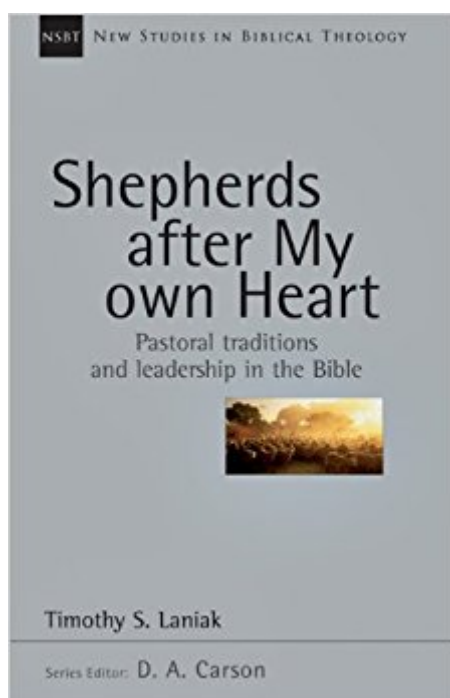


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Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions And Leadership In The Bible (New Studies In Biblical Theology)



Synopsis

Scripture says, "I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding" (Jeremiah 3:15). Most of Israel's pastoral imagery is grounded in two traditions: Moses as God's under-shepherd and David as shepherd-king. These traditions, explains author Timothy S. Laniak, provided prototypes for leaders that followed, and formed the background for the ministry of Jesus, the good shepherd. The pastoral role was central to the ongoing life of local churches in the Christian movement, and today's pastors are still called to be shepherds after God's own heart, to lead his people, living on the margins of settled society, to their eternal home. In this New Studies in Biblical Theology volume, Laniak draws on a wide range of Old and New Testament texts to develop the biblical theology of "shepherd" imagery, and concludes with some principles and implications for contemporary pastoral ministry. A wonderful resource for pastors, teachers and seminary students, as well as readers interested in the study of biblical imagery. Addressing key issues in biblical theology, the works comprising New Studies in Biblical Theology are creative attempts to help Christians better understand their Bibles. The NSBT series is edited by D. A. Carson, aiming to simultaneously instruct and to edify, to interact with current scholarship and to point the way ahead.

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Customer Reviews

This book is a must-read for both ministers and scholars. (Journal of the Evangelical Theological

Society, November 2007)

Features & Benefits * Offers insight into the biblical understanding of the metaphor of the shepherd/pastor* Presents an antidote to unbiblical notions of this metaphor and its pastoral implications* Highlights the key elements involved in the development of this metaphor in the Bible* Features a wealth of interaction with ancient Near Eastern culture and history* Provides a definitive resource for exploration of this important issue* Serves pastors and lay leaders who desire assistance in understanding this topic

I highly recommend *Shepherds After My Own Heart*, by Tim Laniak, for those serving in ministerial positions and/or interested in the biblical theology of the shepherd/sheep/flock metaphor found throughout the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. I also recommend this book for anyone interested in the study of leadership, Christian or otherwise. Dr. Tim Laniak is an OT/Hebrew Professor at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary. His book represents an exhaustive study of the shepherd motif/metaphor in the Old and New Testaments, as well as ancient near eastern cultures. The analogies of a shepherd, undershepherds, sheep, goats, rams, ewes, and lambs provides a rich medium in which to help communicate the biblical theologies of 1) leadership, 2) the sacrificial care and concern of God for His people, 3) the visible church, 4) church discipline, 5) the role of human ministers, 6) the saving work of Christ, and 7) eschatology and judgment. The book is written to accommodate both the common laity as well as advanced biblical scholars. Someone with little or no knowledge of the Bible will appreciate it, as well as the Biblical language expert. In addition to its "standalone" value, the book has an advanced bibliography and detailed indexes to serve as a reference text for exegesis and sermon preparation.

