



LESSON 3

WHO'S WHO?

THE LOST SHEEP

We have learned in lesson two that the word **Gentiles** should have been translated "nations" or "people," with the context determining the particular people being spoken of. We can now proceed to the task of identifying what people Paul referred to in Acts 18:6 when he said, "...from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles (**ethnos**, i.e. nations)." Also, Jesus said in Acts 9:15 that Paul "...is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles (**ethnos**, i.e. nations) ." Just who were these Gentiles Jesus was referring to? And, when Jesus said to His disciples in Matthew 28:19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations (**ethnos**)," who were these nations He was speaking of? Are these three passages identifying the same people? If so, who are they?



In Matthew 15:24, Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." In John 10:27, Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." Then, in John 21:16-17, Jesus twice tells Peter to "Feed my sheep." Who are these sheep Jesus is referring to? Is it possible that these "sheep" are the same people as the "Gentiles" and "nations" mentioned above?

SHEEP

The word **sheep** appears in both the Old and New Scriptures. Many times this term is used to describe a certain group of people. Let's examine the use of this word in Scripture and see who it refers to.

Old Testament Usage

In the Old Testament the word **sheep** is translated from six different Hebrew words. The Hebrew word most often used is Strong's #6629 (approximately 80 per cent of the time). The Englishman's Hebrew Concordance indicates that the two primary translations of this word (#6629) are "sheep" and "flock." Let us now look at some scripture verses using this Hebrew word.

Strong's Concordance Dictionary:

"**tsōn** or **ts'ōwn**, a collective name for a *flock* (of sheep or goats); also figuratively (of men)."

Hebrew to English Translation:

#6629  sheep
flock(s)

The book of Psalms was the hymn book and prayer book of Israel and later of the early Christians. The different authors wrote the Psalms to and about God's people Israel. Let's examine a few verses and see how the Psalmists described God's people.

The name "Psalms" comes from the Greek word **Psalmoi** which means "songs." Sometimes the book of Psalms is called the Psalter. It has also been called the "Hebrew Prayer and Praise Book."

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. In Psalms 79:13, God's people Israel are called the "_____ of thy pasture."
2. In Psalms 95:7, God's people are called the "**sheep** of his _____."
3. In Psalms 100:3, the Israel people are called the **sheep** of God's _____.
4. In each of the verses above, the word **sheep** was translated from what Hebrew word?

The above verses clearly show that the Psalmists used the word **sheep** in speaking about the Israel people. Let's now look at the writings of the Israelite prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah to see if they, too, made the same comparison.

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Isaiah 53. (This is a tremendous prophecy of Jesus' sacrifice for Israel's sin.) In

5. verse 6, the prophet Isaiah compares God's people Israel to _____ that "have gone astray" (speaking of their iniquity: lawlessness).

Read Jeremiah 23:1-8. (This is a powerful prophecy of the regathering of the Israel people and King Jesus' rule over His kingdom.)

6. In verse 1, the God of Israel speaks against "the pastors that _____ and scatter the **sheep** of my pasture!"
7. In verse 2, the God of Israel says to the pastors who were supposed to feed His people, "Ye have scattered my _____."
8. In verse 3, God says He "will gather the remnant of my **flock** out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their _____."
9. In Jeremiah 50, verses 6 and 17, God refers to His people Israel as "_____ sheep" and "_____ sheep."
10. In the five verses above, the words "sheep" and "flock" are translated from what Hebrew word? _____ .

The prophet Ezekiel also likened the Israel people to sheep. Let's take a look at the thirty-fourth chapter of Ezekiel for some examples.

Ezekiel, like Isaiah and Jeremiah, was an Israelite prophet. He went to Babylon in the second deportation in 597 B.C. and spent his entire prophetic career there.

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Ezekiel 34.

