

Dear friends and fellow sheep! My first reaction to this passage (**Jn. 10:1-21**) was to realize, “I have a good Shepherd, One who owns me and is deeply concerned about me and has made me part of His one flock!” This comes after realizing that I was once spiritually blind, but now I can see (**chapter 9**)! What a Lord we have, supplying us with Himself and all we need. Let’s take a look at **Jn. 10** and realize, if by faith in Jesus’ Person and work we have come to know Jesus as Lord, we have a good Shepherd and we’re His sheep!

In terms of shepherds, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David were shepherds in the OT. King David writes in **Ps. 23:1-6**: “**Yahweh is my Shepherd!**” Centuries before Jesus came, the OT had predicted the Messiah would shepherd His people (see **Ezek. 34:23, Mic. 5:4, Zech. 13:7**. We could also read **Mt. 2:6, 18:10-14, Mk. 6:34, Lk. 15:3-7, 1 Pet. 2:25, 5:4, Rev. 7:17**). Let’s read **Heb. 13:20-21** together. **Ezek. 34** most likely establishes the background for Jesus’ words in **Jn. 10** because He’s dealing with Israel’s religious leaders. “Jesus paints a picture of God as the loving Shepherd who goes to great lengths for the sake of even one of His flock!” Why do sheep need a good shepherd? Someone described sheep like this: “Sheep are the most helpless, defenseless, straying, and dirty of animals. They require constant oversight, leading, rescue, and cleaning, or they will die.” So, once again, who is our Lord Jesus? Let’s add to “He’s the Bread of life and the Light of the world”: “He’s the Door of the sheepfold and the Good Shepherd.” Jesus as the good Shepherd had sought and found the healed man.

There is no time gap or break in thought between **John chapters 9 and 10**. The crowd is still the same: His disciples, the formerly blind beggar, the hostile Pharisees, & many others in the festival crowd. Jesus is speaking to all of them.

**Read 10:1-6. :1-2 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. :2 But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.”**

**Truly, truly** introduces “a statement of essential importance.” Jesus has just said to the Pharisees (**9:41**), “**Since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.**” He as the true Shepherd is addressing the so-called shepherds of the people of Israel. The Pharisees were using the Law and their additions to it to try to ‘control’ Jews. He tells them they’re blind and not truly acting as shepherds to the Israelites. The one who is the shepherd of the sheep enters through the door, not like a thief or robber who tries to find another way to the flock. A thief was determined to deprive another of his property; a robber would even use violence in order to attain his goals; neither would enter by the door.

True shepherds would graze their flocks in the surrounding countryside during the day and then lead them back to the shared (where several flocks were kept) sheepfold (pen) in the evening. The fold was a courtyard surrounded by walls with only one proper entrance. A doorkeeper would keep watch over the sheep during the night. We’ll see that the ‘door’ in **:7,9** and the ‘shepherd’ in **:11,14** is Jesus Himself. The context indicates that the sheep represent Israel. The self-appointed shepherds were Jewish religious leaders.

**:3-5 “To him [the shepherd] the doorkeeper (door-guardian) opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. :4 When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they (fully) know his voice. :5 A stranger they simply (absolutely) will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not (fully) know the voice of strangers.”** Each shepherd separated his sheep from the others by his voice and particular call; his sheep would recognize his voice. He’d call them by name (because he knows each of them and they are his!) and he’d lead (not drive) them out. In the Near East the shepherd went ahead of his flock, alert to any potential dangers. The sheep’s freedom depended upon the shepherd’s actions. No flock ever grazed without a shepherd, and he was never off duty during the day. He would lead them to adequate pasture and guard against possible danger. In no way (notice the strong negative) will the sheep follow a stranger. The sheep know the shepherd’s voice. Wherever we find people who are eager for the Word of God (Jesus’ voice), we know they are His sheep.

**:6 This figure of speech (figurative language, used again in 16:25,29) Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand (come to know) what those things were which He had been saying to them.** The figures of speech were used to let us know something about a shepherd. Remember, the Pharisees were blind (**9:41**). They couldn’t ‘see’ that their behavior in putting the man out whose blindness had been cured is contrasted with that of the Shepherd who had received and welcomed him. They completely missed Jesus’ indictment of them. “It wasn’t easy for the legally minded to think pastorally.”

