

GOSPEL OF YOHANAN

Chapter 10

The passages we are about to study are immersed in the love of God, where God's love overflows. It is an outpouring of His profound affection for those who have been mistreated or insulted because of Him. In **Matthew 5**, Yeshua says:

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.

Here, in the Gospel of Yohanan, Yeshua shows us the extent of these blessings after He saw that one of His own was falsely abused and mistreated. What follows, in the **10th Chapter**, was meant for the man born blind and for all who are suffering for the Messiah and for those that count it worthy to be reviled and persecuted in His name.

The story began after Jesus performed the miracle that no one else could perform, the healing of a man born blind. Even his opponents knew that it was a unique miracle. In fact, there was a division among them, as many of them were even arguing. In **John 9:16**, some of them said:
...How can a man who is a sinner do such signs? ...

Instead of putting their arms down and recognizing that it was the Messiah who was present in Israel, calling on them, they closed their eyes to this miracle. They called the Messiah a sinner, and turned against this unfortunate man born blind. They reviled him and they excommunicated him. It would be hard to imagine a worse outcome.

It is at this point that Jesus' heart went for this healed blind man who was falsely accused and mistreated because of Him. In **Chapter 10**, Jesus pours out His love for the healed man as well as for each one of His own, who undergo such a treatment. The Spirit of God used a whole chapter of the Scriptures to assure us of the infinite love that God has for us.

Let me begin to present to you some selected verses from **John 10**. I am going to skip the verses that carry the religious leader's objections on purpose; we will come back to them. The following verses will give you a sense of His love for you, if you believe that He is the Messiah.

John 10: 7, 9, 11, 14, 15, 27, 28, 30

Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved - and will go in and out and find pasture.

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

*And I give them eternal life, and they shall **never perish**; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.*

I and My Father are one.

These verses give us a sense of the protection that a believer has in the God of the Bible. As a mother shields and protects her infant, so God shields and protects His own people. It is my prayer that your heart will be touched by our Messiah's deep and such profound love for you, if you believe in Him.

If you are not a believer, and you are searching, these passages are here to tell you that there is someone who really cares for you. There is someone who is extending His hand to you, so that you might have, not only peace in your heart, but everlasting life with your Creator.

As this chapter speaks of God's love, it also speaks of His resentment against those who are working against Him. See the first verse.

John 10:1

Most assuredly, 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.

It is in this mood that the text starts. Reading the first verse, one can already feel that Jesus was hurt and angry at those who had bestowed on themselves an authority that did not belong to them and took on the liberty to mistreat His own. These thieves and robbers were those of Chapter 9 who excommunicated the poor healed man. Twice, He calls them *thieves and robbers*.

John 10: 8

All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

In **verse 5**, He calls them *strangers*. Speaking of His sheep, He says:

Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

They were strangers to the things of God and to His will. Yet they were the religious leaders.

Furthermore, these people come for one purpose. See what Jesus says in **verse 10**:

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy....

Kill and destroy what? They came to destroy all that pertains to God and all things that point to God. Jesus describes them even further in **verses 12-13** by calling them *hireling* or *hired servants* who, after a while, forgot about the owner and thought themselves owners.

John 10:12, 13

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.

The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.

Instead of protecting and shielding, they run away for their lives. But the true Shepherd came to give His life for them.

But how could these people come to the point of doing such things? These are the ones who have taken on themselves to wear the priestly robe. These are the ones who anointed themselves to play as the shepherds of the people of God. It is not a light thing to play with God's people. In fact, these people played God. They replaced God and took His place and so they were playing

God. This is what I believe is intended with the passage that we find in **verses 34-35**, when Jesus speaks to them and says:

..... *"Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"?"*
If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken),

Let's first look at this passage in more detail; I believe that there is there a great truth to grasp. This is indeed a very difficult passage. Many commentators have come up with limited interpretation and some have barely covered it. Because, at first glance, it seems to be saying that man can be called God. Can it?

