for Adonai's congregation.

What should you expect of a Shepherd?

How many doctrines are out there today that may be supported by scripture yet the scripture used may not be rightly divided or taken out of context.

I shared with you last week how in order to support a theory, terminology was created and applied to scripture in order to support the theory.

Example – Gentile Israel was created and applied to Ephesians 2 and Romans 11.

From the beginning of my journey some 13 years ago, I have always believed it necessary to be under leadership.

Even after our summer tour of 2005, when we visited 14 churches, looking to find a new home, we ultimately didn't find what we were looking for, so I settled to be someplace for a time until Adonai revealed our next home.

Even up until the time we came to Maine, we were under a shepherd that prepared us in starting this congregation.

At a time when Moshe is near the end of his life,

Num 27:16 "Let Adonai, God of the spirits of all human beings, appoint a man to be over the community,

Num 27:17 to go out and come in ahead of them, to lead them out and bring them in, so that Adonai's community will not be like sheep without a shepherd."

Num 27:18 Adonai said to Moshe, "Take Y'hoshua the son of Nun, a spiritual man, and lay your hand on him.

Num 27:19 Put him in front of El`azar the cohen and the whole community, and commission him in their sight.

We know Yeshua is our Great Shepherd – John chapter 10.

This isn't in dispute.

However, what I want to emphasize today is that Yeshua instructed Kefa to take care of and feed His sheep.

Yeshua asked Kefa three times...do you love me. Upon Kefa's affirming answer Yeshua instructed him

Feed My Sheep
Shepherd My Sheep
Feed My Sheep
(John 21:15 - 17)

1Pe 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the stake, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness – by his wounds you were healed.

1Pe 2:25 For you used to be like sheep gone astray, but now you have turned to the Shepherd, who watches over you.

1Pe 5:1 Therefore, I urge the congregation leaders among you, as a fellow-leader and witness to the Messiah's sufferings, as well as a sharer in the glory to be revealed:

1Pe 5:2 shepherd the flock of God that is in your care, exercising oversight not out of constraint, but willingly, as God wants; and not out of a desire for dishonest gain, but with enthusiasm;

1Pe 5:3 also not as machers domineering over those in your care, but as people who become examples to the flock.

The word "*macher*" is Yiddish for "big shot, real operator," with the overtone of trying to take charge; what you might call an overlord.

You put your faith and trust in the one who shepherds you.

You do this with any congregation you attend.

To say that only Yeshua is your Shepherd also goes against what He says...

He is our final authority, the Great Shepherd, however, He has also instructed others to tend to His flock.

Yeshua did as Moshe did...

Through the counsel of his father in-law, Moshe raised up leaders under him to lead the people.

Moshe was the final authority for the people.

He was in direct communications with Adonai.

Likewise, Yeshua chose those to be His talmadim...teaching them the ways of Adonai, ultimately preparing them to lead His congregation:

What trait does one usually possess when they are unwilling to be led by a shepherd of a congregation?

Pride.

What happens to one who chooses to be shepherdless?

They are more susceptible to be easily lead to teachings that will lead them away...false prophets.

We are warned 8 times and encouraged once:

Matthew 7:17

Matthew 24:11

Matthew 24:24

Mark 13:22

Luke 6:26

2 Peter 2:1

2 Peter 2:10 (false teachers)

1 John 4:1

1 John 4:4

What are the responsibilities of the shepherd?

Eze 34:1 The word of Adonai came to me:

Eze 34:2 "Human being, prophesy against the shepherds of Isra'el. Prophesy! Tell them, the shepherds, that Adonai Elohim says this: 'Woe to the shepherds of Isra'el who feed themselves! Shouldn't the shepherds feed the sheep?"

Eze 34:3 You eat the choice meat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, and you slaughter the best of the herd; but you don't feed the sheep!

Eze 34:4 You don't strengthen the weak, heal the sick, bandage the broken, bring back the outcasts or seek the lost; on the contrary, you tyrannize them with crushing force.

