



### LESSON 5

# Christ's Sheep

## MODERN-DAY ISRAEL

We learned in lesson four that the Gospel of Christ and His Kingdom was preached to the descendants of dispersed Israel throughout the areas of Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy. These people were the so-called "Gentiles" (Israelites in the nations) spoken of in the New Scriptures to which Christ sent Paul and the disciples to "bear His name." From there the Good News spread throughout Europe, Britain, North America, and the rest of the world. Yes, the Christian nations of the world are the modern-day descendants of the Israel forefathers – God's chosen people. In them can be seen the marks of Israel's blessings and the unfolding of the New Covenant.

We also learned, however, that the majority of these modern-day Israelites are blinded to their true identity, to the truth of the Gospel of the Kingdom, to the present reign of King Jesus, and to the meaning of the New Covenant. They are living as "children of the flesh" rather than as "children of promise." What do these terms mean? What did Paul mean when he said in Romans 9:6 that "they are not all Israel which are of Israel"? Are all physical Israelites "children of promise" and "heirs of the kingdom"? Jesus said that His sheep would hear His voice and follow Him. Just who are His sheep? Who are the "called" and the "elect" spoken of in the New Scriptures? These questions are the subject of this lesson.



## WHO ARE JESUS' SHEEP?

We saw in lesson three that God called the Israel people "**sheep** of His pasture." Many times in the Scriptures the people of Israel are compared to **sheep** and a **flock**. Jesus also used these terms. Let us read what He had to say about "His sheep."

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Jesus says in John 10:14, "I am the good shepherd, and know my **sheep**, and am \_\_\_\_\_ of mine."
2. In John 10:27 Jesus says, "My **sheep** \_\_\_\_\_ my voice, and I know them, and they \_\_\_\_\_ me."

The above words of Jesus clearly show that His "sheep" are those that **know** Him, **hear** His voice, and **follow** Him. Do all physical Israelites today know, hear, and follow Jesus? If they do not, then by Jesus' own words they are not all His sheep. Many Israel descendants have lived in rebellion to Jesus, and many continue to do so even today. In fact, the majority of the so-called "Christians" today are following false "christs" and choosing to believe in pagan doctrines. Therefore, many Israelites are "blind."

### FIND THE ANSWERS

3. John 12:37-40 reiterates Isaiah's prophecy about faithless Israelites whose eyes were \_\_\_\_\_ and whose hearts were \_\_\_\_\_. (See Isaiah 6:10)
4. In both Romans 11:5-8 and II Corinthians 3:14-16, Paul says that blindness is upon \_\_\_\_\_ and that only a "remnant" (those who turn to Christ) obtained that which they sought after. (See also Isaiah 29:10)

Some became "sheep of His pasture," and some remained "blind and lost." How do we recognize the difference?

### FIND THE ANSWERS

5. In Luke 9:23 Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him \_\_\_\_\_ himself, and take up his \_\_\_\_\_ daily, and **follow** me."
6. In Matthew 10:38 Jesus says, "And he that taketh not his cross, and **followeth** after me, is not \_\_\_\_\_ of me."

The words **follow** and **followeth** in the above verses are translated from the Greek word *akoloutheo*. Strong's Concordance defines this word (#190) as follows: "to be in the same way with, i.e. to accompany (specially as a disciple.)" Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon indicates the fullest extent this action can take: "to cleave steadfastly to one, conform wholly to his example, in living and if need be in dying also."

Strong's definition suggests that to follow someone is to be that person's disciple. The following Scriptures illustrate this point.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

1. In Luke 14:27 Jesus says, "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my \_\_\_\_\_."
2. Jesus said in John 8:31, "If ye continue in my \_\_\_\_\_, then are ye my **disciples** indeed."

### DISCIPLE

Strong's Concordance defines the Greek word *mathetes* (#3101) as "a learner, i.e. a pupil." It comes from the Greek word *manthano* (#3129), meaning "to learn."

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon defines the Greek word *mathetes* (#3101) as "a learner, pupil, disciple: one who follows one's teaching."

In the above verses, Jesus calls those who believe on Him and follow Him **disciples**. He also says that they must "continue" in His words. This suggests that they must obey and live by His words. To do so, they must hear His voice and then follow Him. Thus, we can see a connection between **disciples** and **sheep**.