Guess who you find waiting for you at the threshold of these verses? All those cults and company, with Bible in their hands, greeting you with a victorious smile and saying: "I told you so. We are gods, just like Jesus is. We are all like Him and there is nothing special about Him." Do you see how they use that verse? But what this passage is showing is the exact opposite of what they pretend it to be. In fact, the irony of it all is that this passage speaks of this very type of people.

The question is how can Jesus call them gods? Where they really gods? Most commentators refer back to **Psalm 82** from which Yeshua quotes this passage. What they conclude is that **Psalm 82** simply calls judges and magistrates *gods*, because they are representing God on earth. But saying this, is just giving credence to these cults that believe that man is God.

Jewish commentators have had a different approach. There are few different ways in which **Psalm 82** was understood in Jewish traditions:

First, some have said that it refers to angels.

Second, others have called them *Judges*. Just like most modern commentators. In Jewish tradition it referred to the judges of Israel.

Third, other rabbis have understood it to be Israel at Sinai. This the most prominent approach that we find in the Talmud and in the Zohar.

One rabbi explained that this is Israel before they built the Golden Calf. This interpretation is supported by the fact that it says in the same verse that *the Word of God came to them*; they understood the law at Sinai.

But how can we understand this passage in context with what is happening in the Gospel of John and in **Psalm 82**? How can we come to an understanding of this saying without injuring the whole body of teaching that we find all over the Scriptures?

Let's begin with **Psalm 82**. Both passages speak of a same situation with the same generation of people. See what **verse 1** says.

Psalm 82:1

God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods.

Well how many gods do we have here? ...A lot, too many.

What did God say in **Isaiah 43:10**?

..... understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me.

How come we find so many here?

What else does He say in **Isaiah 44:6**?

Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: `I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.

What about in **Isaiah 45:5**?

I am the LORD, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me....

So who are these gods in **Psalm 82**? If there is only One God, then these were not gods. But, I believe that these are people who pretended to be gods. There is divine irony here; these people who were called to be hired servants ended up thinking that they were gods.

It is very much like what Jesus says in **Mark 2:17** when He says:

...I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.

But the Bible clearly says that no one is righteous (**Psalm 14, 53, Romans 3**). So there is the irony here. If you think you are righteous, I did not come for you. In **John 10** and **Psalm 82**, these people were worse than thinking that they were righteous; they thought they were gods.

In fact, they were not much of gods. See what the following verses say in **Psalm 82**. It is not something you would say to some gods.

Psalm 82: 2-5

How long will you judge unjustly, And show partiality to the wicked? Selah

Defend the poor and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and needy.

Deliver the poor and needy; Free them from the hand of the wicked.

They do not know, nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are unstable.

Some gods they were! Weren't they? They judged falsely. They were blinded to the truth. They took advantage of the poor and needy God says they are wicked and do not understand. They were mighty gods to themselves.

It is **verse 6** that Jesus quoted to the judges of His time.

Psalm 82:6

I said, "You are gods, And all of you are children of the Most High

Again, the rest of Psalm tells you that they were not real gods. See what it further says in the next verses, **John 10: 7, 8**

But you shall die like men, And fall like one of the princes."

Arise, O God, judge the earth; For You shall inherit all nations.

This is divine irony. Those who thought they were gods, were mere men. They were nothing but sinful men. This is what I believe Jesus was telling the religious institution of the time. What I find extraordinary is that Jesus only quotes **verse 6**. Why did He do that? What did He mean by that? Let's go back to **John 10** and put in context why Yeshua said that. It is after Jesus said *I and the Father are one*, that they picked up stones to stone Jesus and Jesus answered them in **John 10: 32**:

..... *"Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?"*

Now, here is their reply. Let's read **verses 33-36**. They describe the events preceding Jesus' quotation of **Psalm 82**.

John 10: 33-36

.... *"For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God."*

Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"?"

"If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), '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'?"