- Feed the sheep (Deuteronomy 8:3)

Both physically and spiritually, through the Word of Adonai.

- Strengthen the weak

Strengthen through study of Adonai's Word.

- Heal the sick

Whether it is physical or spiritual healing as a result of wounds from others

- Bandage the broken
- Bring back the outcasts
- Seek the lost

Does this sound familiar?

These are the very things that Messiah Yeshua did.

Throughout the Gospels, we witness Him doing these very things and ultimately training others to continue...

What happens when the shepherd doesn't do what they are supposed to do?

At a time when judgment was to come against those who were supposed to shepherd Israel...

Eze 34:5 So they were scattered, without a shepherd, and became food for every wild animal — they were scattered.

Eze 34:6 My sheep wandered around aimlessly on every mountain and hill; yes, my sheep were scattered all over the land, with no one to search for them or look after them.

Eze 34:7 " Therefore, shepherds, hear the word of Adonai:

Eze 34:8 "As I live," Adonai Elohim swears, "because my sheep have become prey, my sheep have become food for every wild animal, since there was no shepherd, since my shepherds didn't look for my sheep, and instead my shepherds fed themselves but not my sheep,"

Eze 34:9 therefore, shepherds, hear the word of Adonai!

Eze 34:10 Adonai Elohim says, "I am against the shepherds. I demand that they hand my sheep back to me. I will not allow them to feed the sheep, and they won't feed themselves either. I will rescue my sheep from their

mouths; they will be food for them no longer."

Eze 34:11 " 'For here is what Adonai Elohim says: "I am taking over! I will search for my sheep and look after them, myself.

This is Messiah.

Eze 34:12 Just as a shepherd looks after his flock when he finds himself among his scattered sheep, so I will look after my sheep. I will rescue them from all the places where they were scattered when it was cloudy and dark.

Eze 34:13 I will bring them back from those peoples, gather them from those countries and return them to their own land. Then I will let them feed on the mountains of Isra'el, by the streams and in all the livable places of the land.

Eze 34:14 I will have them feed in good pastures; their grazing ground will be on the high mountains of Isra'el. They will rest in good grazing grounds and feed in rich pastures on Isra'el's mountains.

Eze 34:15 Yes, I will pasture my sheep; and I will let them rest" says Adonai Elohim.

Eze 34:16 "I will seek the lost, bring back the outcasts, bandage the broken, and strengthen the sick. But the fat and the strong I will destroy — I will feed them with judgment."

Eze 34:17 " 'As for you, my flock,' Adonai Elohim says this: 'I will judge between sheep and other sheep, between rams and billy-goats.

Eze 34:18 Wasn't it enough for you to feed on the best pasture and drink from the clearest water? Did you have to trample the rest of the pasture and foul the remaining water with your feet?

Eze 34:22 therefore I will save my flock; they will no longer be prey; and I will judge between sheep and other sheep.

Eze 34:23 " 'I will raise up one shepherd to be in charge of them, and he will let them feed — my servant David. He will pasture them and be their shepherd.

Joh 10:3 This is the one the gate-keeper admits, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep, each one by name, and leads them out.

Joh 10:4 After taking out all that are his own, he goes on ahead of them; and the sheep follow him because they recognize his voice.

Joh 10:5 They never follow a stranger but will run away from him, because strangers' voices are unfamiliar to them."

Ultimately, I believe it to be my responsibility to do what was mentioned earlier...

- Guide
- Protect
- Feed

Mat 26:31 Yeshua then said to them, "Tonight you will all lose faith in me, as the Tanakh says, 'I will strike the shepherd dead, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'

Mat 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, accompanied by all the angels, he will sit on his glorious throne.

Mat 25:32 All the nations will be assembled before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates sheep from goats.

Mat 25:33 The 'sheep' he will place at his right hand and the 'goats' at his left.