Obedience seems to be a key ingredient in being a disciple or sheep of Jesus. This can be seen from the following Scriptures.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

3. According to Jesus in John 14:15, if we love Him we will \_\_\_\_\_ His commandments.
4. In John 14:23 Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will **keep** my \_\_\_\_\_."
5. Jesus says in John 15:14, "Ye are my \_\_\_\_\_, if ye **do** whatsoever I command you."
6. Concerning Jesus' mother and brethren, Jesus states in Matthew 12:50, "For whosoever shall **do** the \_\_\_\_\_ of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."
7. Concerning entrance into the Kingdom, Revelation 22:14 tells us, "Blessed are they that \_\_\_\_\_ his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city (New Jerusalem)."
8. We are told in James 1:22, "But be ye \_\_\_\_\_ of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."

Here we seem to see a narrowing down of who Jesus' sheep are. Those who hear His voice (commandments, sayings) and follow (obey) Him are called His disciples, friends, and brethren. They are the ones who receive life and enter into the Kingdom. Do all physical Israelites today meet this standard?

Obviously not all Israelites today acknowledge Jesus Christ as their reigning King. Not all listen to His voice or follow after Him. However, some do accept Him and believe on Him.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read John 1:11-13

1. Verse 11 tells us that Jesus "came unto his own, and his own (people) \_\_\_\_\_ him not."
2. According to verse 12, Jesus gave to those who received Him and believed on His name the power (authority) to become the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
3. Verse 13 tells us that these believers were "born (begotten), not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of \_\_\_\_\_."

These verses provide additional evidence that only a portion of the descendants of Israel accepted Jesus and believed on Him. These were the ones who were begotten (regenerated with spiritual life) by God through the process of the New Covenant. Could these be the sheep that hear Jesus' voice and follow Him? If so, then not all physical Israelites (literal descendants of Jacob-Israel) could be His sheep – only part of them.

We have already seen that Jesus stated He was sent only to the "lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 15:24). Some believe Jesus was speaking only of the Israelites who were dispersed and scattered abroad among the nations beyond the Palestine area. However, Scripture disproves this.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Matthew 9:35-38

4. Looking upon the multitudes, Jesus (verse 36) was "moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as \_\_\_\_\_ having no \_\_\_\_\_."
5. In verse 37 Jesus tells His disciples, "The \_\_\_\_\_ is plenteous, but the \_\_\_\_\_ are few."

### Read Matthew 10:1-15

6. In verses 5-7 Jesus sent forth His \_\_\_\_\_ and told them to preach the Kingdom to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Judean Israelites) rather than to the Israelites in the nations (Gentiles) and in Samaria.
7. According to verse 14, would all of these lost Judean Israelites accept Jesus' disciples and hear the Gospel of the Kingdom? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

The preceding verses clearly show that there were lost Israelites in the Palestine area as well as scattered abroad in the nations. Jesus sent His disciples first to the Judean Israelites (the disciples were later sent to the other Israelites – the so-called "Gentiles"). Not all of these Israelites accepted Jesus and the Gospel of the Kingdom. Further evidence exists to show that Jesus had "sheep" (Israelites) both in Palestine and outside the area.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read John 10:14-18

1. In verse 16 Jesus states, "And \_\_\_\_\_ sheep I have, which are not of this \_\_\_\_\_."
2. Jesus continues in verse 16, "them also I must bring and they shall **hear my voice**; and there shall be one \_\_\_\_\_, and one \_\_\_\_\_."

Here Jesus is speaking of separate folds of sheep (Israelites): the Judean Israelites who first heard the Gospel, and the non-Judean Israelites scattered throughout the nations (the so-called "Gentiles"). Jesus makes a prophecy that all folds (all groups of sheep – Israelites) will hear His voice. Although His voice was "heard" in "all" folds, not every individual Israelite accepted Him and His Gospel. Not all were "sheep." Some Israelites were "goats" and "tares" (Matthew 25:32-33; 13:24-30)

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read Luke 12:31-32

3. In verse 32 Jesus refers to His sheep as a \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Also in Verse 32, Jesus states that it is God's desire to give them the \_\_\_\_\_.

In the above verse, the word **flock** is translated from the Greek word *poimnion*. Strong's Concordance defines this word (#4168) as "figuratively, a group of believers." Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon defines it as "a group of Christ's disciples." Here we see that those who believed on and followed Christ were the **little** (but growing) **flock** that received the Kingdom. Paul makes reference to this "flock" in Acts, chapter 20.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read Acts 20:17-38

5. In verse 17 Paul is speaking to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the ecclesia in Ephesus.
6. In verse 28 Paul instructs elders of the **flock** to \_\_\_\_\_ the ecclesia of God.
7. Paul warns them in verse 29 that grievous \_\_\_\_\_ would come in and draw some of the flock away with perverse teaching.