**Read 10:7-10. :7 So Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. :8 All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. :9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. :10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.** Here Jesus claims to be the Door of the sheep, the 3rd of 7 statements in John’s gospel where Jesus claims He is “I AM” something. “Yahweh: The Door of the sheep, etc.” “I AM the door of the sheep.” No one could enter or leave except through Him. There was simply no other way. Through Him, says Paul, we have access to the Father (**Eph. 2:18**). “So with a renewed and solemn affirmation (**Truly, Truly**), Jesus spells it out.”

**:8-9** Israel had had many false shepherds: “her wicked kings, corrupt priests, false prophets, and pseudo-messiahs,” her ‘thieves and robbers’. Right then, Jesus was thinking of the men who were standing right in front of Him as He is speaking! He says it again: “**I AM the door!** Think about it. You put out the healed man! You’re rejecting Me, the Door of the sheepfold!” No wonder the sheep didn’t hear them. “Listen, if you enter through Me, you will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture!” **Saved** means “delivered out of danger and into safety.” Jesus’ main purpose was the salvation (health) of the sheep, which He defined as free access to pasture and fullness of life.

In Jesus, we have the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Door of the

Sheep. We have the freedom to move in and out, and we find all our needs supplied, **abundantly** (something that goes far beyond what is necessary)!

:10 The thief comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy. This sounds like the devil in **Jn. 8**: a liar and a murderer, a deceiver and a destroyer.

Jesus is the Door of the sheepfold. He's also every sheep's Shepherd, the good one! It is through Jesus alone that there is available both freedom and security. One purpose of Jesus' coming was not to judge but to give abundant life. He is the source of such life, the only source. Be careful who you follow!

**Read :11-18.** This is the 4<sup>th</sup> of 7 I AM statements of Jesus (**6:35; 8:12, 9:7,9**). "Yahweh: the Shepherd, the good one!" :11-16 tell us the Good Shepherd is genuinely concerned for His sheep (:13): In fact, He'll die for them and us!

:11 **I AM the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.** Literally, "I AM the shepherd, the good (excellent) one." He stands in contrast to the hired man who doesn't own the sheep or care for them. See **Jer. 23:1-3, Ezek. 34:12,15**. Jesus, the great Shepherd (**Heb. 13:20, Ps. 23**), the chief Shepherd (**1 Pet. 5:4**). A good shepherd will lay down his life for his flock. In this case, Jesus will lay down His life for the sheep; the result will mean life for the sheep! Jesus is Himself the good Shepherd, the one who does for the flock what only He can do, become flesh and voluntarily lay down His life!

:12 **He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.** Essential is a shepherd based on the example of Jesus. The hired hand, who isn't the owner of the sheep, sees danger to himself coming and flees from the sheep. This is what the Pharisees were like. They were self-focused. They would flee when danger threatened. Look how they had treated the man whom Jesus had cured (**9:34**). They didn't care about the sheep; their only concern was laws and rituals; they were just doing a job!

:13 **He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep.** "Their religious leaders' overriding priority was self-preservation, and the last thing they cared to do was to sacrifice themselves for anyone."

:14 **I AM the good shepherd, and I know (1097) My own and My own know Me.** "I am genuinely concerned for My own; I'll die for them and I'll unite them." The sheep were dependent on the shepherd for provision, direction, and protection; he fed them, led them, and protected them. The best thing we can do as sheep is to keep our eyes on the Shepherd and continue to get to know Him better. "Just as I know My own and My own know Me, :15 **even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father** [Wow!]; **and I lay down My life for the sheep.**" Again, Jesus laid down His life for all (:11,17,18)! Even death on a cross (**Phil. 2:8**). **Jn. 12:32** tells us: "**And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.**" He died on the cross for all.

Now look at :16 and **realize its implications for you and me!** :16 **I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice, and they will become one flock with one shepherd.** Jesus is talking about Gentiles (people who can't trace their lineage back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). These are the people to whom Jesus sent His disciples (**Mt. 28:19,**

**Lk. 24:47, Acts 1:8, Rom. 9:6**). "The Gentiles too will hear My voice, and they'll become one flock with one shepherd: Me!" To suggest that Jews and Gentiles would be united in one flock was a revolutionary concept (see **11:50-52; Eph. 2:11-18**)! Whether Jew or Gentile believer, all God's people have the same Shepherd. One believing and following flock, one good and great Shepherd. All can come. All can follow. Only One is our Shepherd, Jesus!

