

John 10a

1 The shepherds of Jesus' day built a pen out of rock and briars. They would sleep in the entrance of the pen. Any predators or thieves would have to climb over their wall or go over the shepherd. Jesus is saying that all good shepherds come through Him to the sheep. Those who would approach the sheep by some other means than through Christ have only self-interest at heart (Isaiah 56:11). Psalm 23:1; 95:7; Hebrews 13:20 Both old and new testaments are full of the shepherd and sheep analogy. Matthew 7:15 - false prophets

2 The same idea is presented. We will see in verse 7 that Jesus is the gate. Those shepherds that are called of God shepherd through Christ Jesus. They come to the sheep through Him.

3-6 In ancient Palestine the sheep were raised more for wool than meat. The shepherd got to know his sheep well and by name. Each shepherd has his own call for his flock. I have seen two flocks cross paths. How do the sheep keep in the right herd? Each shepherd calls in his own unique way, and his sheep follow the sound of his voice. They won't follow the other shepherd. Soon there were two herds going their separate ways. The shepherds had no doubt that their sheep followed them. Do you know the voice of your Shepherd? Do you follow that voice alone? 6:45; Exodus 33:17; 1 John 4:5,6 There are two different languages – that of the true Shepherd and that of the false ones.

7 14:6; Ephesians 2:18 His body is the door into the sheepfold. He is the only way in and out. It is a comforting thought to those of us inside. It is an offensive to those on the outside. The Jews that were listening didn't understand the analogy, so Jesus made it very plain in this verse. This is one of the seven 'I am' of John. "I am the gate."

8 At this time there were many who claimed to be the promised one. They promised peace and freedom to those who would follow them into battle (Acts 5:36). Even during the fall of Jerusalem several men claimed to be the Messiah. Jesus called them thieves and robbers.

9 To go in and out safely meant that fear was gone. The One who leads you can protect you. In that age when powers were constantly shifting, it was somewhat like living in present day Israel. Deaths were commonplace. Fear was prevalent. No one knew what the day might bring. Power meant wealth, and life was cheap. In Christ we know our times are in His hand. We need not fear the loss of life. We don't have to worry when we leave our home. Our shepherd watches over us and provides for us (find pasture). Isaiah 49:9,10

10 Here is the defining difference between Jesus and those who come through Him and all the others who climb up some other way. Those who are thieves have the fruit of death, theft, and waste. Matthew 21:13 Those who come through Jesus have superabundant life. They encourage people in the ways of life, steering them away from death. In Jesus we have EVERYTHING! Mark 10:30 In what ways do we have that abundance now? And in the life to come?

11 "I am the good shepherd." Another of the "I am" of John. Shepherds of that day might have had to face a lion or bear or even worse, men. Thieves might kill the shepherd to gain the wealth of the flock. The good shepherd did not run when he saw danger approaching. 1 Samuel 17:34,35

12-13 This is the shepherd who is hired for a short time. He has no attachment to the sheep. He cares more for his own safety. How wonderful to know that the Lord was not just doing a duty, but has an attachment to us, a concern strong enough to lay down His life.

14 –15 There is a love relationship. Jesus compares His relationship with us to His relationship with the Father. That is inseparable. How wonderful! This is love that will give all, even life itself. May the Lord birth in us a love like that for Him. 15:13; Revelation 5:9; Ephesians 5:2

16 The Mormons use this verse to claim that Jesus went to South America. Contextually Jesus is speaking of the Gentiles. The Jews always considered themselves the sheep of His pasture. They would have understood that He meant to the Gentile nations. Ephesians 2:14; Psalm 22:27

17 –18 Jesus knew the Father gave Him the power to lay down His life and to resurrect Himself! That is why He could say so confidently to the disciples that He would rise from death on the third day (Matthew 20:19). Jesus was not forced to die for us. He willingly laid down His life. Hebrews 2:9

19-21 They are still debating over the miracle of the man who was blind from birth having sight. If you do not believe He is the Messiah then these words would sound like a lunatic. Those who believed argued, "How can a demon possessed person heal a man born blind?" Jesus miracles were the proof His words were true, along with the fulfillment of prophecy. The ultimate proof was His resurrection.