In the foregoing verses, Paul is comparing the **flock** to the **ecclesia** of God. (The word **church** is a poor and misleading translation. The Greek word is *ekklesia*, [#1577] in Strong's Concordance, defined as "a calling-out, i.e. an elect assembly." This refers to a "governmental" body rather than the typical modern-day understanding of a "religious" organization. This term will be studied in more detail in later lessons). Paul is admonishing these "elders" (shepherds) to watch over and feed these "called-out ones" and protect them from being led astray by false teaching. The word **overseers** is translated from the Greek words *skopos* (#4649), meaning "a watch (sentry or scout)" and *epi* (#1909), meaning "over." Thus, an "overseer" is one who "watches over" or guards. Rebellious, disobedient Israelites were not included as part of the **flock** or **ecclesia** – only those "called out" by God.

Peter makes reference to the **sheep** in the book of 1 Peter. In verses 1 and 2 of chapter 1, Peter states that he is writing to the "strangers" (resident foreigners – #3927 in Strong's Concordance) scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. These were dispersed Israelites living in foreign nations.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read 1 Peter, chapter 1

1. In verse 2 Peter calls these strangers " \_\_\_\_\_ according to the foreknowledge of God the Father."
2. In verses 14-15 Peter calls them " \_\_\_\_\_ children" that are "called" to be holy.
3. Peter says in verse 23 they are "being \_\_\_\_\_ again" by the word of God.

### Read 1 Peter, chapter 2

4. In verse 2 Peter refers to these Israelites as "newborn \_\_\_\_\_," desiring the "sincere milk of the \_\_\_\_\_."
5. He compares them in verse 5 to "lively \_\_\_\_\_" of a spiritual house (the Kingdom), and he calls them a "holy \_\_\_\_\_."
6. In verse 9 he says, "Ye are a \_\_\_\_\_ generation, a \_\_\_\_\_ priesthood, a holy \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ people."
7. In verse 25 Peter says of them, "For ye were as \_\_\_\_\_ going astray; but are now returned unto the \_\_\_\_\_ and Bishop (overseer) of your souls (lives)."

In these verses Peter describes the **sheep** of Christ – those that hear His voice and follow Him. They are a special group – an elect – chosen by God "out of" physical Israel to be a holy and peculiar people. They are called out of darkness through a rebirth (regeneration or spiritual resurrection). As new creatures in Christ (newborn babes), they begin a process of spiritual growth and maturation. This is the unfolding of the New Covenant promised by God to Israel in the Old Scriptures (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

## NOT ALL OF ISRAEL ARE CHRIST'S SHEEP

We are beginning to see a picture that not all of physical Israel qualify as Christ's sheep. Many Bible students have erroneously believed that those who did not hear Jesus' voice were only non-Israelites, and were, therefore, not considered "sheep" on account of their race. Scripture, however, indicates that many of the literal flesh and blood Israelites also refused to hear Jesus and rejected Him and His teachings.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read Romans 9:1-33

1. In verse 3 Paul is talking about his "brethren," his "kinsmen according to the \_\_\_\_\_."
2. He identifies these kinsmen in verse 4 as \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In verse 6 Paul says, "For they are not all \_\_\_\_\_, which are of Israel."
4. He states in verse 7, "Neither, because they (Israelites) are the \_\_\_\_\_ of Abraham, are they all \_\_\_\_\_."
5. In verse 8 Paul says, "That is, they which are the children of the \_\_\_\_\_, these are not the children of \_\_\_\_\_."
6. After referring to God's selection of Jacob over his twin brother Esau (verses 10-13), Paul states in verse 16 that the choosing is not of men but of \_\_\_\_\_.
7. In verse 18 Paul says, "Therefore hath he (God) \_\_\_\_\_ on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he \_\_\_\_\_."

In these verses we find some extremely important statements. Paul is talking about Israelites, and he says that not all those out of Israel (physical descendants of Israel) are true Israel (spiritually reborn Israelites). He further explains this by stating that being the "seed" (literal offspring) of Abraham does not make them all "children," (being a "fleshly" child does not automatically make one a child of promise). What Paul is describing here is the result of the New Covenant — the implantation of God's Law into the heart. He is saying that being a literal, physical descendant of Israel is no automatic "guarantee" of being reborn into God's Kingdom and being one of Christ's sheep. It is, however, important to realize that those chosen by God to experience this rebirth/life are called "out of" physical/dead Israel. Paul also explains, in the remainder of chapter 9, that this calling (choosing or selection) of individuals by God is purely at His discretion, as Sovereign Creator, to show His power and mercy.

