

John 10

- The Last public discourse of Jesus.
- Shepherds have failed Israel in the past (Jer. 23:1-4, 25:32-38; Zech 11; Isa 56:9-12; Ezek 34- esp v.23).
- God is Israel's Shepherd (Ps 80:1, 23:1; Isa 40:10-11).
- "Nowadays we think of the shepherd in terms of tender care and concern for the flock, thoughts that are legitimate for the ancient world as for the modern. But we should not overlook the fact that for people in biblical times other associations were also aroused by the term. The shepherd was an autocrat over his flock, and passages are not lacking where the shepherd imagery is used to emphasize the thought of sovereignty" (NICNT, 443).
- A sheepfold "consisted of a circular wall of stones with a single opening.... A shepherd would bring his flock through the gate and into the fold to protect the sheep from thieves and predators" (Symbolism, 109).
- Jesus= door/gate; climb over the wall= thieves and robbers.
- Jesus= good shepherd; hired hand= not the shepherd.
- Relate to the Man Born Blind. If Jesus is the gate, then the Pharisees have no legitimate claim to the authority to expel the man from the synagogue. "If Jesus is the gate, then the beggar's relationship with Jesus actually made him an insider who belonged to the people of God" (Symbolism, 110).
- "Identifying Jesus as the gate means that those who enter through him 'will be saved' (10:9), yet the promise of salvation does not eliminate the threat of danger. The thieves and bandits continue seeking to kill and destroy (10:12), and the blind man who was healed by Jesus was repeatedly questioned and finally expelled from the synagogue, so that he clearly was not exempted from hostile situations" (Symbolism, 111).
- Personal gain and not concern for the sheep drives the thief and hired hand.
- Compare that to the Good Shepherd who goes all the way to lay down his life for the sheep.
- "The Sadducees in particular were known to make quite a lot of money out of temple religion, and there are denunciations of the Pharisees (Luke 16:14) and the scribes (Mark 12:40) for covetousness" (NICNT, 451).
- The typical shepherd would live for his sheep; Jesus dies for his. "Moreover, the death of the Palestinian shepherd meant disaster for his sheep. The death of the Good Shepherd means life for his sheep" (NICNT, 454).
- Those who are "not of this sheep pen" are already his; and this, in its context, refers to Gentile disciples.
- The importance of the voice of the shepherd: vv. 3, 4, 5, 16. The sheep know the identity of their shepherd by his voice. It's all about knowing the identity of Jesus!
- Accusations that Jesus has a demon in: 7:20, 8:48, 52. The only time demons are mentioned is when Jesus is accused of being possessed by one.

- “Their respect for the facts prevented this group from prejudging the case. So they refused to condemn Jesus. Yet their position remains entirely a negative one. They say what Jesus is not, but they make no attempt to say what he is” (NICNT, 458).
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