You see, what is happening here is that they wanted to stone Jesus because they understood His claim of divinity. But Jesus, who is the Word incarnate, God in the flesh, answers them and says to them that He came on earth humbly as the Son of God. They, who were mere men, thought of themselves as being fully gods. The roles were reversed. They took on the role of God and vested themselves with all kinds of authorities, when they were just men, while Yeshua who was God incarnate took on the form of a Servant. How ironic.

They had forgotten the beam in their eye and tried to find a speck on Yeshua's eyes, but they could not. This is what they thought of themselves. This is why I believe Jesus says *your law*, meaning what you have made of God's law and how you manipulated it to make yourselves gods.

This is where the descendants of Eve have believed the same lie that their mother believed.

Remember the lie Satan suggested to Eve in **Genesis 3:5**?

For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

By the time of **John 10**, they had fully developed into thinking they were gods, just like Satan thought of himself in **Isaiah 14:14** who said in his heart:

I will be like the Most High.

What we are reading here is the climax of sin. It is the end of it all, when man thinks he is God. This is why this passage of **John 10** represents the point of no return for those of the religious institution of the time.

In **Genesis 3:22**, we find the same kind of irony when God says:

.....Behold, the man has become like one of Us.....

How can man become like God? ...Only in his thoughts. Therefore, God put Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden, away from the Tree of life, in order to save them from an eternity in sin. This is what eating of the tree of life would have done to Adam and Eve should they have eaten it while in their sinful state.

The beauty of it all is that, in **John 10**, the same God took on a form of a man in order to save man from an eternity of sin, by dying and resurrecting. This, in order for the saved one to eat of the tree of life in their redeemed state, as we see in **Revelation 2:7**

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.

Yet only a few overcome, because most do not believe.

What are the characteristics of those who think of themselves as gods?

See what Jesus says in **John 10:1**. Let's read it one more time:

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is ... what? ... a thief and a robber.

They are thieves and robbers and the Greek words are strong. The word *thief* is *kleptes* where we get our word kleptomania, which means somebody with obsessive desire to steal. Stealing became their nature. According to Zodhiates in his Lexical Aids to the New Testament, this word designates those who steal by fraud and in secret. While the other word *robber*, which is *lestes*, designates those who steal by violence and do so openly.

This is true for false religions. They are strong with much influence and they openly excommunicate those who do not agree with them. They are the *lestes*, and they also pretend to have secret knowledge that no one can attain but through them. They are the *kleptes*; they steal from God. This covers all false religious institutions. It does not only pertain to some misguided Pharisees.

These words are meant to speak to the heart of all who are shepherds and the like and to remind them of the extreme importance of carrying God's name. The Word of God cannot be broken.

What we read here is not new; in the Old Testament, God warned the false shepherds. See the strong words we find in **Jeremiah 23:2**

Therefore thus says the LORD God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: "You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings," says the LORD.

False shepherds would be severely judged. The same thing is said in **James 3:1**

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

Therefore, what we find in **John 10** is something that had started long before, and it is also still going on. Where do you think all this is leading to? Remember what Jesus said in **John 5:43** *I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.*

Of whom was He speaking? It is the final false shepherd—the antichrist. The same was spoken of in **Zechariah 11:16-17**.

For indeed I will raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for those who are cut off, nor seek the young, nor heal those that are broken, nor feed those that still stand. But he will eat the flesh of the fat and tear their hooves in pieces.

Woe to the worthless shepherd, Who leaves the flock! A sword shall be against his arm And against his right eye; His arm shall completely wither, And his right eye shall be totally blinded."

This passage, in **Zechariah**, comes after they rejected the True Shepherd. This prophecy has not yet been fulfilled. Man's continued denial of the True Shepherd will bring about a span of time until the man of sin, as Paul calls the Antichrist in **2Thessalonians**, reveals himself.

It is in this passage, where we find such a strong warning for those who misuse God's name, that we also find one of the greatest encouragements for those who love God. Let's begin by reading **John 10:2-5**

But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

It is here that Jesus speaks of Himself as the Shepherd. The Shepherd begins by entering by the door. He does things the proper and honest way. We learn something quite deep here; it says that when He enters the sheepfold, He calls the sheep and they recognize His voice and follow Him.