Again, we see this idea of physical Israel divided into two portions: those who hear Jesus' voice and follow Him (children of God – children of promise), and those who reject Him and live in rebellion to God (children of the flesh). Both are the literal seed (offspring) of Abraham, but only one represents the sons of God. This truth is repeated over and over throughout the New Scriptures.

## ALLEGORY OF THE TWO ISRAELITES

Paul, by means of an allegory, describes two kinds of Israelites in the fourth chapter of Galatians: those in bondage (children of the flesh), and those who are free (children of promise). Both are physical Israelites, yet there is a significant difference between them.

### ALLEGORY

"A figurative sentence or discourse, in which the principal subject is described by another subject resembling it in its properties and circumstances. The principal subject is thus kept out of view, and we are left to collect the intentions of the writer or speaker, by the resemblance of the secondary to the primary subject. Allegory is in words what hieroglyphics are in painting. We have a fine example of an allegory in the eighteenth psalm, in which God's chosen people are represented by a vineyard. The distinction in scripture between a parable and an allegory, is said to be that a parable is a *supposed* history, and an allegory, a figurative description of *real* facts." (Webster's 1828 Dictionary)

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Galatians 4:21-31** (Compare to Romans 9:6-9)

1. According to verse 23 the son of the bondmaid was "born after the \_\_\_\_\_," whereas the son of the freewoman was "by \_\_\_\_\_."
2. Verse 24 tells us that Hagar (like the Old Covenant and Old Jerusalem) "gendereth to" (was born into) \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Verse 26 says that New Jerusalem (the Bride of promise) is \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Verse 29 tells us he that is "born after the \_\_\_\_\_" persecutes him that is "born after the \_\_\_\_\_."
5. In verse 30 we see that the son of the \_\_\_\_\_ woman (New Jerusalem) is to be an **heir** (of the Kingdom), while the son of the \_\_\_\_\_ woman (Old Jerusalem — flesh) is to be cast out.
6. In Galatians 5:1 Paul admonishes the children of promise to, "Stand fast therefore in the \_\_\_\_\_ wherewith Christ hath made us **free**, and be not entangled again with the yoke of \_\_\_\_\_."

Here we see a picture of unregenerate Israelites (children of the flesh) in bondage to the flesh (dead in sin) as opposed to regenerate Israelites (children of the promise) made free and thus capable of receiving the New Covenant (through faith in Christ). We see the Israelites born after the flesh persecuting those Israelites born after the spirit (just as they do today). However, we also see that the Israelites of promise are heirs (inheritors) of the Kingdom while the others are cast out. This allegory brings out two kinds of Israelites. Both are of the same seed line, the same family of people, but some are Christ's sheep and some are not. We see again that merely being a physical descendant of Israel is not enough in itself to inherit freedom and qualify as one of Christ's sheep.



## Children of Flesh vs Children of Promise

Paul makes clear the difference between these two types of Israelites. In Romans 10 he describes these "children of the flesh" who live in bondage.

### **FIND THE ANSWERS**

#### **Read Romans 10:1-4**

1. In verse 1 we see that Paul's desire and prayer for \_\_\_\_\_ is that they might be saved.
2. In verse 2 Paul says they "have a zeal of God, but not according to \_\_\_\_\_."
3. He says in verse 3 that they are \_\_\_\_\_ of God's righteousness and go about trying to establish their own \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Continuing in verse 3, Paul says that they "have not \_\_\_\_\_ themselves unto the righteousness of God."

These Israelites of the flesh were trusting in their own works to succeed in life instead of trusting Christ's instructions. They were not submitting to God – they were living in rebellion. They were racial Israelites, but they were not following after Christ. In contrast, Paul describes in Galatians 3 the "children of God" (children of promise) that live in the freedom of Christ under the New Covenant.

### **FIND THE ANSWERS**

#### **Read Galatians 3:26-29**

5. Verse 26 tells us that \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus makes one a child (son) of God.
6. We read in verse 29, "And if ye be Christ's (His sheep), then are ye Abraham's seed, and \_\_\_\_\_ according to the \_\_\_\_\_."

Here we see what makes an Israelite a son of God (heir — freeman): **faith in Christ Jesus**. Ancestry alone does not accomplish it. Faith in one's own works will not do it. Only God brings it to pass with the New Covenant administered through King Jesus. (This process will be covered in more detail in future lessons.)

