

A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS
JJJ. Christ's Presentation As God's Shepherd
(John 10:1-21)

I. Introduction

- A. Israel's prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel had condemned Israel's false shepherds who had spiritually misled God's flock and abused them, but in place of the false shepherds, they foretold the coming of God's Shepherd.
- B. Jesus presented Himself as that Shepherd in John 10:1-21, revealing Himself to be the True Shepherd, the Good Shepherd, the Only Shepherd and the Obedient Shepherd (J. Dwight Pentecost, The Words and Works of Jesus Christ, 1991, p. 292-296), so we view this passage for our insight, application and edification:

II. Christ's Presentation As God's Shepherd, John 10:1-21.

- A. The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel attributed much of Israel's spiritual failure that led to God's punishment of the Babylonian Captivity to the failure of her leaders. (Ibid., p. 292-293; Jer. 50:6; 23:1-2; Ezek. 34:1-10)
- B. God responded to Israel's leadership failure by causing Jeremiah to predict that the Branch of David, "the Lord Our Righteousness" (Jer. 23:5-6) would shepherd Israel, and God moved Ezekiel to predict that God Himself would shepherd and restore the nation's scattered flock. (Ezekiel 34:15; Ibid., p. 293)
- C. In fulfillment of these prophecies, Jesus Christ came to Israel presenting Himself as God's Shepherd:
 - 1. Christ presented Himself to Israel as God's **True** Shepherd, John 10:1-6:
 - a. Jesus had come to Israel through the door (John 10:1-2), the right way that Scripture predicted as to where He would be born (Micah 5:2), when (Daniel 9:24-27), the circumstances of His birth (Isaiah 7:14), the ministry He would have (Isaiah 61:1-2), the miracles He would perform (Isaiah 35:5-6) and that He would be presented to Israel by a forerunner (Malachi 3:1), whom Jesus in John 10:3a called the gatekeeper, Ibid.
 - b. As Jesus spoke to His true flock, leading them, they followed Him (John 10:3b-4) because they would not follow the voice of strangers like Israel's sinful religious leaders (John 10:5-6), so Jesus had led His disciples without working within the godless institutions of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, Ibid., p. 294.
 - 2. Christ presented Himself to Israel as God's **Good** Shepherd, John 10:7-11:
 - a. Many false Messiahs and false teachers had come to Israel in the first century A. D. (Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to John 10:8), but only in Christ did believers find spiritual nurture, John 10:7-9.
 - b. The religious leaders offered salvation by oppressive traditions, rituals and sacrifices, but Jesus gave salvation to all who just trusted in Him as the Good Shepherd. (John 10:10-11; Pentecost, op. cit., p. 295)
 - 3. Christ presented Himself to Israel as God's **Only** Shepherd, John 10:12-16:
 - a. Jesus in John 10:12-13 likened Israel's religious leaders to hired hands who assumed responsibility for the flock not out of any concern for the flock, but only out of a concern for themselves. (Ibid.)
 - b. In contrast, Jesus as God's Good Shepherd personally related to His flock, He would lay down His life for them and He would unite Gentile believers with Hebrew believers to form His Church, John 10:14-16.
 - 4. Christ presented Himself to Israel as God's **Obedient** Shepherd, John 10:17-18:
 - a. God the Father loved Jesus because He laid His life down for the flock that He might take it again, v. 17.
 - b. Indeed, in obedience to the Father, no one took Christ's life from Him, but He laid it down and would take it again in obedience to the Father's command that He do these things, John 10:18.
- D. The peoples' response to these presentations of Christ as God's Shepherd to Israel was mixed, John 10:19-21.
 - 1. On the one hand, many people, including Israel's religious leaders, "recognized that Christ spoke these words against them" and they "were infuriated by what they heard. They dismissed Christ's words as those of a demon-possessed maniac (v. 20)." (Pentecost, op. cit., p. 296)
 - 2. On the other hand, "many accepted His words and remembered the miracle of the healing of the blind man. These were convinced that Jesus could not have been demon-possessed." (John 10:21; Ibid.)

Lesson: *In response to the failed spiritual shepherding of Israel's leaders, God sent His Son Jesus Christ as God's True, Good, Only and Obedient Shepherd to lay down His life and take it again for the salvation of God's people.*

Application: *(1) May we believe in Christ as our True, Good, Only and Obedient Shepherd for salvation and fulfillment in this life and in eternity. (2) May we leaders who function as Christ's "under shepherds" as 1 Peter 5:4 would put it function NOT with the unbiblical selfishness of Israel's false shepherds, BUT RATHER heed Jesus' example of truth, goodness, unity and obedience to God to shepherd God's people for His glory. (3) May we believers in the pew identify and follow godly leads who focus on truth, goodness, unity and obedience to the Lord.*