

H O U S E o f W I S D O M

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John 10 - Part I

The Door of the Sheepfold

John 10:1-14: *1. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that enters not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2. But he that enters in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3. To him the porter opens; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calls his own sheep by name, and leads them out. 4. And when he puts forth his own sheep, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. 6. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. 7. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 8. **All** that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. 9. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. 10. The thief comes not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. 11. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees: and the wolf catches them, and scatters the sheep. 13. The hireling flees, because he is an hireling, and cares not for the sheep. 14. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.*

At night, in ancient times, a shepherd protected the sheep from predators and from straying by putting them in an enclosure (fold) of some kind. Even when away overnight in distant pastures, some kind of temporary fold was set up. Or, they watched the sheep in shifts. But they had to be watch constantly so as not to stray or get in trouble. Outwardly, a fold is a metaphor for an assemble of believers, who encourage, inspire and support each other through difficult times. Inwardly, the fold is the heart, and the door into your heart is Jesus Christ, the only one through whom comes the truth, and who guards the door of the heart. He is represented by the cherubim with a flaming sword placed at the gate to the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:24) after Adam and Eve sinned. What is a thief, and what other way does he get to the heart, if not through the door? (i.e. Christ did not send him).

Jeremiah 23:1, 30-31: *1. Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! saith the Lord.... 30. Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that steal my words every one from his neighbor. 31. Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. A thief is a teacher/preacher of the Bible who is giving the people men's opinions. Several times I have seen people who immediately saw the truth that the Father and Son were two individual beings. But when they went back to their church and shared what they had learned, the pastor, or another stole the truth from them. How did they get to the heart of the person? The individual listened to another voice, the voice of a stranger, which came in another way - through the intellect. The thief can not come through the gate: **Joel 2:9:** *They (Babylon, Joel 1:6) shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses; they shall enter in at the windows like a thief.**

The thief comes unexpected, to steal, kill and destroy the truth that the Lord puts in the heart. The effect of a wolf is the same, but goes about his work differently: **Matthew 7:15:** *Beware of false prophets, which come to you*

in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. The wolf looks and acts like a sheep. I can relate to a thief in that when I first came to the Lord was because I had the spirit of the Lord. The church I joined took away the Lord's spirit and gave me their spirit of understanding. A wolf, on the other hand, tries to act like a sheep, but inwardly is full of deceit. The word for *ravening* is actually *extorting*. Extortion is by *threats, force or unfair means*. I have seen and heard of whole churches being shutdown, or the building sold from under the congregation because many were seeing something wrong with church doctrines, and speaking out, all of which resulted in scattering the group. A hireling (pastor) flees when he sees the wolf (upper church management) coming. Outwardly, pastors are paid servants of men's organizations, and they teach their doctrines. Those who teach the truth are not paid by an organization of man, but freely disseminate the riches of God to others. The hireling who flees, and whose worldly career is on the line, will not stand up for the sheep and defend the truth. I have heard pastors admit, anonymously, that if they told their congregations that they did not believe what they were teaching, they would be without a job. The wolf is a metaphor for a false message mingled with the truth and forced on the congregation. When it is received, the false message will kill the truth in a person's heart and destroy the spiritual life of a sheep who is unaware.

God's people are referred to as *the sheep of my pasture*, those who "hear the voice of the great Shepherd (Hebrews 13:10)." **Ezekiel 34:12-16:** *12. As a shepherd seeks out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. 13. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie (rest) in a good fold, and in a fat (positive for prosperous) pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. 15. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. 16. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat (negative for sin) and the strong; I will feed them with judgment (a decision, verdict).* The sheep are scattered into many folds because of confusion (Babylon in Joel 2:9 above). What does it mean to feed on the mountains of Israel? The city of Jerusalem was built on mountains. As a metaphor, it is the *mother of us all* (Galatians 4:26). It is a symbol for the mind of Christ. Also, Christ teaches us through the writings of Israel.

Ezekiel 34:18: *Seem it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue (remnant) of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue (remainder) with your feet?* Does it seem a small thing that false teachers have polluted God's spiritual understanding for the modern day church, by their drinking from the words of man (Proverbs 18:4). They drink from the world's way of understanding, and foul the remainder of the truth by their conduct (walking in error).

The door keeper (porter) of the heart is YOU. Jesus gave us all a warning: **Mark 13:33-37:** *33. Take heed, watch and pray: for you know not when the time is. 34. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. 35. Watch ye therefore: for you know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning: 36. Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. 37. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.* These verses speak not of the time of Christ's literal return, but of a time when the spirit of Christ moves on the darkness of your earthly heart. Only Jesus comes to the door; so be watchful and discerning of the impressions of your heart that you invite him in when he knocks at the door (Revelation 3:20). Amen.