best book i've read in a long time

This is a thorough book! First, in pages 29-74, Laniak discusses metaphors and a summary of the shepherd theme in the cultures of the Ancient Near East. In the rest of the book (p 77-250) he simply walks through the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, highlighting the shepherd metaphor where it shows up. This book is good in that it is a detailed summary of the shepherding theme in the Bible. Laniak lists the shepherding texts and then exegetes them in a commentary-like way. Quite often it did feel like I was reading a commentary (with transliterated Hebrew/Greek rather than Hebrew/Greek font). The commentary-type writing did make for slow and tedious reading at times. I

wasn't expecting this, so it was a small let down for me. Positively, Laniak's commentary on the shepherding theme in the Bible is a good resource to have when one is studying those Scriptures that talk about shepherding (from Psalm 23 to Jeremiah to 1 Peter, for example). The book is nicely Christ-centered - as it should be, since Jesus is the Good Shepherd! On the other hand, I was hoping for more application on what it means for men whom God has called to be under-shepherds in his church. The "Concluding Observations and Reflections" section was less than five pages long and didn't give much detail on what it means to "pastor" the flock today. In summary, this is a very solid Christian commentary on the shepherd theme in Scripture. It is good scholarship, full of detail, and helpful for those who want a biblical understanding of God/Christ our Shepherd. But for me, it was a bit too heavy on the details and a bit too light on the application.

This is indeed a great book by Timothy Laniak, and would recommend it to all spiritual leaders. However, I believe I had too much expectations after reading his book "While Shepherds Watch Their Flocks."

The title of this book is from Jeremiah 3:15 as God promises to give His people shepherds after His own heart. The book explores leadership throughout the Bible as it relates to the shepherd motif thus creating a biblical theology of the pastoral tradition in Scripture. The thesis of the book is that a pastoral stream of tradition flows through Scripture which provides a broader context for understanding the nature of leaders in the covenant community and for understanding the nature of that community as the flock of the divine Shepherd (24). Six sections provide an outline of the book. Section one explores the background of the shepherd metaphor as it relates to shepherding in the Ancient Near East and shepherd rulers in the ancient world (21-74). Section two traces Moses and David as two biblical prototypes in the Old Testament and traces how God reveals himself to be the true shepherd ruler of Israel (75-114). Section three focuses on how Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel each recall the exodus/wilderness motif, reveal insights into the Davidic covenant, and create expectation for a future Messianic shepherd king (115-170). The fourth section focuses on the how the Gospels depict Jesus as a shepherd who has come to lead God's flock in the new kingdom (171-222). Section five explains how 1 Peter challenges leaders to follow the divine shepherd who became their sacrificial lamb and how the book of Revelation reveals that the shepherd lamb sacrificed himself for his people (223-246). The final section (247-251) is composed of observations and reflections on the shepherding theme as it relates to those in pastoral ministry. Laniak reveals how shepherd language is connected to the metanarrative of Scripture as those who

are in pastoral ministry are heirs to a remarkable heritage that stretches back four thousand years (250-251). Laniak masterfully weaves the shepherding theme throughout the book and comprehensively covers the major texts thus creating a robust biblical theology of shepherding. Laniak appeals to two kinds of readers in this book; (1) those interested in the academic discipline of biblical theology as it relates to the shepherd motif and (2) pastors who want to deepen their understanding of the theme in Scripture as it pertains to their leadership (26). Because of its excellent scholarship, biblical exposition, and thoughtful concluding thoughts for pastors the book accomplishes both these purposes. In reading this book, I found both my academic curiosities and pastoral leanings deepened and stretched. Laniak's hope for this book is that pastors who read it gain a deeper sense of their identity, a greater sense of awe of being called to serve the Great Shepherd, and a stronger sense of their vocation as a robust and significant calling (27). As one who is involved in pastoral ministry, Laniak's hopes were fulfilled in my mind and heart as I read and reflected on the book. I come away from reading this book with a renewed sense of my identity and calling as a shepherd leader serving God's people under the grace and authority of the Good Shepherd to the glory and praise of God.

The book arrived soon after purchase. It was in pristine condition. The content reads like it is the author's doctoral thesis.

loved it!

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