

Wednesday, (October 28) November 11

Jehovah-Rohi – The Lord is My Shepherd; I AM the Good Shepherd

[START] We've been in a study on Wed nights on the covenant names of God as revealed to us by Him.

Covenant (Vows) – What God did was not without considering what our greatest needs were: namely, provision, healing, peace, His presence, His righteousness, His holiness, victory.

I did the same thing when I covenanted in marriage. I didn't fulfill them well but my vows to Rene considered her greatest needs in a husband, that is, Love, Attention, Protection, Security/Commitment, Appreciation/Value (Honor), Compassion, Partnership

“I, ___, take thee, ___, to be my wedded husband/wife,

[Over everyone else, I choose you, and will continually remind myself of those reasons]

to have and to hold,

[In whatever you go through, in me you will always have someone to go to, to share your fears and joys, and to be held]

from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health,

[No matter the future, I will give physical, mental, emotional, financial, and spiritual support]

to love and to cherish,

[I will be devoted to you alone]

till death do us part,

[In my covenant to you, I consider it irrevocable while on the earth]

according to God's holy ordinance; and thereto I pledge thee my faith [or] pledge myself to you.”

Minister (to Groom) Will you have this woman as your lawfully wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of Matrimony? Will you love her, comfort her, honor, and keep her, in sickness and in health; for richer and for poorer, forsaking all others, and keep yourself only to her, so long as you both shall live?

Groom: *I do.*

There was another need the Lord considered in His covenant with us...

We need a Shepherd!

A covenant requires diligence, and there is no greater picture of this than a shepherd.

The life of a shepherd:

Judea has a rocky plateau over 30 miles long from Hebron to Bethel and some 15 miles wide. It wasn't good for growing crops. There wasn't many grassy patches but this is where sheep normally grazed during the day. For the shepherds it was difficult. They were constantly outside in the cold and heat. The sheep were always wandering off and there was nothing to hold them in like a fence of wall. The plateau had a number of crevices throughout that was dangerous if one was to fall in. Sheep were easily lost and were regular prey from animal predators and thieves who stole them for their wool and meat. It required a vigilant watch if the sheep were to survive and thrive.

When the shepherds came back to the fold [DEFINE] at night, they were weather-beaten and tired.

The covenant name, **Jehovah-Rohi**, was revealed to a shepherd, David. See Psalm 23:1

Psalm 28:9 – “Save Your people and bless Your inheritance; be their Shepherd also, and carry them forever [they knew what this meant].” And also, Psalm 95:6-7, “Come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For He is our God and we are the people of His pasture and the sheep of His hand.”

Psalm 80:1 (Psalm of Asaph, 1 Chronicles 15:16-19, David's chief singers/musicians; he wrote 12 of the psalms). It was fully understood that the Lord was the Shepherd of Israel – “Oh, give ear, Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock; You who are enthroned above the cherubim, shine forth! Also from Asaph, Psalm 79:13, “So we Your people and the sheep of Your pasture will give thanks to You forever; to all generations we will tell of Your praise.”

Psalm 78:52 (Asaph reflecting history under Moses...God did it!) – But He [God, not Moses who was His instrument – “You led Your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron” Psalm 77:20] led forth His own people like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock; He led them safely, so that they did not fear; but the sea engulfed their enemies.” Asaph also knew how God would use men as shepherds of His people: vs. 70-72 states, “He also chose David His servant and took him from the sheepfolds; from the care of the ewes with suckling lambs He brought him to shepherd Jacob His people and Israel His inheritance. So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart and guided them with his skillful hands.” We'll get to this later...

Why (do we need a Shepherd)?

We are likened unto sheep! More than 40 passages refer to us as sheep (and God as our Shepherd).

Why the analogy? It would have been understood well in the agrarian societies of biblical history. The Jews had always had a sheep/Shepherd relationship with God and the leaders of Israel, as under-shepherds, were judged for how they had wickedly shepherded the children of Israel.

So...we are sheep?

- Timid, fearful, easily panicked Matt 9:36; will flee from the stranger because they don't know his voice; a shepherd must comfort and lead the sheep to comfortable places
- Dumb, stupid, gullible (easily deceived) 1 Peter 2:25; Isaiah 53:6 (strays); stubborn; can ruin a field unless prodded by the shepherd to move. "All we have gone astray...like sheep!"
- Mass-minded – they flock; separation from the flock brings fear, panic, and stress (Matt 18:12 leaves the 99 to go and search for the lost 1); stampede easily, vulnerable to mob psychology; easily moved (sheep dog) but can follow to its own peril (ex. In Eastern Turkey, about 1500 unattended sheep fell off a cliff while the shepherds were eating breakfast far away from the flock. The first 400 fell to their death in a ravine, but the remaining 1100 were saved because the first 400 broke the fall. The first 400 sheep were a big, fluffy cushion for the other sheep).
- Little or no means of self-defense; can only run, but not extremely fast or very far
- Easily killed by enemies
- Jealous, competitive for dominance
- Easily "cast" (flipped over on their back); cannot turn back over by itself
- Needy

Loyal – mixed flocks will separate out to their own shepherds (John 10:7, 27) I AM the door!

Must be anointed – protects ears and nose from insects; salves scrapes and cuts; protects from hurting themselves when butting against each other for authority

Need a shepherd! But not just any shepherd – John 10:11, the Good (kalos [more than morally; beautiful, excellent in all things, majestic, attractive, lovely, magnificent, here in contrast to all others], not just agathos [morally good]) Shepherd. Grammatically, "I AM [claim to deity] the Shepherd, the good one."

Now, Ezekiel prophesied against the shepherds of Israel in Chapter 34 (vss. 1-6f) and of the coming Good Shepherd (vss. 23-31). "David" – the messianic line...

Jesus is the Good Shepherd!

He's Good because (see below)

He dies for the sheep

He loves the sheep

He makes one fold of the sheep (Ephesian language!)

Today's text:

John 10:1-18 – Context: Ch 9-10 is the same event starting with the healing of a man born blind; the pharisees had already sought to kill Him 3 times;

Vs. 1-2 – the sheep fold

Vs. 3-4, 7, 9 – the door (doorkeeper)

Vs. 5, 8, 10a – the strangers (thieves and robbers)

Vs. 10b-11, 14-15 – the Good Shepherd (lays down His life for the sheep, vs. 17-18)

Dies for the sheep (sacrifice)

Knows (loves) the sheep (provide, protect, invest in; get to “know”)

Makes one fold of the folds of sheep (enlarge the fold; seek the lost sheep)

Vs. 12-13 – the hired hand

Vs. 16 – sheep of another fold

Jesus is distinguishing Himself from the scribes and pharisees who are false shepherds (God challenged the false shepherds of Israel throughout scripture – Ezekiel, Jeremiah)

Final considerations:

Jesus as Shepherd and sheep (Lamb of God)

We as sheep and shepherds (disciples) - see John 21:15-17 when Jesus reconciles Peter...
“Shepherd (feed) My sheep” (see 1 Peter 5:2, 4)

Benediction:

Hebrews 13:20-21 – “Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.