

## Olivet Baptist Church

3500 Edmondson Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21229

Wednesday Night Bible Study (7:00 pm)

Book of John – Facilitator: Rev. Alex O. Stone

### Overall Theme: Jesus Manifestation to the Nation of Israel (1:19–12:50)

#### I. Jesus Return to Jerusalem and the resumption of hostility (John 7:10–10:42)

##### ➤ Chapter Review: John 9:1 - 9:41

- **“I Am the Light of The World”** (John 8:12) The 2<sup>nd</sup> of the seven (7) “I Am Statements” found in the Gospel of John.
- The world is in darkness, a symbol of evil, sin, and ignorance (Isa. 9:2; Matt. 4:16; 27:45; John 3:19).
- **“Light”** in the Bible is a symbol of God and His holiness (Acts 9:3; 1 John 1:5). Jesus is **“the Light,”** not merely a light or another light among many lights.
- He is the only Light, **“the true Light”** (John 1:9), for the world. When Jesus said, **“Whoever follows Me,”** He meant *whoever believes and obeys* Him (cf. 10:4–5, 27; 12:26; 21:19–20, 22). Jesus was speaking of salvation.
- Coming to Christ for salvation results in a different kind of life. A believer **will never walk in darkness**. He does not remain in the realm of evil and ignorance (John 12:46) for he has Christ as his **Light** and salvation (cf. Ps. 36:9).
- **John 9:17. The healed blind man’s opinion was that Jesus is a prophet.**
- **John 9:25–26.** His witness was clear, and he refused to deny what he knew for certain: **I was blind, but now I see! They asked him** to go over the story again, hoping to find some contradiction in the man’s report.
- **John 9:35.** Taking the initiative again (cf. v. 6), **Jesus** found the former blind man. **Do you** (emphatic in the Gr.) **believe in the Son of Man?** This was a call to commitment. “Son of Man” is a title of Messiah which includes a rich background (cf. Dan. 7:13; and comments on Mark 2:10).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 308–309). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

- **John 9:36–37**. The beggar responded that he was willing to **believe** but he was ignorant. **Jesus** then disclosed Himself and gave the beggar the necessary knowledge for faith. *Faith involves an act of the will, based on information.*
- **John 9:38**. After Jesus revealed that *He* is the Son of Man, **the man** responded in faith (**Lord, I believe**) and **worshiped Him**. His worship of Jesus replaced his worship in the synagogue. Jesus does not cast out those who come to Him (John 6:37). **One goal of salvation is worship of the One who saves (John 4:23).**
- **John 9:39** **Jesus meant He came to pronounce decisions on the ungodly, like a judge** (cf. 5:22, 27). **The blind** who come to sight are those who, admitting their helplessness and inability, trust Jesus for salvation.

### **CURRENT FOCUS: "I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD" (10:1–10:21)**

**10** "Most assuredly, <sup>2</sup> I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. <sup>2</sup> But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup> To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup> And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. <sup>5</sup> Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers." <sup>6</sup> Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

<sup>7</sup> Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **I am the door of the sheep.** <sup>8</sup> All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. <sup>9</sup> **I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved,** and will go in and out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and

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<sup>2</sup> [\*The New King James Version\*](#). (1982). (Jn 10:1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

<sup>11</sup> "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. <sup>12</sup> But a hireling, *he who is* not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. <sup>13</sup> The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. <sup>14</sup> *I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.* <sup>15</sup> As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. <sup>16</sup> And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.

<sup>17</sup> "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. <sup>18</sup> No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

<sup>19</sup> Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings. <sup>20</sup> And many of them said, "He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?" <sup>21</sup> Others said, "These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

### **The Opposition at the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem**

<sup>22</sup> Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter. <sup>23</sup> And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. <sup>24</sup> Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, "How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. <sup>26</sup> But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. <sup>27</sup> My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. <sup>28</sup> And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. <sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father's hand. <sup>30</sup> I and My Father are one."

