

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness.

And an Highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The Way of Holiness—Isa. 35-8.

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NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA
REV. H. C. SANDERS, M. D.



VOL. XXXIII.

MONCTON, N. B., OCT. 30, 1920.

NO. 8

Woe to the Shepherds of Israel That do Feed Themselves! Should Not the Shepherds Feed the Flocks?

**Ye Eat The Fat, And Ye Clothe You With Wool, Ye Kill Them
That Are Fed: Ye Feed Not The Flocks.**

The Prophet Ezekiel in this message to the Shepherds of Israel was given a text and a sermon to preach that few pastors of the present day would have the courage to deliver.

Pastors preach much to their people and lay before them their obligations and duties, if not their short-comings and sins, who seldom hear a sermon that lays bare their own responsibilities and obligations they have assumed in taking upon them the office of a God-called ministry.

It seems to us that no pastor can take this (Thirty-fourth) chapter of Ezekiel into careful consideration, without trembling in the presence of its requirements and the account of his stewardship that must be rendered. And applied to present day conditions and practices and neglects, and permissions by the ministry generally is as astounding in its awful arraignment as when it was proclaimed by prophet. We, like many among our church members, do not enjoy facing the mirror of truth which reveal our deficiencies in faithful service to "the flock of God" looking after "diseased to strengthen them," to "heal those who are sickly," in their Christian lives, "and binding up that which was broken," "and bringing again that which was driven away," and seeking that which was lost," "who were scattered because there was no shepherd."

"The Priests, says Calumet, ate the tithes the first fruits and the offerings of the people * * * and destroyed their souls by the poison of their doctrine, and by their bad example. The fat sheep point out the rich, to whom these pastors often disguise the truth by a cruel condescension and complaisance."

"And is any man fit for the pastoral office, or to be a shepherd of souls, who is not well acquainted with the disease of sin in all its varieties and the remedy for the

disease, and the proper mode of administering it in those various cases?"

He who does not know Jesus Christ as his own Saviour, never can recommend him to others. He who is not saved, will not save.

The shepherds of Israel—when they get fat sheep and wool for their table and clothing, they regarded nothing else.—It was the fat and the wool they sought and not the safety or comfort of the flock. Of the communion of saints such shepherds know nothing, farther than that is makes a part of the common creed."—Adam Clarke.

"Himself a wanderer from the narrow way,
His silly sheep, no wonder that they stray!"

THE SHEPHERD'S QUALIFICATIONS.

(By Dr. Adam Clarke)

1. He is skilful; he knows the disease of sin and its consequences; for the eternal Spirit by whom he is called has convinced him of sin, of righteousness and of judgment.

2. He knows well the great remedy for this disease, the passion and sacrificial death of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. He is skilful and knows how to apply the remedy.

4. The flock over which he watches is, in its individuals, either—1, healthy, sound. 2, Or, in a state of convalescence, returning to health. 3, Or, still under the whole power of the general disease. 4, Or, still under the whole power of the general disease. 4, Or, some one dying in a state of spiritual weakness. 5, Or some are fallen into sin, and sorely bruised and broken in their souls by the fall. Or, some have been driven away by some, sore temptation or cruel usage. 7, Or some have wandered from the flock, are got into strange pastures, and are perverted by erroneous doctrines. 8, Or some wolf has

got among them, and scattered the whole flock.

Now the true shepherd, the pastor of God's choosing, knows—

1. How to keep the healthy in health; and to cause them to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

2. How to nourish, feed and care for the convalescent, that they may be brought into a state of spiritual soundness.

3. How to reprove, instruct and awaken those who are still under the full power of the disease of sin.

4. How to find out and remove the cause of all of that spiritual weakness of which he sees some slowly dying.

5. How to deal with those who have fallen into some scandalous sin and restore them from their fall.

6. How to find out and turn aside the sore temptation or cruel usage by which some have been driven away.

7. How to seek and bring back to the fold those who have strayed into strange pastures and have had their souls perverted by erroneous doctrines and knows also how, by a godly discipline, to preserve the flock honorably together.

8. How to oppose, confound, and expel the grievous wolf, who has got among the flock, and is scattering them from each other, and from God. He knows how to preach, explain, and defend the truth. He is well acquainted with the weapons he is to use and the spirit in which he is to employ them.

In a word, the true shepherd gives up his life to the sheep, spends and is spent for the glory of God and; gives up his life for the sheep, in defence of them, and in labouring for their welfare. And while he is thus employed, it is the duty of the flock to feed and clothe him; and see that neither he nor his family lack the necessities and conveniences of life."

God will care for his flock.—See Eze. 34-11-16.