Have you ever wondered why it is that not everyone follows Jesus? Or why some people leave the faith? The reason is simple. It is because they simply are not His sheep. His sheep know His voice and will not follow a stranger. Those who hear and believe the voice of strangers and follow them instead of God, simply means that they are not God's sheep. Let's not accuse the philosophy teacher or the anti-missionaries, even though these have to answer to Yeshua. But when people leave or don't believe, it is because they are not His own.

Yeshua clearly says in **John 10:14**

I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

Again in **John 10: 26, 27**

But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

Of those who are His sheep, the Messiah goes a very long way to tell them how much they mean to Him. See what He says in **John 10:28**

And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

First, true believers never leave. They might backslide for a while, but they will never deny who the Messiah is. Furthermore, no one would be able to snatch them out of His hand, whether it would be now or for eternity. These are strong words, but Jesus does not stop here. He goes even further to show that His sheep are very precious kept and protected; He adds another Hand to His hand.

John 10:29

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.

Therefore we now have, not one hand, but two hands. See how much God loves His own people? This is where He comes with this great statement in the following verse:

John 10:30

I and My Father are one.

The people understood that, by this statement, He made Himself God. This is why, in **verse 31**, they picked up stones to stone Him. They rightly understood who He was, but I don't believe the words "*I and My Father are one*" were meant to show His deity. He had already shown that He was divine so many times before, in the first 9 chapters of **John**. I believe that He said that in order to show that He and the Father are one in their determination to keep the believers safe for all eternity. That implies deity. But first and foremost, His purpose in saying that was to tell us that He will be guarding us, the believers, forever and ever. This is how far our eternal security goes, in that God the Father and God the Son are One in keeping us safe with Him.

What I find most extraordinary is that we are told that these words were uttered during the Feast of Dedication—the Feast of Hanukkah.

John 10:22

Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter.

What is the relation between Hanukkah and the eternal security of the believer? Do you remember what happened during the events surrounding the feast of Hanukkah? It was the time when another type of thief and robber came to Israel and wanted to do away with everything that pertained to the Jewish People. His name was Antiochus Epiphanes. He tried to stop Israel from being who they are. He even forbade the reading of the Word of God and also forbade Jews to follow the law of God. But, what he did not realize is that he was fighting against God.

The same protective love of God we see in action for His people Israel during the events of this Feast of Dedication, we see here voiced by the Son of God, who says that no one could snatch them from His or His Father's hand. As God loves the nation of Israel with an unconditional

love, so He loves His own. No sheep will be lost; no Antiochus will be able to snatch them out of our God's hand.

Some might argue and say: well, why does God go against the Pharisees, the religious leaders, if you say that He loves Israel? There is a misconception that says that the religious institutions represent the people, especially in Judaism. That is not even a consensus within the people of Israel today. The history of Israel in the Bible clearly shows the opposite, as the leaders rejected all the prophets of God and ended up rejecting the very Messiah of Israel.

There is something quite dramatic here that we learn from Edersheim, a Messianic Jewish commentator from the 1800's. He said that during the eight days of the Feast [Hanukkah] at the time of Jesus, they used to recite the Hallel in the same way they do at Passover and they also practiced the carrying of palm-branches. This, I find quite significant. The Hallel is a collection of **Psalms 113-118**, and it ends with this passage in **verse 22** of **Psalm 118** which says:
The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.

This is what was being fulfilled in front of their eyes, as the Messiah was uttering the words of **John 10**; a final rejection that prompted Yeshua to reassure His own of His continued protection.

What about the Palm branches? The symbol is taken from the Feast of Tabernacles, which symbolizes the coming Messianic time of the Millennium. These branches represent these times and the peoples' yearning for that time, which the Messiah will bring. But because they rejected the Messiah, this time is delayed until His Second Coming. These two symbolisms, found in Israel at the time when Jesus was completely rejected, add another dimension to the story. They had the very key to their freedom, but they rejected it.