<sup>31</sup> Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. <sup>32</sup> Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" <sup>33</sup> The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."

<sup>34</sup> Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, '*I said, "You are gods"'*'? <sup>35</sup> If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), <sup>36</sup> do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You are blaspheming,' because I said, 'I am the Son of God'? <sup>37</sup> If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; <sup>38</sup> but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father *is* in Me, and I in Him." <sup>39</sup> Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

<sup>40</sup> And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed. <sup>41</sup> Then many came to Him and said, "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true." <sup>42</sup> And many believed in Him there.

**Commentary: THE GOOD SHEPHERD DISCOURSE (CHAP. 10:1-21)**

The discourse on the Good Shepherd continues the same setting as in chapter 9. Comparing people to a shepherd and his sheep was common in the Middle East. Kings and priests called themselves shepherds and their subjects sheep. The Bible makes frequent use of this analogy. Many of the great men of the Old Testament were shepherds (e.g., Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David). As national leaders, Moses and David were both “shepherds” over Israel. Some of the most famous passages in the Bible employ this motif (cf. Ps. 23; Isa. 53:6; Luke 15:1–7).

Jesus developed this analogy in several ways. The connection with the preceding chapter is seen in Jesus’ contrast of the Pharisees with the man born blind. The Pharisees—spiritually blind while claiming insight (John 9:41)—were false shepherds. As the True Shepherd, Jesus came to seek and to heal. His sheep hear and respond to His voice.

**John 10:1–2.** Verses 1–5 describe a morning shepherding scene. A **shepherd** enters through a **gate** into a walled enclosure which has several flocks in one **sheep pen**. The enclosure, with stone walls, is guarded at night by a doorkeeper to prevent thieves and beasts of prey from entering. Anyone who would climb the wall would do it for no good purpose.

**John 10:3–4.** By contrast, the shepherd has a right to enter the sheep pen. **The watchman opens the gate**, and the shepherd comes in to call **his own sheep by name** (out from the other flocks). Shepherds knew their sheep well and gave them names. As **sheep** hear the sound of their owner’s familiar **voice**, they go to him. He

leads them out of the pen till his flock is formed. Then he goes **out** toward the fields with **the sheep** following **him**.

**John 10:5–6**. If a **stranger** enters the pen, the sheep **run away from him because** his **voice** is not familiar. The point of **this figure of speech** consists in how a shepherd forms his flock. People come to God because He calls them (cf. vv. 16, 27; Rom. 8:28, 30). Their proper response to His call is to follow Him (cf. John 1:43; 8:12; 12:26; 21:19, 22). *But this spiritual lesson was missed by those who heard Jesus, even though they certainly understood the local shepherd/sheep relationship. In their blindness, they could not see Jesus as the Lord who is the Shepherd* (cf. Ps. 23).

**John 10:7–9**. Jesus then developed the shepherd/sheep figure of speech in another way. After a shepherd's flock has been separated from the other **sheep**, he takes them to pasture. Near the pasture is <sup>3</sup> an enclosure for the sheep. The shepherd takes his place in the doorway or entrance and functions as a door or **gate**. The sheep can go out to the pasture in front of the enclosure, or if afraid, they can retreat into the security of the enclosure. The spiritual meaning is that Jesus is **the only Gate** by which people can enter into God's provision for them.

When Jesus said, **All who ever came before Me were thieves and robbers**, He *referred to those leaders of the nation who cared not for the spiritual good of the people* but only for themselves. Jesus the Shepherd provides security for His flock from enemies (**whoever enters through Me will be saved**, or "kept safe"). He also provides for their daily needs (the sheep **come in and go out, and find pasture**).

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<sup>3</sup> Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 309–310). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

**John 10:10.** **The thief**, that is, a false shepherd, cares only about feeding himself, not building up the flock. He steals sheep in order to **kill** them, thus destroying part of the flock. But Christ has **come** to benefit the sheep. He gives **life** which is not constricted but overflowing. The thief takes life; Christ gives **it to the full**.