1. In verse 2, God asks the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves, "should not the shepherds feed the _____?"
2. In verse 3, God says to these same shepherds, "ye _____ them that are fed: but ye feed not the **flock**."
3. God says in verse 6, "My _____ wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my _____ was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them."
4. In verses 8 and 9, one word appears seven separate times and each time is translated from the Hebrew word **tson** (#6629). That word is _____
5. In verses 10 and 11, who does God say will search out His **sheep**, as a shepherd seeketh out his **flock**, and deliver them? _____
6. From verse 12 to the end of the chapter, how many times do the words **sheep** and **flock** appear? _____
7. Verse 31 says "And ye my **flock**, the **flock** of my pasture, are _____."
8. Who are these **sheep** (people) of God? (verse 30) _____

The Israelite prophet Micah also used "**sheep**" figuratively when writing about the Israel people.

FIND THE ANSWERS

9. In Micah 2:12, who is compared to **sheep**? _____
10. _____
In Micah 7:14, he calls a people "the **flock** of thine heritage." Who do you suppose

From the Scriptures we have just examined, it is clear that God often refers to His people Israel as **sheep**. He called them the "**sheep** of His pasture" and His "**flock**." He also said that they had "gone astray," were "lost" and "scattered." He said He would search His **sheep** and "seek" them out and give them pastors and shepherds to "feed" them. Let us see if any of these ideas are to be found in the New Testament.

It is interesting to note that in the Old Scriptures the words **pastors**, **shepherds** and **feed** are all translated from forms of the Hebrew word **raah** (#7462). Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon defines this word as "to feed a flock, to pasture, to tend." It further states that the figurative meaning is "to govern, to rule, to nourish, to feed." In the New Scriptures the words **pastors** and **shepherds** are also translated from the same Greek word **poimen** (#4166). Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon defines this word as "a herdsman, especially a shepherd." The figurative meaning is given as "the presiding officer, director, of any assembly."

New Testament Usage

In the New Testament the word **sheep** is translated from the Greek word **probaton**, #4263 in Strong's Concordance. It appears 41 times. Let's look at a few of these occurrences.

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon defines **probaton** as "a follower." (A probaton is someone who follows a master. The master can be good or bad.)

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. In Matthew 10:6, Jesus told His disciples to go to "the _____ **sheep** of the house of _____ ." (In Jeremiah 23:4, God said He would send shepherds to feed His sheep.)
2. What good news did Jesus want His disciples to proclaim to His sheep? (verse 7)
_____ (Could this be considered as "feeding the sheep?")
3. In Matthew 15:24, Jesus said, "I am not sent but unto the lost _____ of the house of Israel." (Isaiah 53, Jeremiah 23 and Ezekiel 34 all prophesied of Jesus' coming to save His people (Israel) who had gone astray and were lost.)
4. In 1 Peter 2:25, Peter says, "For ye were as _____ going astray (following the wrong masters); but are now returned unto the _____ and Bishop of your souls."
5. In 1 Peter 1:1, we see that Peter was writing to "the strangers _____ throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." (Could these be part of the "scattered" and "lost" **sheep** (Israel) spoken of in Jeremiah and Ezekiel?)
6. In Hebrews 13:20, Jesus is called "that great _____ of the **sheep**." (Could this be the same shepherd spoken of in Ezekiel 34:23 and 1 Peter 2:25?)
7. In John 21:16-17, Jesus twice tells Simon Peter to "_____ my **sheep**." (Could this be what Peter was doing when he wrote to the "scattered strangers" in 1 Peter?)

Similarities Between the Sheep of the Old and New Scriptures:

1. Both had "gone astray." (followed wrong masters)
2. Both were "scattered" and "lost."
3. Both were to be "fed" by shepherds (pastors).

By examining these New Scriptures and comparing them to the Old Scripture passages, we see a possible connection between the people called **sheep** (Israel) in the Old Testament and the people called **sheep** in the New Testament. The similarities are summarized in the diagram at the left.

Let's continue our study by looking at additional New Scripture verses that may give us more evidence of a connection between these two.

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read John 10

1. In verses 1-5, Jesus tells a parable in which He says, "...the _____ follow him (shepherd): for they know his voice." (Compare with Isaiah 53; Jeremiah 23; Ezekiel 34)
2. In verse 7, who does Jesus say is the "door of the **sheep**?" _____
3. According to verse 9, who is "saved" and finds "pasture" if they enter in by Jesus?

