



Matthew 9:35-38

What is the condition of these people described as “sheep without a shepherd”? In what way would a shepherd address these needs?

The picture of sheep without a shepherd is used many times throughout the Old Testament. Consider how the illustration is used in each of the following passages:

Numbers 27:15-21

In this context, who had served as a “shepherd” for Israel and who was about to step in to fulfill that role? How is the work of shepherding described here and why would this be important for the well-being of Israel?

1 Kings 22:15-17

Who is the “shepherd” referring to in this context? What is the condition of the sheep of Israel without a shepherd and what are they told to do in this situation? What does this teach us about the role that shepherd was intended to fulfill?

Ezekiel 34:1-10

Who are the “shepherds” addressed here? How is the condition of Israel described because of their corruption and neglect? What type of work should these shepherds have been doing?

Nahum 3:18; Zechariah 10:2-3

Who are the flocks referred to in each of these passages? What are the conditions of the flocks due to the neglect or ungodly guidance of their shepherds?

Based on what we have studied thus far, what challenges and dangers does a local church face when they do not have godly men to fulfill the role of shepherd? (*Acts 20:28-31; 1 Pet 5:1-4, 8*)

Acts 14:21-23; Titus 1:5

How was the need for elders addressed in the early church? What does this teach us about the importance of their role in the growth and well-being of a local flock?

Galatians 6:1-2; James 5:19-20; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-14

Can the work of shepherding be done where there are no authorized shepherds? Can you think of other passages that would help us answer this question?

Why might this alone be less effective than having qualified men entrusted with the work of shepherding?

If we appoint qualified men as shepherds, how will the rest of the members' responsibilities change in looking out for the well-being of the flock?