**Journey**;—**or rather, one to another**—**responsively**

**3–7.]** The man having  
the hundred sheep, *the Son of  
God*, *the Good Shepherd*. This had been his   
prophetic description, and that *in this*  
*very connexion*,—of *seeking the lost*, Ezek.  
xxxiv. 6,11 ff. This it is which gives so  
peculiar an interest to David as a type of Christ  
—that he was *a shepherd*; ibid.  
ver. 23. Our Lord plainly declares then  
by this parable—and that I take to be the  
reason why it is placed *first* (see below)—  
that the matter in which they had found  
fault with Him was the *very pursuit most  
in accordance with his divine Office of  
Shepherd*.

**4.]** It is the *Owner Himself* who goes to seek, see Ezek. ver. 11—  
*God in Christ*. The **hundred sheep**  
are the house of Israel, see Matt. x. 6;   
but in *present* application, mankind:  
(not, ‘*believers in Christ*;’ see on ver. 7.)

The argument is to *their self-interest*:  
but the act on the part of the good Shepherd  
is, from the nature of the case, one of  
*love*; or, as Stier remarks, also human love  
for *his own*; for in Him, Love, and His  
glory, are one and the same thing.

**the** **ninety and nine]** These pass altogether  
into the background, and are lost sight of.   
The character of the good Shepherd is a  
sufficient warrant for their being well  
cared for. The **wilderness** is not a barren  
place, but one abounding in pastures  
(John vi. 10, compared with Matt. xiv.  
15).

**5.]** Not mere self-interest,  
but *love* comes forward here; see Isa. xl.  
ll. No blows are given for the straying —  
no hard words: mercy to the lost one,—  
and joy within himself,—are the Shepherd’s feeling;   
the sheep is weary with long wanderings,—He gives it rest.  
Matt. ix. 36; xi. 28.

**6.]** In this return to His house, must be understood the whole  
course of seeking and finding which the  
good Shepherd, either by Himself or His agents,  
now pursues in each individual case,  
even until He brings the lost sheep home  
into heaven to Himself—not in *reality*, so  
that it should not take place till the *death*  
of the penitent—but *by anticipation*,—  
till the *name is written in heaven*;—till  
the sinner is penitent. This is clear from  
the interpretation in ver. 7. **The friends and neighbours**represent the angels (and  
spirits of just men made perfect?).

**my sheep which was lost breathes**a totally different thought from “*the  
piece (drachma) which I lost.*” There is  
pity and love in it, which, from the nature  
of the case, the other does not admit of.

**7. I say unto you]** In these words  
the Lord often introduces His revelations  
of the unseen world of glory: see Matt.  
xviii. 10.

On these **just persons**, see note at Matt. ix.   
12, 13. They are the *subjectively* righteous,  
and this saying respects their own view of themselves. (Or

if it be required that the words should be   
literally explained, seeing that these ninety-  
nine *did not err*, —then I see no other way  
but to suppose them, in the deeper meaning   
of the parable, to be the *worlds that have  
not fallen*;—and the one that has strayed,  
our human nature, in this our world.)  
But we have yet to enquire, *what sort of  
sinner* this parable represents; for each of  
the three sets before us a *different type*  
of the sinner sunk in his sin. Bengel, in  
distinguishing the three, says, “ The sheep,   
the drachma, the prodigal son;—signify   
respectively, (1) the stupid sinner,—(2) the  
sinner wholly unconscious of the fact and  
of himself, —(3) the sinner conscious and of  
purpose.” This one is the stupid and bewildered  
sinner, erring and straying away  
in ignorance and self-will from his Shepherd