

An Incredible Claim; A Vicious Rejection

The Shepherd's Security Promise

John 10.22-30

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John 10.22-42 – Overview

❖ **The Feast of Dedication** (Hanukkah)

- ▶ An eight day celebration that began on 25 Kislev (the lunar month coinciding with December); decreed as a yearly celebration and the only extra-biblical feast observed by the Jews.
- ▶ Commemorated of the liberation of Jerusalem from the Seleucid armies and the reconsecration of the desecrated and abandoned Temple in 25 Kislev, 164 B.C.
- ▶ The last significant victory of national deliverance over oppression experienced by the Jews —“the right to worship ‘appeared to us at a time when we hardly dared hope for it.’ ”
- ▶ Now the One greater than the Temple was here (cf. John 2.19-22), the Desire of Nations had come (Haggai 2.7), and the Sought-After One, the Messenger of the Covenant had appeared in his temple (Malachi 3.1), but yet again, “his own did not receive him” (P¹¹).

▶ John always presents Jesus, when in the Temple at a feast time, as the fulfillment of that particular observance (Sabbath [ch. 5], Passover [ch. 6], Tabernacles [chs. 7-9]). In his crucifixion, Jesus will render the work of this temple concluded and obsolete; his Body, the Church, is now his temple on earth; in the New Jerusalem, he, the Lamb, will be the temple (Revelation 21.11).

❖ **Further confrontation**

▶ Is Jesus demon-possessed and out of his mind? “Can a demon-possessed man open the eyes of the blind?” These are the divided opinions of the *Learned-Ones* as Jesus declares himself to be the True Shepherd. The questioners, however, still do not believe. He is confronted again, but not for sincere clarification as it was with the healed blind man (9.36). His questioners are seeking an unambiguous statement that will give them the clear justification to carry out the murder that is in their hearts—a spirit that will manifest itself twice during this dialogue and validate, yet again, the words of Jesus about them (v. 26; cf. 8.40-41, 43-44).

- ❖ The Christological nature of Jesus' earlier "Savior-Shepherd" statements continues to be the main presentation. Jesus again makes use of *repeated emphasis* to convey one of the most profound truths about the completeness of his saving work on behalf of his sheep. He unambiguously declares his "oneness" with the Father (v. 30), his validation as the Father's very own *Sent One* (v. 36-38), and himself as the source of eternal life with the sovereign right to determine those who are his sheep, and thus, the eternal destiny of every one in the world (vss. 28-29). If all he says in this passage is true, then he is as has been said, either a liar, a lunatic, or truly *the* Lord—preeminent and eternal.

An Ominous Warning

“I did tell you, but you do not believe. The works I do in my Father’s name testify about me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep.”

- ❖ Jesus has never explicitly stated that he is the “Christ”—the Messiah. He has, however, plainly declared in both word and deed, with more than sufficient revelation, that he is indeed “the Messiah, the Son of God” (John 20.31)—
 - ▶ He has identified God as his Father and himself as the “Son of God” (5.25-26)
 - ▶ He has referred to himself with a messianic title, “Son of Man” (5.27; 6.53, 62; 9.37)
 - ▶ He has appropriated the sacred name “I AM” and presented himself as the fulfillment of it’s divine representation (e.g. *“I am the Bread of Life that has come down from heaven”*)
 - ▶ His miraculous signs have testified to his validity as the “Sent One” from the Father
- ❖ How can the Jews see and hear so much revelation and yet not know and believe?

“You do not believe because you are not my sheep.”

❖ Are we his sheep because we believe?

- ▶ Does believing make us his sheep or do we believe because we are his sheep?

“You do not believe because you are not my sheep.”

- ▶ Does salvation depend primarily on faith?

For He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. In love He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will—to the praise of His glorious grace, which He has freely given us in the One He loves. . . . But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. . . . For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God . . .

—Ephesians 1.4-6; 2.4-5, 8

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered in the wilderness. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did.

These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the culmination of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

—1 Corinthians 10.1-6, 11-12

A Promise Too Good to be True

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand. I and the Father are one.”

❖ What does it mean to be “his sheep?”

- (1) “My sheep listen to my voice” (present tense continually)
- (2) “I know my sheep” (present tense continuing)
- (3) “They follow me” (cf. Luke 14.25-35; also Ephesians 5.1-2; Philippians 2.1-8)
- (4) “I give them eternal life” – present possession and future promise
- (5) “They shall never perish” (cf. Colossians 3.3-4)
- (6) “No one will snatch them out of my hand” (double negative plus subjective: “never ever”)

❖ An infinite security—

“No one will snatch them out of my hand”

“No one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.”

“I and the Father are one in our omnipotent grip”

Q. What is your only comfort in life and in death?

A. That I am not my own,¹ but belong—

body and soul, in life and in death—²

to my faithful Savior, Jesus Christ.³

He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood,⁴

and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil.⁵

He also watches over me in such a way⁶

that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven;⁷

in fact, all things must work together for my salvation.⁸

Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life⁹

and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.¹⁰

¹ 1 Corinthians 6.19-20 ² Romans 14.7-9 ³ 1 Corinthians 3.23; Titus 2.14 ⁴ 1 Peter 1.18-19; 1 John 1.7-9; 2.2

⁵ John 8.34-36; Hebrews 2.14-15; 1 John 3.1-11 ⁶ John 6.39-40; 10.27-30; 2 Thessalonians 3.3; 1 Peter 1.5 ⁷ Matthew 10.9-31; Luke 21.16-18

⁸ Romans 8.28 ⁹ Romans 8.15-16; 2 Corinthians 1.21-22; 5.5; Ephesians 1.13-14 ¹⁰ Romans 8.1-17