:17 **For this reason the Father loves (agapaō) Me, because I lay down My life so that (hina) I may take it again.** The Father loves His Son. The deep and intimate affection that is shared between God the Father and Jesus the Son (**14:21,23, 15:10, 17:25-26**). Jesus would lay down His life because that was the Father's will for Him and He cared for the sheep. Also notice, **so that He could take it up again.** His death and resurrection from the dead would provide salvation, reconciliation, redemption, life, light for us!

:18 **No one has taken it [My life] away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority (right, freedom, power to act) to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.** Jesus was free to do what His Father wanted. Jesus never doubted that He must die, and equally He never doubted that He would rise again. We must understand, no part of the Cross and Resurrection took place outside of God's plan. Jesus was going forward on the path of obedience to His Father.

**Read :19-21.** :19 **A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words.** Proclaiming Jesus as who He is will always cause division. :20 **Many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?"** (see **7:20, 8:48,52, 10:20, Mt. 9:34, 12:24**). Jesus was either demon-possessed and raving mad, or, He was the Door of the fold, the good Shepherd. The leaders were blind to the truth about Jesus, that He was the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Door of the Sheepfold, the Shepherd (the Good one!), the Resurrection and the Life, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and the True Vine. :21 **Others were saying, "These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?"** Jesus' life was spent in doing good (:32) for others. Like the blind man, this group realized that Jesus' miraculous power and good works were undeniable proofs that He truly was endorsed by and sent from God (**7:31**).

Why didn't the Pharisees truly recognize Him? The man who had been given his sight said in **9:30-33**: "**Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes!...Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.**" The Pharisees didn't believe Jesus; they continued denying His claims. And, just like in the OT, Israel's false shepherds would not escape God's judgment (**Jer. 23:1-2, Ezek. 34:2-10**). Others recognized Him and said :21 **read.**

What is the choice you make when you hear Jesus' claims and words and see His actions? What is the next step for you? What is a practical way in your thinking or actions or words that need to change as a result of this passage? May we together follow "The Door and the Shepherd, the good One!" Joel

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In terms of shepherds, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, and David were shepherds in the OT. King David writes in **Ps. 23:1-6**: “**Yahweh is my Shepherd!**” Centuries before Jesus came, the OT had predicted the Messiah would shepherd His people (see **Ezek. 34:23, Mic. 5:4, Zech. 13:7**. We could also read **Mt. 2:6, 18:10-14, Mk. 6:34, Lk. 15:3-7, 1 Pet. 2:25, 5:4, Rev. 7:17**). Let’s read **Heb. 13:20-21** together. **Ezek. 34** most likely establishes the background for Jesus’ words in **Jn. 10** because He’s dealing with Israel’s religious leaders. “Jesus paints a picture of God as the loving Shepherd who goes to great lengths for the sake of even one of His flock!” Why do sheep need a good shepherd? Someone described sheep like this: “Sheep are the most helpless, defenseless, straying, and dirty of animals. They require constant oversight, leading, rescue, and cleaning, or they will die.” So, once again, who is our Lord Jesus? Let’s add to “He’s the Bread of life and the Light of the world”: “He’s the Door of the sheepfold and the Good Shepherd.” Jesus as the good Shepherd had sought and found the healed man.

There is no time gap or break in thought between **John chapters 9 and 10**. The crowd is still the same: His disciples, the formerly blind beggar, the hostile Pharisees, & many others in the festival crowd. Jesus is speaking to all of them.

**Read 10:1-6. :1-2 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. :2 But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.”**

**Truly, truly** introduces “a statement of essential importance.” Jesus has just said to the Pharisees (**9:41**), “**Since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.**” He as the true Shepherd is addressing the so-called shepherds of the people of Israel. The Pharisees were using the Law and their additions to it to try to ‘control’ Jews. He tells them they’re blind and not truly acting as shepherds to the Israelites. The one who is the shepherd of the sheep enters through the door, not like a thief or robber who tries to find another way to the flock. A thief was determined to deprive another of his property; a robber would even use violence in order to attain his goals; neither would enter by the door.

