

The Heavenly Calling - Part 11

by T. Austin-Sparks

The sermon emphasizes the importance of being a true sheep of the Lord, hearing his voice, and following him spontaneously, and highlights the bond between the Lord's sheep and him as the realization of belonging to him.

Duration: 50:01

Scripture: Psalm 77:20, Psalm 78:52, Psalm 95:7, Isaiah 53:6, John 10:19, Acts 20:28-30, Romans 10:16, Hebrews 13:20

Topics: "Heavenly Calling"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the concept of God as the good shepherd and his relationship with his people. He references various passages from the Bible, including Psalms 77:20 and 78:52, as well as Acts 20. The preacher emphasizes that Israel's downfall was their rejection of God as their shepherd and their turning to other gods. He also highlights the transition from the old Israel to the new Israel in the Gospel of John, specifically focusing on chapter 10, which is known as the chapter of the good shepherd and his sheep. The sermon concludes with the idea that God had to forsake Israel due to their rejection of him as their shepherd.

Transcript

Welcome to the 10th chapter of the Gospel by John. In John's Gospel chapter we are seeing that behind everything in the Gospel by John is a Jewish background. And we are seeing that in this Gospel there is the movement from the Jewish background to the new Israel foreground.

The old dispensation of Israel to the new dispensation. In this Gospel there is a movement, the closing down of the history of Israel, the opening up of the history of Israel. So that there is a background and a foreground.

In the 16th point of chapter 13 is marked, everybody knows, it is the chapter of the Good Shepherd. Of the chapter is the word, I am the Good Shepherd. By the hand of God he let for his own people, take heed unto yourselves, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the jealous wolves who brought again from the dead, the great shepherds of earth and the earth.

But there should be very much that the Lord looked upon them because of their treason with the false sheep. They failed to fulfill that. They are the Lord's ownership of the flock.

He is everywhere. By the hand of God for it is everywhere. They were the sheep of his past.

How angry he was when he was very jealous. He claimed the ownership of his sheep. He owned them. They were his sheep. Everything that he, the God who had so loved, the God who had been so jealous for him. He had done everything that he could do for him.

Never, never, Israel is in that. They are without a shepherd. Was their repudiation of. They turned to other gods. They made other gods. They followed the. They repudiated the soul of all we like. It is impressive to note. They refused to be. This is why they turned away. All we like. Everyone away from the. Their own way was to choose other shepherds. To notice that in some. Where this matter. And the sheep. You notice today. Oh that you would hear his voice. Harden not your heart. We are the sheep. But the sheep can. Have very hard heart. And refuse to hear the shepherd's voice. So to his sheep of. Oh today. That you would not harden your heart. Do you know friends. That that very word is quoted. At least three quoted. Today if you will hear his voice. Harden not your heart. So it was. Hardness of heart. That lost Israel their shepherd. The refusal to hear his voice. Paul said in that letter to the Romans. You have only got to read this one chapter. John 10. It's a terrible thing. The good shepherds who give it his life. He has said I give unto my sheep. And all these wonderful things about himself. You notice what happens at verse 19. There arose a division among the Jews. And many of them the Jews said. He hath a devil. I give my life for the sheep. That they might have life. I give unto them eternal life. They shall never perish. All these wonderful and beautiful things. And the Jews said. Now do you understand my God. We have turned everyone to our own way. We have gone away from the shepherd. In other words we have said. We will not. That is the Jewish bet. Into that situation. Jesus came as the good shepherd. You can feel the very atmosphere. You can feel how they hated him. Presently they will take counsel that they may kill him. He was right when he called them wolves. Who would destroy the sheep. Right into that atmosphere Jesus came.

And I am going to lead my sheep. I am going to take my flock out. Out of this false flock.

He leads the nucleus of his new flock. He begins with a nucleus. Out of the old.

A dividing word. I did not read the whole of that statement. There arose a division.

Many of them said. He hath a devil. He is mad.

Why hear him. Others said. These are not the sayings of one.

Can a devil open the eyes. He is evidently getting some other sheep. There are those out of the old flock.

Who are inclined to war. They are the new beginning. The newest royal.

Right out of that whole setting. And we see that nucleus. On the day of Pentecost.

Beginning with 12. Then 120. And then more than 500 brethren at once.

And then 3000. And then 5000. The new flock.

Well here you see. Jesus is building upon the Old Testament principles. If he cannot take the Old Testament sheep.

He will take up the principle of shepherd and sheep. He will carry it over into his new Israel of dispensation. Well the position is perfectly clear.

There you have it. Quite clearly. One Israel is being put in its place.

The earthly is going. The heavenly is coming in. Now we have to note some of the marks of these true sheep.

Jesus says here. If you have any doubt as to whether you are one of the Lord's sheep. Here it is.

You can prove it. And the Lord knows himself by these marks. You know.

It may be a red mark. Or it may be a blue mark. But on their sheep they put their own mark.

Many flocks of sheep are sent out onto the mountain. And they all get mixed up. They wander far far over the mountain.