It was after these things that the **Gospel of Luke** picks up the scene, and Luke reports that Yeshua gave the mission to the *seventy-two*, as we see in **Luke 10:1-20**. Here Jesus was sending out messengers to all the towns in order to give people opportunities to accept His message. It was the end and there was urgency. The times were critical and the Messiah was soon to leave this earth. What were they to say? At the end of **Verse 11** of **Luke 10**, Jesus tells them to say to the people *that the kingdom of God has come near you*. It is interesting that in **Luke 10:3**, He says:

Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves.

The same imagery is in **John 10:12**

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.

After sending the seventy-two, Luke tells us that, Yeshua taught His followers on prayer (**Luke 11:1-13**). He was preparing them for His departure. The disciples asked Him: *Lord, teach us to pray*. He taught them through the Lord's Prayer.

It is at this time that He taught them about the Blessed Hope, His return. **Luke 12:35-48**. This is where He says, in **verse 37**

Blessed are those servants whom the master, when he comes, will find watching...

From that time on, Yeshua was, and still today is, preparing His own to live on this earth, until He comes and takes them home. Notice what title He used in **John 10:11, 14**: “the good shepherd.” Three times in these two verses, He says it:

John 10:11

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

John 10:14

I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

Here the word *good*—*kalos* in Greek—means: excellent, eminent, surpassing, precious. This word is translated as *worthy* in **James 4:17**. Here, He was saying that He is the **Ultimate Shepherd**. The fact that He is **The Shepherd** is shown in three different ways in the New Testament. Let’s look at them and see the progression.

First: Here in **John 10:11**, He is the “**the Good Shepherd**,” the one who is to lay down His life for the sheep, through His death. This is what He says in the following verses:

John 10:15

As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

So, He is the Good Shepherd in death.

In **Hebrews 13:20**, He is spoken of as the **Great Shepherd**.

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Second, we see Yeshua resurrected and in His priestly function. He is “**the Great Shepherd**” in resurrection.

In **1Peter 5:4** He is called “**The Chief Shepherd**.”

and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

Third, Yeshua is seen in His glory at the Second Coming, when He comes as the Shepherd of all shepherds to fulfill His function of prophet.

Thus, in these titles, we see the Son of God who comes first to die as the **Good Shepherd**, then resurrects and so fulfills His priestly function as the **Great Shepherd**. Then He comes back to fulfill His kingly function as the **Chief Shepherd**.

This is not all. There is something of great magnitude here. When Yeshua speaks of Himself as a *Shepherd*, He was affirming His deity.

How did the Jewish people, to whom He was speaking, understand this title? Who is the Shepherd of Israel in the Old Testament? Remember **Psalm 23:1**
The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Another place, where the Lord is called the Shepherd of Israel, is in **Psalm 80:1**. See how Asaph addresses the Lord here:

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock; You who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth!

The Shepherd was none else than God Himself. When then the Savior said, “I *am* the good shepherd,” He identified Himself with the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

But let’s go back to **Psalm 23**, as it speaks so much of the things that we read in **John 10**. David speaks of the Lord being the Shepherd. Yeshua tell us how He is our Shepherd.

Psalm 23 is one of the greatest Psalms in the Scriptures. Speaking of David who wrote it, Spurgeon described it this way:

It is but a moment's opening of his soul; but, as when one, walking the winter street sees the door opened for some one to enter, and the red light streams a moment forth, and the forms of happy children are running to greet the comer, and warm music sounds, though the door shuts and leaves the night black, yet it cannot shut back again all that the eyes, the ear, the heart, and the imagination have seen--so in this Psalm.

This Psalm does not stand alone; there are, in fact, three beautiful Psalms that really bring out the Shepherd aspect of our Lord: **Psalm 22, 23** and **24**. These three are similar to the three mentioned of the Shepherd in the New Testament.

The first shows us the death of the Shepherd Christ dying for His sheep (**Psalm 22**).

It starts with

My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?...

It is there that it says in **verse 16**

...They pierced My hands and My feet; a prophecy of the manner of the death of the Shepherd.