**John 10:11.** Jesus then developed the sheep/shepherd figure in a third way. When evening settled over the land of Palestine, danger lurked. In Bible times lions, wolves,<sup>4</sup> jackals, panthers, leopards, bears, and hyenas were common in the countryside. The life of a shepherd could be dangerous as illustrated by David's fights with at least one lion and one bear (1 Sam. 17:34–35, 37).

*Jacob also experienced the labor and toil of being a faithful shepherd* (Gen. 31:38–40). Jesus said, **I am the Good Shepherd** (cf. John 10:14). In the Old Testament, God is called the Shepherd of His people (Pss. 23:1; 80:1–2; Ecc. 12:11; Isa. 40:11; Jer. 31:10). Jesus is this to His people, and He came to give **His life for** their benefit (cf. John 10:14, 17–18; Gal. 1:4; Eph. 5:2, 25; Heb. 9:14). He is also the “Great Shepherd” (Heb. 13:20–21) and “the Chief Shepherd” (1 Peter 5:4).

**John 10:12–13.** In contrast with **the Good Shepherd, who owns**, cares, feeds, protects, and dies for His **sheep**, the one who works for wages—**the hired hand**—does not have the same commitment. He is interested in making money and in self-preservation. If a **wolf attacks** (*harpazei*, lit., “snatches away”; cf. this same verb in

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<sup>4</sup> Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 310). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

v. 28), he **runs away** and his selfishness causes **the flock** to be scattered. Obviously, he **cares nothing for the sheep**. Israel had many false prophets, selfish kings, and imitation messiahs. The flock of God suffered constantly from their abuse (Jer. 10:21–22<sup>5</sup> Jer. 10:21–22; 12:10; Zech. 11:4–17).

**John 10:14–15**. In contrast with a hired workman, **the Good Shepherd** has an intimacy with and personal interest in the sheep (cf. vv. 3, 27). **I know My sheep** stresses His ownership and watchful oversight. **My sheep know Me** stresses their reciprocal knowledge of and intimacy with Him. *This intimacy is modeled on the loving and trusting mutual relationship of the Father and the Son*. Jesus' care and concern is evidenced by His prediction of His coming death for the flock. Some shepherds have willingly died while protecting their sheep from danger. Jesus willingly gave His **life for His sheep** (vv. 11, 15, 17–18)—on their behalf as their Substitute (Rom. 5:8, 10; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18). His death gives them life.

**John 10:16**. The **other sheep ... not of this** flock refers to Gentiles who would believe. His coming death would **bring them also** to the Father. **They too will listen to My voice**. Jesus continues to save people as they hear His voice in the Scriptures. Acts 18:9–11 illustrates how this works out in the history of the church. “I have many people in this city” (i.e., Corinth), the Lord told Paul.

**One flock and one Shepherd** speaks of the church with believers from Jewish and to save people as they hear His voice in the Scriptures. Acts 18:9–11 illustrates how this

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<sup>5</sup> Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 310). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.



works out in the history of the church. “I have many people in this city” (i.e., Corinth), the Lord told Paul. **One flock and one Shepherd** speaks of the church with believers from Jewish and Gentile “sheep pens” in one body with Christ as Head (cf. Eph. 2:11–22; 3:6).

**John 10:17–18**. Again, Jesus predicted His death, saying **four times** that He would **voluntarily lay down His life** (vv. 11, 14, 17–18). The **Father** has a special love for Jesus because of His sacrificial obedience to the will of God. *Jesus predicted His resurrection twice* (He would **take ... up** His life **again** [vv. 17–18]) and His sovereignty (**authority**) over His own destiny. *His death was wholly voluntary: No one takes it from Me*. Jesus was not a helpless pawn on history’s chessboard.