The day comes when the sheep. Now here is a very wonderful thing. Those dogs know.

God knows the sheep that belong to his master. He gives a word to the dog. He goes over the mountain.

Picking up all the sheep. The dog brings back just those sheep. They are known.

Now Jesus is saying here. Because there are many. They know.

Illustration. The gospels are but the illustrations. If you go on into the rest.

You will read a great deal about. He that hath an ear to hear. Let him hear what the Spirit.

Because that is not our outward ear. The faculty of spiritual intelligence. An ability to hear what no one else can hear.

My sheep know when I speak. My sheep have an ear for me. My sheep are always listening.

Hear my voice. Every truly born again child of God. Is given a faculty of the Holy Spirit.

Today if you will hear his voice. Pardon not your heart. There are poor kind of people.

True sheep hear his voice. This of course is the whole of that. A great man in Israel.

He had a high. And a great education. Jesus had to say to him.

If I had spoken to you earthly things. And you have not understood. When Jesus said.

You must be born again. He hadn't any spiritual intelligence. He was like a little child.

Although a great teacher. I have a little. About four years of age.

He said to a mother. Mother will you get me out all my baby toys. That we put away.

Oh she said. My teacher said. I must be born again.

Well that's a little child. You might expect that of a little child. Here is the great big grown up Nicodemus.

You might expect. Spiritual intelligence belongs to the born again ones. And you and I. Are given that gift.

With our birth. We have a whole new set. Of faculties.

To hear. To see. To feel.

And I repeat. It is about that very thing. That the New Testament speaks.

When it speaks of spiritual understanding. That is what Jesus meant. They know me.

Mark of doubt these sheep is. My sheep. Follow me.

Now that is very simple in the words. It has a very deep meaning. He is compelled to go his way.

His sheep follow him. In a voluntary and spontaneous way. The Lord never has to say.

Or ought never to say. To his sheep. You must come.

The Lord is going a certain way. And his sheep see which way he is going. Of course in this part of the world.

It's just the other way round. Where sheep are concerned. I have a son who is a farmer.

And he has one of these wonderful sheep dogs. And how often we have. Heard him give the dog.

A word of command. And off the dog has gone. But the dog has never stood in front of the sheep.

And said follow me. He has got round behind the sheep. And he has driven them on.

He is running from side to side all the time. He is not letting one of those sheep get away. He is driving them on.

And if a sheep should stop. The dog quietly creeps up. And then suddenly lets his presence be known.

And that sheep goes on. Well these sheep have to be driven. Never like that in the east.

Jesus takes the principle of government from the. He says I don't drive my sheep. I never have to get behind them and force them to go on.

I never have to send a dog after them to bite their heels to keep them going. My sheep hear my voice. And they follow me.

It's a spontaneous movement of the heart to go after the Lord. Now let us apply the law. These are the marks of his sheep.

Are you one of his sheep? Do you really hear the Lord speaking in your heart? Do you listen for his voice? Do you seek to have your life guided by that voice of the spirit within? Speaking to you through the word of God. Speaking to you through the circumstances of your life. Speaking to you through your sorrows.

The Lord always having something to say to us. There are very few things that happen to the Lord's sheep which do not have some meaning. It is for us to seek to know what it is the Lord is saying to us.

The government of the life of the Lord's sheep is by hearing his voice. Do you know anything about this? And what about this spontaneous response? Just a heart that readily goes after the Lord. We have only to know that the Lord wants something and we respond with a hearty yes, Lord.

Now I must close. Time has gone extra quickly tonight somehow. What is the bond between us, his sheep, and him, the shepherd? It is the same bond as existed between old Israel and the Lord.

The same principle is taken over. It is the principle of his ownership. That which unites us with the Lord is the realization that we belong to him.

That he is the absolute owner of our lives. To quote another scripture, ye are not your own, ye were bought with a price. And we have the mark of the Lord put upon us which is the seal of his ownership.

And Paul tells us that the seal is the Holy Spirit. Sealed with the Holy Spirit. When you look at a seal you know who the box belongs to.

That says that this is the property of a certain person. And he gives us his spirit as the seal that we belong to him. What a sheep the apostle Paul was.

He said, let no man trouble me. That is, try to draw me away. For I bear branded in my body the marks of Jesus.

The marks of Jesus mean that I belong to him. He said to the centurion on the ship when he was traveling to Rome, the angel of the Lord stood by me this night, whose I am and whom I serve. The true sheep of the Lord are never ashamed to say, I belong to the Lord Jesus.

He owns my life and everything that I have. I am completely committed to him. That is a true sheep.

Well these are the marks of his new Israel. And you can now understand why we have these words which have been the key to all our meditation. Wherefore holy brethren, companions of a heavenly calling, companions of Christ.

There is a kind of companionship between this shepherd and his sheep. They are not just animals. They are friends.

Wonderful friendship between the Lord Jesus and his own. Companions of a heavenly calling. We pray.

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