

Doctrine of Shepherd

1. The role of the shepherd is mentioned early in *Scripture*, dating back to the days of Adam and Eve.
 - *Genesis 4:2 And she [Eve] again bare his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*

2. The shepherd would usually carry a scrip or bag.
 - *1 Samuel 17:40 And he [David] took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.*

3. The shepherd carried a staff and rod.
 - *Leviticus 27:32 And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.*
 - *Psalms 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.*

4. The shepherd would dwell in a tent while tending the flock.
 - *Song of Solomon 1:8 If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.*
 - *Isaiah 38:12 Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me.*

5. Both male and female members of the family might act as a shepherd.
 - *Genesis 29:6 And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.*
 - *1 Samuel 16:11 And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all thy children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.*
 - *1 Samuel 17:15 But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Bethlehem.*

6. Prosperous shepherds would employ hired help.
 - *1 Samuel 17:20 And David rose up early in the morning, and left the sheep with a keeper, and took, and went, as Jesse had commanded him; and he came to the trench, as the host was going forth to the fight, and shouted for the battle.*

7. The hired help was not always reliable.

- *John 10:12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.*

8. Good shepherds possess notable characteristics.

- A good shepherd knows his sheep.

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

- A good shepherd does not drive his sheep but leads them.

Psalms 77:20 Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Psalms 78:52 But made his own people to go forth like sheep, and guided them in the wilderness like a flock.

Psalms 80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.

- A good shepherd will seek out a good pasture for the sheep.

1 Chronicles 4:39 And they went to the entrance of Gedor, even unto the east side of the valley, to seek pasture for their flocks. And they found fat pasture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for they of Ham had dwelt there of old. And these written by name came in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and smote their tents, and the habitations that were found there, and destroyed them utterly unto this day, and dwelt in their rooms: because there was pasture there for their flocks.

Psalms 23:2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

- A good shepherd will count the sheep when they return from pasture so that none are lost or missing.

Jeremiah 33:13 In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth them, saith the LORD.

- A good shepherd will watch over the flock by night.

Luke 2:8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

- A good shepherd will show tenderness to the ewes in lamb, and to the young.

Genesis 33:13 And he said unto him, My lord knoweth that the children are tender, and the flocks and herds with young are with me: and if men should overdrive them one day, all the flock will die. Let my lord, I pray thee, pass over before his servant: and I will lead on softly, according as the cattle that goeth before me and the children be able to endure, until I come unto my lord unto Seir.

- A good shepherd will defend the flock when attacked by wild beasts.

1 Samuel 17:34 And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God. Amos 3:12 Thus saith the LORD; As the shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear; so shall the children of Israel be taken out that dwell in Samaria in the corner of a bed, and in Damascus in a couch.

- A good shepherd will search out any sheep lost or straying.

Ezekiel 34:12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

Luke 15:4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing.

- A good shepherd will attend to the sheep when one is sick.

Ezekiel 34:16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

9. The occupation of a shepherd held a negative image in the ancient world. The shepherd was an abomination to the Egyptians.

Genesis 46:34 That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians.

10. The image of a shepherd is illustrative.

- There is the shepherd image of God. God is presented in Scripture like a Shepherd who leads his people.

Psalms 77:20 Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

Psalms 80:1 Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.

- There is the shepherd image of Christ. Christ is the Good Shepherd.

Ezekiel 34:23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

Zechariah 13:7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

Hebrews 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

- There is the shepherd image of kings. Political leaders are to perform God's will, provide for the general welfare of the populace and defend the nation against all enemies.

Isaiah 44:28 That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.

Jeremiah 6:3 The shepherds with their flocks shall come unto her; they shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place.

Jeremiah 49:19 Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan against the habitation of the strong: but I will suddenly make him run away from her: and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? For who is like me? And who will appoint me the time? And who is that shepherd that will stand before me?

- There is the shepherd image of ministers of the gospel.

Jeremiah 23:4 And I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them: and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall they be lacking, saith the LORD.

- As spiritual shepherds, ministers of the gospel are to perform the following duties.
- Spiritual shepherds are to search out straying sheep, like Christ seeking the lost.

Ezekiel 34:12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

Luke 15:2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them. 3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying, 4 What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? 5 And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. 6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

- Spiritual shepherds are to take care of their people with tenderness thereby reflecting the tenderness of Christ.

Isaiah 40:11 He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

Ezekiel 34:13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. 15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. 16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.

- There is the shepherd image of those who are ignorant and foolish, especially bad ministers.

Isaiah 56:11 Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.

Jeremiah 50:6 My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their resting place.

Ezekiel 34:2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

Ezekiel 34:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them.