
3 Nephi 15 — I Am the Law and the Light — The Fulfilled Law and the Other Sheep

3 Nephi 15: Jesus, having ended the sermon, addresses the multitude's confusion about the law of Moses. Some marveled at his saying that old things had passed away and all things had become new, not understanding what he meant for the law. He explains: the law given to Moses is fulfilled and has an end in him — 'Behold, I am he that gave the law, and I am he who covenanted with my people Israel; therefore, the law in me is fulfilled.' But he does not destroy the prophets; those prophecies not yet fulfilled shall all be fulfilled, and the covenant with his people is not yet all accomplished. 'Behold, I am the law, and the light. Look unto me, and endure to the end, and ye shall live.' Then he turns to the twelve and reveals a mystery: the Nephites are a remnant of the house of Joseph, given this land for their inheritance; the Father commanded him to tell those at Jerusalem only this much — 'other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.' The Jews supposed he meant the Gentiles, not understanding; but Jesus reveals that the Nephites are those other sheep, separated from the Jews because of Jewish iniquity, and there are yet other tribes the Father has led away. 'Ye have both heard my voice, and seen me; and ye are my sheep, and ye are numbered among those whom the Father hath given me.' The chapter resolves the law of Moses into Christ — its giver, its fulfillment, its end and light — and opens the great vision of the one flock: the scattered sheep of Israel, in every land, gathered at last under one Shepherd.

This chapter does two great things: it settles, with the Lord's own voice, the question of the law of Moses that had divided the Nephites for a generation; and it opens one of the most beautiful visions in all of scripture — the vision of the *one flock*, the scattered sheep of Israel in every land, gathered at last under *one shepherd*. The two are connected, because both are about Christ's universality: he is the One who gave the law and now fulfills it, and he is the One Shepherd whose voice will gather sheep the Jews at Jerusalem never knew existed. The chapter is the resolution of the old covenant into Christ and the opening of the new vision of a gathered, worldwide Israel — and it turns, at its center, on the stunning revelation that *these Nephites*, on the far side of the world, are themselves the "other sheep" Jesus had spoken of in Jerusalem.

Hebrew Word Studies

e■ad (אֶחָד) — "one, single, unified, united" — **e■ad**, the number one; but also oneness, unity — not merely singularity but the unity of things joined into one. The word of the Shema (the Lord is one — **e■ad**), of the one flesh of marriage, and of the one people God makes of the scattered vv. 17, 21 (there shall be one fold, and one shepherd). The climax of the great vision — *one fold, and one shepherd* — turns on the Hebrew **e■ad**, "one," and it is one of the most theologically loaded words in all of scripture. **E■ad** is the number one, but it is rarely *merely* arithmetic; it carries the sense of *unity*, of things brought together into one. It is the word of the great confession of Israel's faith, the Shema: *Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord (Yahweh e■ad)* (Deut. 6:4) — the oneness of God. It is the word for the union of marriage: the man and woman become *one flesh (basar e■ad)* (Gen. 2:24) — two made one. And it is the word God uses for the great healing of his divided people: in Ezekiel, God takes the two sticks of divided Israel and Judah and makes them *one stick* in his hand, *and they shall be one (e■ad)...* *and one king shall be king to them all...* *and they shall be no more two nations* (Ezek. 37:17–22). The scattering of Israel — into Israel and Judah, into the lost tribes, into the Nephites, into folds that do not know of one another — is the great *brokenness* of the covenant people, the one flock shattered into many. And **e■ad** is the word of its *healing*: the promise that the many will be made *one* again. This is exactly the vision of *one fold, and one shepherd*. The Good Shepherd has sheep scattered everywhere — *other sheep which are not of this fold* — divided by oceans and centuries and the Father's hidden purposes, ignorant of one another's existence. But the divisions are not the final word. *There shall be one fold (e■ad), and one shepherd (e■ad)* — the scattered made one, every sheep that ever heard the Shepherd's voice gathered into a single flock under a single Shepherd. And the source of the unity is the *oneness of the Shepherd himself*: because there is *one* Lord, *one* Christ, there can be only *one* flock — for all who hear *his* voice belong to *him*, and what belongs to the one Shepherd is one. The deep logic is the logic of the Shema: *the Lord is one*, therefore his people, however scattered, are ultimately *one*, and will be gathered into one. Jesus prays this very unity in his great intercession: *that they all may be one (e■ad); as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us... that they may be one, even as we are one* (John 17:21–22) — the oneness of the flock grounded in the oneness of the Father and the Son. The gathering of Israel, then, is not finally a geographic event but a *participation in the oneness of God* — the scattered sheep brought into the unity that the Father and the Son and the Spirit eternally are. *One fold, one shepherd, one God* — the **e■ad** that heals every division, that makes the broken people whole, that gathers the lost sheep of every fold into the single flock of the one Lord who is **e■ad**. The Shepherd is one; therefore the flock will be one; therefore no sheep, in any fold, is finally lost.

From the Chapter's Architecture

```cross-references John 10:14–16 (*I am the good shepherd... other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring... and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd* — the source quoted in vv. 17, 21); Deut. 6:4 (*the Lord our God is one Lord* — Yahweh **e■ad** — the oneness behind one shepherd, vv. 17, 21); Ezek. 37:15–28 (*the two sticks made one* — **e■ad** — in mine hand... *one king... one shepherd over them all* — the gathering of divided Israel into one, vv. 17–21); John 17:21–22 (*that they all may be one... even as we are one* — the unity of the flock grounded in the unity of God); Matt. 5:17–18 (*I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil... till all be fulfilled* — the law fulfilled, vv. 4–8); Rom. 10:4 (*Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth* — the law's end in Christ, v. 5); Gal. 3:24–25 (*the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ... we are no longer under a schoolmaster* — the law fulfilled and ended, v. 9); Isa. 45:22 (*look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth* — look unto me... and ye shall live, v. 9); 1 Ne. 22:25 (*he gathereth his children from the four quarters of the earth... and there is one fold and one shepherd* — Nephi's prophecy of the one fold); 3 Ne. 16:1–5 (*the other sheep not of this land, and the gathering of all into one fold* — the continuation of vv. 17–21); 3 Ne. 5:23–26 (*the remnant of Joseph and the gathering of Jacob* — the Nephites as the remnant, v. 12); 3 Ne. 11:11 (*I am the light and the life of the world* — *I am the law, and the light*, v. 9). ```