True shepherds would graze their flocks in the surrounding countryside during the day and then lead them back to the shared (where several flocks were kept) sheepfold (pen) in the evening. The fold was a courtyard surrounded by walls with only one proper entrance. A doorkeeper would keep watch over the sheep during the night. We’ll see that the ‘door’ in **:7,9** and the ‘shepherd’ in **:11,14** is Jesus Himself. The context indicates that the sheep represent Israel. The self-appointed shepherds were Jewish religious leaders.

**:3-5 “To him [the shepherd] the doorkeeper (door-guardian) opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. :4 When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they (fully) know his voice. :5 A stranger they simply (absolutely) will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not (fully) know the voice of strangers.”** Each shepherd separated his sheep from the others by his voice and particular call; his sheep would recognize his voice. He’d call them by name (because he knows each of them and they are his!) and he’d lead (not drive) them out. In the Near East the shepherd went ahead of his flock, alert to any potential dangers. The sheep’s freedom depended upon the shepherd’s actions. No flock ever grazed without a shepherd, and he was never off duty during the day. He would lead them to adequate pasture and guard against possible danger. In no way (notice the strong negative) will the sheep follow a stranger. The sheep know the shepherd’s voice. Wherever we find people who are eager for the Word of God (Jesus’ voice), we know they are His sheep.

**:6 This figure of speech (figurative language, used again in 16:25,29) Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand (come to know) what those things were which He had been saying to them.** The figures of speech were used to let us know something about a shepherd. Remember, the Pharisees were blind (9:41). They couldn’t ‘see’ that their behavior in putting the man out whose blindness had been cured is contrasted with that of the Shepherd who had received and welcomed him. They completely missed Jesus’ indictment of them. “It wasn’t easy for the legally minded to think pastorally.”

**Read 10:7-10. :7 So Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. :8 All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. :9 I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. :10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.** Here Jesus claims to be the Door of the sheep, the 3rd of 7 statements in John’s gospel where Jesus claims He is “I AM” something. “Yahweh: The Door of the sheep, etc.” “I AM the door of the sheep.” No one could enter or leave except through Him. There was simply no other way. Through Him, says Paul, we have access to the Father (Eph. 2:18). “So with a renewed and solemn affirmation (Truly, Truly), Jesus spells it out.”

**:8-9** Israel had had many false shepherds: “her wicked kings, corrupt priests, false prophets, and pseudo-messiahs,” her ‘thieves and robbers’. Right then, Jesus was thinking of the men who were standing right in front of Him as He is speaking! He says it again: “**I AM the door!** Think about it. You put out the healed man! You’re rejecting Me, the Door of the sheepfold!” No wonder the sheep didn’t hear them. “Listen, if you enter through Me, you will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture!” **Saved** means “delivered out of danger and into safety.” Jesus’ main purpose was the salvation (health) of the sheep, which He defined as free access to pasture and fullness of life.

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Sheep. We have the freedom to move in and out, and we find all our needs supplied, **abundantly** (something that goes far beyond what is necessary)!

:10 The thief comes to steal, to kill, and to destroy. This sounds like the devil in **Jn. 8**: a liar and a murderer, a deceiver and a destroyer.

Jesus is the Door of the sheepfold. He's also every sheep's Shepherd, the good one! It is through Jesus alone that there is available both freedom and security. One purpose of Jesus' coming was not to judge but to give abundant life. He is the source of such life, the only source. Be careful who you follow!

**Read :11-18.** This is the 4<sup>th</sup> of 7 I AM statements of Jesus (**6:35; 8:12, 9:7,9**). "Yahweh: the Shepherd, the good one!" :11-16 tell us the Good Shepherd is genuinely concerned for His sheep (:13): In fact, He'll die for them and us!

:11 **I AM the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.** Literally, "I AM the shepherd, the good (excellent) one." He stands in contrast to the hired man who doesn't own the sheep or care for them. See **Jer. 23:1-3, Ezek. 34:12,15**. Jesus, the great Shepherd (**Heb. 13:20, Ps. 23**), the chief Shepherd (**1 Pet. 5:4**). A good shepherd will lay down his life for his flock. In this case, Jesus will lay down His life for the sheep; the result will mean life for the sheep! Jesus is Himself the good Shepherd, the one who does for the flock what only He can do, become flesh and voluntarily lay down His life!