4. In verse 10, Jesus said He came "that they might have _____."
5. According to verse 11, Jesus identifies Himself as the "good _____" who "giveth his life for the **sheep**."
6. Jesus says, in verse 14, "I am the good shepherd, and know my _____, and am known of mine."
7. In verse 27, Jesus says, "My **sheep** hear my voice, and I know them, and they _____ me."

"Having had my attention directed last night to the words in John X.3, I asked my man if it were usual in Greece to give names to the sheep. He informed me that it was, and that the sheep obeyed the shepherd when he called them by their names. This morning I had an opportunity of verifying the truth of this remark. Passing by a flock of sheep, I asked the shepherd the same question which I had put to the servant, and he gave me the same answer. I then bade him call one of his sheep. He did so, and it instantly left its pasturage and its companions, and ran up to the hands of the shepherd, with signs of pleasure, and with prompt obedience which I had never before observed in any other animal.

"It is also true that in this country, 'a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him.' The shepherd told me that many of his sheep were still wild, that they had not learned their names, but that by teaching them they would all learn them."

(A passage from *Researches in Greece and the Levant*, as quoted by J. G. Wood in *Bible Animals*, 1877 edition, page 197.)

Considering the preceding verses in chapter 10 of John, we see a very close similarity to Isaiah 53, Jeremiah 23 and Ezekiel 34. It appears that the **sheep** mentioned in these three Old Scripture books may be the same **sheep** Jesus talks about in John 10: Israelites. Additional evidence of this connection can be found in the meaning and use of the word **lost**.

LOST

Old Testament Usage

In the Old Testament the word **lost** appears 17 times and is translated from six different Hebrew words. On nine occasions the word is rendered from the Hebrew word **abad** (#6). Let's look at some examples of the use of this word.

Gesenius' Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon defines the Hebrew word **abad** as follows:

1. To be lost, to lose oneself, to wander.
2. To perish, to be destroyed.
3. To be ready to perish, to be wretched, unfortunate.

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. In Psalms 119:176, we read, "I have gone astray like a **lost** _____ : seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments."
2. In Jeremiah 50: 6, we read, "My people hath been _____ sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray" (speaking of the Israelites in captivity in Babylon).
3. Speaking to the shepherds of captive Israel, God says in Ezekiel 34:4, "...neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was _____."
4. In Ezekiel 34:16, speaking again to captive Israel, God says, "I will _____ that which was **lost**, and bring again that which was driven away."
5. God warns His people for their iniquity and prophesies their captivity in Jeremiah 15:7, "...I will destroy my people, since they return not from their ways." What Hebrew word is **destroy** translated from? _____
6. God, tells the Israel pastors in Jeremiah 23:1, "Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" The word **destroy** is translated from what Hebrew word? _____

In light of the above verses, we can see that the words **lost** and **destroy** are translated from the same Hebrew word. We have also seen that these words are used in reference to Israel's wickedness in turning away from God, their captivity and scattering among other nations. Let's now turn to the New Testament and see how the word **lost** is used.

New Testament Usage

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon defines the Greek word **apollumi** as follows:

1. To destroy, to put out of the way, put an end to, ruin.
2. To perish, to be lost, ruined, destroyed.
3. To destroy, to lose, to stray from.

In the New Testament the word **lost** appears 16 times and is translated from four different Greek words. On 13 occasions the word is rendered from the Greek word **apollumi** (#622). Let's look at some examples of the use of this word.

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Jesus declared in Matthew 15:24, "I am not sent but unto the _____ sheep of the house of Israel."