## Flesh vs Spirit

The terms "flesh" and "spirit" are also used often in the Scriptures to describe these two types of Israelites: those that follow Christ and those who do not. A look at Romans 8 will illustrate the use of these terms.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read Romans 8:1-17

1. In verse 1 we see that those who are in Christ Jesus (His sheep) are those who "walk not after the \_\_\_\_\_, but after the \_\_\_\_\_."
2. Verse 4 tells us that the \_\_\_\_\_ of the law is fulfilled in those who walk not after the **flesh**, but after the **spirit**.
3. In verse 5 we read, "For they that are after the **flesh** mind the things of the \_\_\_\_\_; but they that are after the **spirit**, the things of the \_\_\_\_\_."
4. We read in verse 8, "they that are in the **flesh** cannot \_\_\_\_\_ God."
5. Verse 9 states those "in the **spirit**" have the Spirit of \_\_\_\_\_ dwelling in them.
6. Verse 9 also says, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is \_\_\_\_\_ of his."
7. According to verse 14, the **sons** of God are those led by the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
8. Verses 16-17 tells us that the children of God are \_\_\_\_\_ of God and **joint-heirs** with \_\_\_\_\_.

Here we see that Israelites walking (living) after the flesh cannot please God. They do not have the spirit of Christ and thus are none of His (not His sheep). However, those Israelites walking after the spirit are led by the spirit of God dwelling in them and are the sons of God. As God's children, they are heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. Repentant and obedient Israelites are God's true sheep – the sheep of His pasture. It is only through the grace and power of Christ that we can be His sheep.

We have seen in this lesson what it means to be one of Christ's sheep. We have also discovered that not all Israelites are "His sheep." This discovery destroys the false teaching that it is only non-Israelites who do not hear Jesus' voice and do not follow Him. We have seen a number of examples from Scripture showing that many Israelites reject Him as well.

An additional false teaching which is promoted by some within Christendom today is that none of those people called "Jews" in most modern Bible translations and versions were Israelites. Some say they were Edomites from the lineage of Esau, while others go so far as to say they were literal offspring of "Satan, the Devil." This, they claim, is why they could not "hear" Jesus' words and refused to believe on Him. We have already learned in lesson one that the word "Jew" in the New Scriptures should have been rendered **Judean**. We also know that the majority of people called "Jews" today have little or nothing in common with the Judeans of Scripture. The next lesson will examine in more detail just who these people were that were called **Judeans**.



### LESSON 5

# Christ's Sheep

#### Page 42

1. known (Jesus' sheep know Him.)
2. hear; follow (indicates commitment)
3. blinded; hardened
4. Israel
5. deny; cross
6. worthy (or deserving)

#### Page 43

1. disciple
2. word (referring to His teachings)
3. keep (indicates obedience)
4. words (His sayings)
5. friends (suggests a close personal relationship)
6. will (God's purpose and desire)
7. do (indicates obedience)
8. doers (This would indicate that those allowed to understand the word are expected to act upon that knowledge.)

#### Page 44

1. received (or accepted)
2. sons
3. God (God caused the rebirth)
4. sheep; shepherd
5. harvest; labourers
6. disciples (NOTE: the Gospel was preached first to the Judean Israelites and later to other Israelites.)
7. No (compare to John 1:11)

#### Page 45

1. other; fold (This indicates other Israelites living beyond the immediate area.)
2. fold; shepherd (This indicates that all His followers would be united with Him.)
3. little flock
4. kingdom
5. elders (referring to older men)
6. feed (with the idea of watching over)
7. wolves (referring to false teachers)

#### Page 46

1. elect (selected or chosen – #1588 in Strong's Concordance)
2. obedient (doers of the word)
3. born (begotten or regenerated – #313 in Strong's Concordance)
4. babes; word (Infants in need of spiritual understanding)
5. stones; priesthood (refers to the New Covenant)
6. chosen; royal; holy; peculiar (A reference to the New Covenant)
7. sheep; Shepherd (referring to Christ) (NOTE: these verses are an excellent description of the implementation of the New Covenant through King Jesus. Compare them with chapters 8-10 of Hebrews.)

### Page 47

- 1.
2. flesh (indicating ancestry)
3. Israelites (descendants of Israel)
4. Israel (spiritually reborn Israelites)
5. seed; children
6. flesh; God
7. God (strictly God's decision)
8. mercy; hardeneth (Only God determines this.)

### Page 48

1. flesh; promise
2. bondage
3. free (freedom through Christ)
4. flesh; spirit
5. free; bond
6. liberty; bondage

### Page 49

1. Israel (Paul is speaking about Israelites)
2. knowledge (spiritual discernment)
3. ignorant; righteousness
4. submitted (obeyed or yielded to)
5. faith (compare to John 1:12)
6. heirs; promise

### Page 50

1. flesh; spirit
2. righteousness
3. flesh; spirit
4. please
5. God
6. none (not His sheep)
7. spirit
8. heirs; Christ

## Notes:

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