:12 **He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.** Essential is a shepherd based on the example of Jesus. The hired hand, who isn't the owner of the sheep, sees danger to himself coming and flees from the sheep. This is what the Pharisees were like. They were self-focused. They would flee when danger threatened. Look how they had treated the man whom Jesus had cured (**9:34**). They didn't care about the sheep; their only concern was laws and rituals; they were just doing a job!

:13 **He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep.** "Their religious leaders' overriding priority was self-preservation, and the last thing they cared to do was to sacrifice themselves for anyone."

:14 **I AM the good shepherd, and I know (1097) My own and My own know Me.** "I am genuinely concerned for My own; I'll die for them and I'll unite them." The sheep were dependent on the shepherd for provision, direction, and protection; he fed them, led them, and protected them. The best thing we can do as sheep is to keep our eyes on the Shepherd and continue to get to know Him better. "Just as I know My own and My own know Me, :15 **even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father** [Wow!]; and I lay down My life for the sheep." Again, Jesus laid down His life for all (:11,17,18)! Even death on a cross (**Phil. 2:8**). **Jn. 12:32** tells us: "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself." He died on the cross for all.

Now look at :16 and realize its implications for you and me! :16 **I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice, and they will become one flock with one shepherd.** Jesus is talking about Gentiles (people who can't trace their lineage back to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob). These are the people to whom Jesus sent His disciples (**Mt. 28:19**,

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**Lk. 24:47, Acts 1:8, Rom. 9:6).** “The Gentiles too will hear My voice, and they’ll become one flock with one shepherd: Me!” To suggest that Jews and Gentiles would be united in one flock was a revolutionary concept (see **11:50-52; Eph. 2:11-18**)! Whether Jew or Gentile believer, all God’s people have the same Shepherd. One believing and following flock, one good and great Shepherd. All can come. All can follow. Only One is our Shepherd, Jesus!

**:17 For this reason the Father loves (agapaō) Me, because I lay down My life so that (hina) I may take it again.** The Father loves His Son. The deep and intimate affection that is shared between God the Father and Jesus the Son (**14:21,23, 15:10, 17:25-26**). Jesus would lay down His life because that was the Father’s will for Him and He cared for the sheep. Also notice, **so that He could take it up again.** His death and resurrection from the dead would provide salvation, reconciliation, redemption, life, light for us!

**:18 No one has taken it [My life] away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority (right, freedom, power to act) to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father.** Jesus was free to do what His Father wanted. Jesus never doubted that He must die, and equally He never doubted that He would rise again. We must understand, no part of the Cross and Resurrection took place outside of God’s plan. Jesus was going forward on the path of obedience to His Father.

**Read :19-21. :19 A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words.** Proclaiming Jesus as who He is will always cause division. **:20 Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?”** (see **7:20, 8:48,52, 10:20, Mt. 9:34, 12:24**). Jesus was either demon-possessed and raving mad, or, He was the Door of the fold, the good Shepherd. The leaders were blind to the truth about Jesus, that He was the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, the Door of the Sheepfold, the Shepherd (the Good one!), the Resurrection and the Life, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and the True Vine. **:21 Others were saying, “These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?”** Jesus’ life was spent in doing good (:32) for others. Like the blind man, this group realized that Jesus’ miraculous power and good works were undeniable proofs that He truly was endorsed by and sent from God (**7:31**).

Why didn’t the Pharisees truly recognize Him? The man who had been given his sight said in **9:30-33**: “**Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes!...Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind. If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.**” The Pharisees didn’t believe Jesus; they continued denying His claims. And, just like in the OT, Israel’s false shepherds would not escape God’s judgment (**Jer. 23:1-2, Ezek. 34:2-10**). Others recognized Him and said **:21 read**.

What is the choice you make when you hear Jesus’ claims and words and see His actions? What is the next step for you? What is a practical way in your thinking or actions or words that need to change as a result of this passage? May we together follow “The Door and the Shepherd, the good One!” Joel

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