2. In the verse above, to what specific **lost** people was Jesus sent? _____

Read Matthew 18:10-14

3. In verse 11, Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to _____ that which was **lost**."

4. The word **perish** in verse 14 is translated from what Greek word? _____

Read Luke 19:1-10

5. In verse 10, Jesus said, "For the Son of man is come to _____ and save that which was **lost**." (compare with Matthew 18:11)

6. Who was Jesus speaking to in verses 9 and 10? _____

7. What did Jesus call him in verse 9? _____

8. In Luke 9:56, Jesus said, "For the Son of man is not come to **destroy** men's lives, but to _____ them."

9. In the verse above, the word **destroy** is translated from what Greek word? _____

Read Mark 8:34-38

10. In verse 35, the word **lose** is used twice. What Greek word is it translated from in each case? _____

11. In verse 34, Jesus is speaking to those that would follow Him. Who did Jesus say in John 10:27 would follow Him? _____

From the verses above, we can get a feel for the meaning of the Greek word **apollumi**, translated as **lost**, **destroy** and **lose**. Jesus was sent to seek and save a **lost** people. He identified those people as the "House of Israel." He also said that His sheep would hear His voice and follow Him. Let us now examine three of Jesus' parables for more evidence.

Parable of the Lost Sheep

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Luke 15:1-7

1. Who is Jesus speaking to in these parables? (vs. 1) _____
2. The words **lose** and **lost** in verse 4 and the word **lost** in verse 6 are all translated from what Greek word? _____
3. The "lost sheep" that was found is symbolic of who? (verse 7) _____

Parable of the Lost Coin

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Luke 15:8-10

4. The words **lose** in verse 8 and **lost** in verse 9 are both translated from what Greek word? _____
5. The "lost piece of silver" that was found is symbolic of who? (vs. 10) _____

Parable of the Lost Son

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Luke 15:11-32

6. Being "**lost**" (from the Greek word **apollumi**—vs. 24 and 32) was likened to being _____
7. Being "**found**" (vs. 24 and 32) is likened to being _____
8. **The son** who was "lost" (dead) and was "found" (made alive—vs. 18 and 21) is symbolic of who? _____

The above three parables clearly show that **sin** caused Israel to become **lost** (spiritually **dead**; i.e. without Godly motivation). Repentance, then, indicates that they are again **found** (made spiritually **alive**). Jesus declared He was sent specifically to **Israel**. He also sent His disciples to Israel. The "lost sheep" were spiritually dead **Israelites**. When they are "found," they receive new life, become HIS **sheep**, hear HIS voice and follow HIM instead of other masters (shepherds).

What Was Lost

Now that we have identified the sheep of the Scriptures as Israel (Israelites), we can turn our attention to the question of what caused them to get "lost." Why did Jesus refer to Israel as **lost sheep**? We will now briefly look at this question from three different perspectives.

Spiritually Lost

The first aspect of this "lost" condition deals with the spiritual* state which Israel was in. The preceding three parables of Jesus gave us a strong clue of this primary problem. Let's see what additional facts the Scriptures give us about this particular type of "lost" situation.

*spiritual: *having to do with one's state of disposition.* This has nothing to do with imaginary invisible realms.

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Romans 5:12-21

1. According to verse 12, what "entered into the world" because of Adam? _____
2. As a result, what "passed upon all men?" (verse 12) _____
3. According to verse 17, death (spiritual death) reigns through Adam, but what reigns through Jesus Christ? _____
4. In 1 Corinthians 15:22, we read that in Adam all _____ and in Christ all shall be made _____ .
5. In John 10:10, what was it that Jesus said He came to bring? _____

From the above verses we can see that because of Adam's sin (refusal to follow God), man became spiritually dead (lost spiritual life). He was in a **lost** condition. We also see that Jesus came to give life: to restore that which was **lost**. This subject will be covered in more detail in later lessons.

Lost King, Nation and Covenant Relationship

The second aspect of this "lost" condition deals with the divorced (put away) state which Israel was in. God had made great promises (covenants) to Abraham and his descendants through Isaac and Jacob and entered a covenant relationship with Israel which He described as a "marriage" arrangement between husband and wife (these promises and covenants will be covered in more detail in later lessons). Because of Israel's wickedness (harlotry—following other gods: masters) and turning away from God, He divorced her and destroyed her as a kingdom by bringing about her captivity to the Assyrians and Babylonians. Thus, Israel **lost** her king, kingdom, freedom and the covenant relationship with God.

