

# Sheep on the Run

## HOOK

This may be insulting, but if so, I'm probably just hitting the wall of your pride. The bible regularly refers to us, God's people, as sheep.

**Example:** Guy who looked into a sheep's eyes. "I saw that nothing was looking back at me. We so often wander foolishly, aimlessly, blindly toward our selfish desires, and it leaves us hollow and empty straining with more desire than we had before. It's a loving term of endearment when Jesus refers to Himself as our Shepherd. He loves us, cares for us, and corrects us.

## BOOK

**1 Peter 2:24-25** - *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*

## LOOK

Three Words for Sin in the Bible (credit: Bible Project)

1. **Transgression** (Pesha) – “trespass”, “rebellion” – violating trust, breaking a treaty, breaking a promise/covenant, treachery, falsehood.
  - a. **Example:** If someone breaks in your house and steals something, they've committed robbery. If it was your friend, it's transgression. They've broken your trust.
  - b. Covenant language (see Week 14 of the Son of Righteousness series: Jesus is the Lamb of God) The whole bible is a long story about man breaking covenants with God and violating His trust. Example: Adam and Eve, Israel . . . us.
  - c. **Explain covenant blessings and curses.** We are justly under the curse.
  - d. **Romans 5:1-2,12,15** - *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through Him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God ... 12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned ... 15 But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one Man Jesus Christ abounded for many.*

2. **Sin** (Khata) – to miss the target/goal, to fail. We fail to love God and others by not honoring them the way they should be.
- The 10 commandments are God’s 10 targets. The first 5 describe how we can fail at loving God. The second 5 are how we can fail at loving people.
    - Failing to honor God is deeply connected to failing to honor other people. Jesus – “How you treat others is how you treat me. (Matt.25:40)”
    - **Example:** Joseph running from Potiphar’s wife – “How can I sin against God?! (Gen.39:9)”
  - Archery example: When we allow Him to empower us and we align ourselves with His instruction, we’ll hit the target. But when we permit our desires to allow our attention to drift, sin is both quick and unsuspecting to send us spiraling off course.
    - **Example:** Cain – “sin is crouching at your door. Its desire is contrary to you, but you must rule over it. (Gen.4:7)”
    - **Example:** Trip from Destin, I10, missed the exit, drove forever over Lake Pontchartrain before I could turn around.
  - Jesus is our GOOD NEWS. We were stuck on an endless bridge toward death/hell, but He overcame, defeated death at the cross and resurrection. **1 Peter 2:24-25** - *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*
3. **Iniquity** (Avon) – crooked, bent over, twisted = wicked (wicker chair).
- Applied to something which is supposed to be straight, even, or level, but has been bent out of shape, distorted.
  - Example:** **Is.59:12-14** – The leaders (shepherds) of Israel were placed in their positions for the good of the people, but God accuses them of ignoring or taking advantage of them for their own gain. Paraphrase: “We are so bent over; truth is so crooked that upright people can’t enter.”
  - What’s so poisonous about iniquity is it will quickly become the normal – the new straight. **Is.5:20** - *Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!*

- d. Iniquity can also be understood in terms of punishment. To “bear your iniquity,” means you carry the weight of the consequences for your crooked choices.
- e. **God’s punishment** is viewed this way: The bible writers usually describe God’s punishment as “visiting their iniquity upon them.” The idea is that God lets them sit in the consequences of their own wicked actions.
- What justice! This leaves us without excuse for our own sin. Isn’t death the consequence (the payment, wages, earnings) of our sin? God’s just discipline (and judgement) is often allowing our consequences to be our punishment.
- f. **Psalm 32:1-5** - *Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. 3 For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah. 5 I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.*
- This is the picture of God picking up and carrying the iniquity as an act of sheer generosity and love. In fact, God’s carrying our iniquity is the most common phrase for God’s forgiveness.
  - **1 Peter 2:24** - *He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.*
  - God has not assigned up punishment, then took it Himself. We brought on our own consequences/punishment, and yet He stepped in and took them Himself. What kind of love is this?
- g. **Isaiah 53:4-7,10-12** - *4 Surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the punishment that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; **we have turned—everyone—to his own way**; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth ... 10 Yet it was the will of the Lord to crush him;*