**John 10:19–21**. *For the third time Jesus’ teaching divided the people* (cf. 7:43; 9:16). **Many** in this hostile crowd judged Him to be **demon-possessed and raving mad** (cf. 7:20; 8:48, 52). **But others** figured that He was not demon-possessed, for how could **a demon open the eyes of the blind?** (cf. 9:16)

#### **4. THE FINAL PUBLIC TEACHING (John 10:22–42)**

*John then recorded a final confrontation of Jesus with the hostile Jerusalem crowd (vv. 22–39), followed by His withdrawal beyond Jordan (vv. 40–42) because of attempts to kill Him.*

**John 10:22–23**. **The Feast of Dedication** is nowadays called Hanukkah or the Feast of Lights. It commemorates the re-consecration of the temple by Judas Maccabeus in 165 B.C. after its desecration in 168 B.C. by Antiochus IV (Epiphanes). The time for the eight-day feast was in December. **It was winter**. The feast reminded the Jewish

people of their last great deliverance from their enemies. **Solomon's Colonnade** was a long-covered walkway on the east side of **the temple**. **Two months had elapsed since Jesus' last confrontation with the Jews** (7:1–10:21) at the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2), which was in October. Jesus again returned to the temple **area**.

**John 10:24. The Jews gathered around Him.** Actually they “closed in (*ekyklōsan*) on Him.” The hostile Jerusalem leaders were determined to pin Him down, so they surrounded Him. His enigmatic sayings plagued them, and they wanted Him to declare Himself on their terms. **How long will You keep us in suspense?** they asked. “Keep us in suspense” is literally “hold up our soul.” **They insisted, If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.**

**John 10:25–26.** Jesus responded that **the miracles** (*lit., “works”; cf. vv. 32, 38*) *He had done are clear evidence that He is from the Father* (cf. Isa. 35:3–6; John 3:2; 9:32–33). **He is the One the Father sent**, but He did not match their expectations. He was no Judas Maccabeus nor would His ministry be like Moses'. *Their problem was a lack of spiritual perception and faith.* **But you do not believe because you are not My sheep** is a simple statement of fact about their conduct. It also reminds one of the ultimate mystery of God's election (cf. 6:37).

**John 10:27.** **Jesus' flock is responsive to His teaching. They listen to His voice** (vv. 3–5, 16). They have an intimacy with Jesus (**I know them**; cf. vv. 3, 14), they understand His message of salvation, **and they follow** Him (vv. 4–5). *To follow Him means to obey the Father's will as Jesus did.*

**John 10:28.** *This is one of the clearest statements in the Bible that one who believes in Jesus for salvation will never be lost.* Believers sin and stumble, but **Jesus as the perfect Shepherd loses none of His flock** (cf. Luke 22:31–32).

**Eternal life is a gift** (John 3:16, 36; 5:24; 10:10; Rom. 6:23). If one has it, he has it eternally. **They shall never perish** is a strong affirmation in the Greek: *ou mē apolōntai eis ton aiōna* (“they will indeed not ever perish”; cf. John 3:16, *mē apolētai*, “never perish”).

The security of the sheep is found in the ability of the Shepherd to defend and preserve His flock. Such security does not depend on the ability of the frail sheep. **No one can even snatch His sheep out of His hand.** “Snatch” is *harpasei*, related to *harpax* (“ravenous wolves, robbers”). This is a fitting word here for the same verb (*harpazei*) is used in 10:12, “the wolf attacks” (lit., “snatches away”).

**John 10:29.** **My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all.** That is, **no one is strong enough to snatch any of Jesus’ flock from the Father’s hand** (or from Jesus’ hand, v. 28). As the NIV margin states, **verse 29a** in many early Greek manuscripts reads, *“What My Father has given Me is greater than all.”* The thought of the verse in either case is that the Father who is omnipotent secures the flock by His power and protection. God’s plan of salvation for Jesus’ flock cannot be aborted.