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Jeremiah 3:1-11

1. According to verse 8, backsliding Israel committed _____ and God put her away and gave her a bill of _____.
2. Who else, according to verse 8, played the harlot? _____
3. According to 2 Kings 17, Israel was taken _____.
4. 2 Kings 18:13 tells us that Assyria also took the cities of _____.
5. 2 Kings 25:1-2 and 8-10 says Jerusalem was besieged and taken captive by _____.

Read Luke 1:67-73

6. In verse 68, prophesying of the birth of Jesus, Zacharias says that the Lord God of Israel hath visited and _____ his people.
7. In verses 72-73, Zacharias prophesied that Jesus came to perform the mercy promised to Israel's fathers (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) and to remember God's holy _____ : the oath which He swore to father Abraham.
8. In Romans 15:8, who did Paul say would confirm the promises made unto the fathers (Israel's fathers)? _____ (see also Daniel 9:20-27)

From the above verses we see all Israel (both Israel and Judah) divorced and sent into captivity because of her turning away from God. She **lost** her status as a free nation and was without a king. It appears that the covenant promises made to Israel's forefathers are **lost**. However, in the New Scriptures we see Israel redeemed and the promises confirmed through King Jesus. That which was lost is found and restored.

Lost Identity

The third aspect of this "lost" condition involves the question of what happened to the millions upon millions of Israelites that were taken captive and removed from their lands. The small remnant of Israelites that returned to Jerusalem from Babylon, during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, could not possibly be all that remained of such a multitude of people. What happened to the vast majority of these people? Where could they have gone, and where can their many descendants be found today? It is as though they have been **lost**.

Is it possible that these seemingly **lost** Israelites can be identified today? Is it possible that the vast majority of them do not realize who they are? Could these people be the "Gentiles" (nations) to which Jesus sent His apostles? Could they be the "Gentiles" (nations) that the apostle Paul said he would go to? Could these so-called "Gentiles" really be the **lost sheep of the house of Israel** that Jesus came to seek and redeem? Could they be the **sheep** that would hear His voice and follow Him? Could the "Christians" of the world be these lost Israelites: God's people Israel? These questions will be the subject of our next lesson.



LESSON 3

WHO'S WHO?

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1. sheep
2. hand
3. pasture
4. #6629, **tson**
5. sheep
6. destroy
7. flock
8. folds
9. lost; scattered
10. #6629, **tson**

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1. flocks
2. kill
3. sheep; flock
4. flock
5. God Himself
6. 8 times
7. men
8. the house of Israel
9. Jacob-Israel
10. Jacob (Israel), the descendants of Abraham

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1. lost; Israel
2. the kingdom message
3. sheep
4. sheep; shepherd

Page 24 (cont.)

5. scattered
 6. shepherd
 7. feed
- (Note the connection between the words **pastors**, **shepherds**, **feed** and **pasture**. This is an area where additional study may prove most interesting.)

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1. sheep
2. Jesus Himself
3. any man
4. life
5. shepherd
6. sheep
7. follow

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1. sheep
 2. lost
 3. lost
 4. seek
 5. #6, **abad**
 6. #6, **abad**
- (Note: The words **lost** and **destroy** both come from this same Hebrew word.)

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1. lost
2. Israel
3. save
4. #622, **apollumi**
5. seek
6. Zacchaeus, a publican
7. son of Abraham (indicating he was an Israelite)
8. save
9. #622, **apollumi**
10. #622, **apollumi**
11. His sheep who hear His voice

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1. publicans and sinners
2. #622, **apollumi**
3. a sinner that repenteth
4. #622, **apollumi**
5. a sinner that repenteth
6. dead (spiritually)
7. alive (spiritually)
8. a repentant sinner

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1. sin
2. death (spiritual death; i.e. loss of Godly disposition)
3. life (spiritual life; i.e. Godly disposition)
4. die (spiritually); alive (spiritually)
5. life (both spiritually and physically)
(Note: This is NOT to deny the physical resurrection which is future. This subject will be studied in more detail in later lessons.)

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1. adultery; divorce
2. Judah (This indicates Judah also committed adultery and was divorced.)
3. captive
4. Judah
5. Babylon (under Nebuchadnezzar)
6. redeemed
7. covenant
8. Jesus Christ

Notes:

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