*he has put him to grief; when his soul makes an offering for guilt, he shall see his offspring; he shall prolong his days; the will of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. 11 Out of the anguish of his soul he shall see and be satisfied; by his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore I will divide him a portion with the many, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors.*

## Temptation

**James 1:14-15** - *But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

- (straight downhill, gravity) **Tempted – Desire – Sin – Death**
- Good news – Temptation is not sin!
  - **Hebrews 4:15-16** - *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*
- SO, temptation is not sin. How we respond to it makes all the difference.

**Jesus internalizes sin:** making righteousness about our hearts, not just our actions.

**Matthew 5:22,28** – Hate = murder; lust = adultery. Before it seemed impossible to keep all of God’s law, but now, it’s definitively impossible. No one is exempt.

Everyone needs a savior. “Here I am.” – Jesus

## Treadmill of Holiness

- Three enemies = 1) satan, 2) sinful society, 3) our own flesh
- As soon as we lose focus on Jesus or become distracted from closeness to Him, we begin to slip back into our selfish lifestyle by default. If we’re not moving forward, we’re sliding somewhere.
  - **Example:** “I’m not sure how it happened, one thing just led to another.”
- It will take an external force to empower us to move forward. Thank you God for Jesus and Your Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

Where do I begin?

**Psalm 97:10-12** - *O you who love the Lord, hate evil! He preserves the lives of his saints; he delivers them from the hand of the wicked. 11 Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart. 12 Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous, and give thanks to his holy name!*

- TOO often, we don't hate evil. We like to play with evil. Be close to evil. Try to pick it up and put it down. Sometimes we treat evil like an ex-girl/boyfriend. We like to stalk evil on social media. We like to call evil late at night and hang up quickly.
- **Psalm 119:10** - *With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments!*
- If we saw it for the grotesque poison it is? What if we recognized it as the most contagious disease with the most hell-ish of symptoms? We'd eradicate it from our lives even at great sacrifice. And when it came anywhere near us in the form of temptation, we'd run.

## TOOK

### Overcoming Temptation through the Victory of Christ

#### 1) RUN from sin

- a. **2 Timothy 2:22** – *Flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*
- b. **1 Timothy 6:11** – *“Flee”*
- c. **1 Cor. 6:18** – *“Flee”*
- d. Sirach 21:2 – Run away from sin like you would from a snake: If you go near it, it will bite you. Its teeth are lion's teeth, destroying a person's life.
- e. CAN YOU HEAR THE URGENCY?? **FLEE! Get away with all hurry!**
- f. **1 Corinthians 10:13** - *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*
  - i. God will provide an exit from temptation. But be warned. The longer you wait, the harder it'll be.

#### 2) BOUNCE from sin

- a. You must act quickly as soon as you recognize temptation. If you are following Jesus, the Holy Spirit inside will fire off a flare that you're being tempted – unlike before Christ.

- b. When you see an opportunity to sin you **bounce** your eyes. This is plainest for me as a guy. When there's an image or person who is underdressed, the sin isn't in the recognition she's there. The sin is in the second look. As soon as you recognize temptation, bounce your eyes somewhere else.
- c. BUT remember, Jesus internalized sin. What happens in our minds is just as poignant as what's happening outside us. We MUST learn the discipline of bouncing our minds as well. **But what should we bounce our minds to?**
  - i. Scripture - **Psalm 119:10-11** - *With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*
    - 1. Begin scripture memorization – Memorize a psalm for a year.
  - ii. Praise & Prayer – **1 Thess.5:16-17** - *Rejoice always, pray without ceasing...*

### 3) ACCOUNTABILITY to a fellow believer

- a. Back to **2 Timothy 2:22** – *Flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*
- b. Find a partner in righteousness to reject sin together and pursue Jesus.