**John 10:30.** When Jesus said, **I and the Father are One**, He was not affirming that He and the Father are the same Person. The Son and the Father are two Persons in the Trinity. This is confirmed here by the fact that the word “One” is neuter. Instead, He was saying *They have the closest possible unity of purpose. Jesus’ will is identical to*

*the Father's regarding the salvation of His sheep.* And yet absolute identity of wills involves identity of nature. **Jesus and the Father are One in will (and also in nature for both are God;** cf. 20:28; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:9).

**John 10:31–32.** The hostile crowd reacted and attempted **to stone** Jesus (cf. 8:59) because they understood the implications of His claim. Jesus' courage was displayed in His calm question: **Which of His many great miracles** (lit., "works"; cf. 10:25, 38) **from the Father** was their reason for wanting to **stone** Him?

**John 10:33.** They claimed that they found no objection in His works. (*Yet His healings on the Sabbath had angered them* [John 5:18; John 9:16].) They said **they objected because He, a mere man, claimed to be God.** This, they said, was **blasphemy.** And yet, ironically, Jesus, who *is* God, did become Man (1:1, 14, 18). Jesus did not walk around Palestine saying "I am God," but His interpretation of the Sabbath and His words about His union with the Father revealed His claim of oneness in nature with God.

**John 10:34.** Jesus' response to their objection requires a bit of insight into the methods of argument common in Rabbinic discussions. He first directed them to the Old <sup>6</sup> Testament: **in your Law.** Normally "the Law" refers to the first five books. But here it means all the Old Testament, for Jesus quoted from the Psalms. It was "your" Law in the sense that they gloried in their possession of it, and also in the sense that they should submit to its authority over them.

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<sup>6</sup> Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 311–312). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

**Psalm 82** speaks of God as the true Judge (Ps. 82:1, 8) and of men, appointed as judges, who were failing to provide true judgment for God (Ps. 82:2–7). “Gods” in Psalm 82:1, 6 refers to these human judges. In this sense, God **said** to the Jews, **You are gods**. In no way does this speak of a divine nature in man.

**John 10:35**. As seen in verse 34, Jesus argued that in certain situations (as in Ps. 82:1, 6) men were called ... “gods.” The Hebrew word for **God** or gods is *’ēlōhîm*. This word is used elsewhere (e.g., Ex. 21:6; 22:8) to mean human judges. Jesus added to His argument the words, **and the Scripture cannot be broken**, so that no one could evade its force by saying an error was in the Scriptures. This important text clearly points up the inerrancy of the Bible.

**John 10:36**. Jesus now completed His argument. Since the inerrant Bible called their judges “gods,” *the Jews could not logically accuse Him of blasphemy for calling Himself God’s Son since He was under divine orders (set apart) and on God’s mission (sent into the world)*.

**John 10:37–38**. Though the Jews were reluctant to **believe** Jesus’ words, God was giving them **miracles** (lit., “works”; cf. vv. 25, 32), which he was doing through Jesus. **These signs were given for their learning** so that by pondering their significance **they might recognize Jesus’ oneness with the Father (the Father is in Me, and I in the Father)**. *Nicodemus had recognized this* for he said, “No one could perform [those] miraculous signs ... if God were not with Him” (3:2).

**John 10:39.** Again an attempt was made to seize (from *piazō*) Him (cf. 7:30, 32, 44; 8:20), perhaps to bring Him to trial. Once again, since it was not God's time, He escaped (cf. 5:13; 8:59; 12:36). No explanation is given as to how He escaped.

**John 10:40–42.** Because of their hostility, Jesus went ... across the Jordan to Perea, which had been the location of John the Baptist's activity (1:28). Jesus' ministry here was received much more favorably, probably because the Baptist had prepared the people there. John, even though dead, was still having influence in people's lives as they remembered his witness. Though John never performed a miraculous sign (*sēmeion*), the people believed his witness about Jesus. By contrast, the hostile Jerusalem crowd had seen His signs and yet disobeyed. In Perea many trusted Jesus as Savior.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Blum, E. A. (1985). [John](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 312). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.