Here He is the **Good Shepherd**.

The second **Psalm** is **Psalm 23**, where after His death and resurrection, the Lord supplies the needs of His sheep. Here He is the **Great Shepherd**.

The Third Psalm, **Psalm 24**, we see the Shepherd coming in all His glory.

Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah

Here He is, the **Chief Shepherd**.

These three Psalms show Yeshua from death to glory, from the cross to the crown. They represent all the needs of the sheep.

This image of God, as the Shepherd of Israel, is seen many times throughout the Old Testament especially in **Ezekiel 34**. Look at **verse 11** and see how they sound like those of **John 10**.
For thus says the Lord GOD: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.

This is precisely what Jesus was doing in the Gospel of John. While the words of Yeshua in **John 10** speak of the present dispensation, the following words of **Ezekiel 34:12-14** speak of the gathering of Israel at the Second Coming:

As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day.

And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country.

I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.

See how the chapter in **Ezekiel 34** ends in **verses 30-31**.

"Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and they, the house of Israel, are My people," says the Lord GOD.

"You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God," says the Lord GOD.

As it is true at the second coming, it is true now; you can have God as your Shepherd, as your Pastor. When God said that Israel, as a nation, is the apple of His eye in **Zechariah 2:8**, it also applies to you if you have recognized Yeshua as your personal Saviour. Furthermore, all these blessings are available to us today.

Do you know what the sheepfold in **John 10:1** represents? It does not represent heaven because thieves and robbers do not climb up into it. The sheepfold is the place of blessings for the believers. In fact He spoke of the other sheep He has that are in another sheepfold. See **Verse 16**.
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.

Who were these sheep? These *other sheep* were the gentile believers. Here in **John**, the Messiah was speaking to Israel as He reminds us that the gentile believers were soon to enter and be grafted into the Olive Tree, while many of the natural branches will be broken off. Notice something beautiful; Yeshua does not say, "other sheep I will have," but "other sheep I have." They were His, even then. Even before many came to believe, Jesus knew of them.

But if Jesus is the Shepherd, the believer is then His sheep. There is a whole lot that comes with this metaphor. Let us briefly look at some particularity about sheep, as they may pertain to man.

Here are some examples. Sheep breeders will tell you that sheep are notoriously poor survivors. They are helpless; nature has endowed them with neither weapons of attack nor defense. Furthermore, they are prone to many different kinds of illnesses. If they get sick, they often die quickly. An old saying goes, “You can always tell a sick sheep ‘cause they lay real still and don’t breathe.”

Also sheep are known to literally eat themselves off the edge of a cliff. They can become so focused on the food directly in front of them, that they will not look ahead and see that they are about to fall to their death. Another fact about sheep is, when in a herd, they are not concerned in the least little bit with where they are going. Their only concern is whether or not they are surrounded by other sheep. Because they are followers, they are the prime example of “the majority wins.”

Is this how man is? Very much so! Spiritually we are very poor survivors and we are prone to many spiritual short comings. Left to ourselves, we will eventually fall into that cliff of backsliding. But I have good news; He knows the name of each and every one of His sheep as He says in **John 10:3**. Yeshua will never leave you nor forsake you. We ought to go to Him for our strength.

Here is a little illustration:

A man in Australia was arrested and charged with stealing a sheep. But he claimed emphatically that it was one of his own that had been missing for many days. When the case went to court, the judge was puzzled, not knowing how to decide the matter. At last he asked that the sheep be brought into the courtroom. Then he ordered the plaintiff to step outside and call the animal. The sheep made no response except to raise its head and look frightened. The judge then instructed the defendant to go to the courtyard and call the sheep. When the accused man began to make his distinctive call, the sheep bounded toward the door. It was obvious that he recognized the familiar voice of his master.

Later, after the establishment of the Messianic Times, God will establish a shepherd on earth for the nation of Israel.

Ezekiel 34:23, 24

I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd.

And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

This time is yet to come and because there are no shepherds, God had become their Shepherd.