

# 1 Peter 2:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

## Analysis

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Peter concludes the slavery section with gospel imagery. "For ye were as sheep going astray" (*ēte gar hōs probata planōmena*) echoes Isaiah 53:6—universal human condition of lostness, wandering from God like wayward sheep without shepherd, vulnerable and directionless. "But are now returned" (*alla epestraphētē nyn*)—conversion is return, coming back to where you belong. "Unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (*epi ton poimena kai episkopon tōn psychōn hymōn*). "Shepherd" (*poimena*) emphasizes care, protection, guidance. "Bishop" (*episkopon*) literally means overseer—one who watches over, supervises. Christ shepherds and oversees believers' souls, providing what they lacked while astray: guidance, protection, care, accountability.

## Historical Context

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Isaiah 53:6's "all we like sheep have gone astray" described Israel's rebellion. Peter applies this to Gentile converts, once lost in paganism, now returned to true Shepherd. The shepherd metaphor appears throughout Scripture (Psalm 23, Ezekiel 34, John 10) emphasizing God's caring leadership. For slaves addressed in context, knowing Christ personally cared for their souls (regardless of earthly masters' treatment) provided profound comfort. Early church understood conversion as return—prodigal coming home, lost sheep found, dead raised to life. The "Bishop of souls" language later influenced church office terminology (*episkopos/bishop*), though here refers primarily to Christ.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does understanding your pre-conversion state as 'going astray' increase gratitude for Christ's shepherding?
2. In what practical ways does Christ currently function as Shepherd and Overseer of your soul?

## Interlinear Text

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ἵτε γὰρ ὡς πρόβατα πλανώμενα· ἀλλ' ἐπεστράφητε  
ye were For as sheep going astray but are  
G2258 G1063 G5613 G4263 G4105 G235 G1994

νῦν ἐπὶ τὸν ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν  
now unto the Shepherd and Bishop souls of your  
G3568 G1909 G3588 G4166 G2532 G1985 G3588 G5590 G5216

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 53:6** (Parallel theme): All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

**Ezekiel 34:6** (Parallel theme): My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.

**Acts 20:28** (Parallel theme): Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

**Isaiah 40:11** (Parallel theme): He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

**Psalms 119:176** (Parallel theme): I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

**Matthew 9:36** (Parallel theme): But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.

**Matthew 18:12** (Parallel theme): How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

**1 Peter 5:4** (Parallel theme): And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

**Hebrews 13:20** (Parallel theme): Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

**Jeremiah 23:2** (Parallel theme): Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them: behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the LORD.