



**V**ERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. 4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth 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 cometh 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, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. 15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. 16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. 17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18 No man taketh 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 commandment have I received of my Father. (John 10:1-18)

This text is among the most beautiful in all of Scripture and the most beautiful as well. It is powerful and packed with assurance for us. What does it mean to be under the care of the Good Shepherd - in a single word, SECURITY. But there are several aspects of that security of which we need reminding.

Let us examine some wonderful truths about the shepherd and the sheep:

### **The Door**

Our Lord Jesus Christ is the very door to the sheepfold. There is no other way into the fold but by Him. Any who come in by other means is a thief and an imposter whose identity will be exposed. Jesus is the WAY – the ONLY Way! (vs 1&2)

### **The Good Shepherd has a familiar voice**

All of His sheep know His Voice and have heard it when He chose and called them. He knows our every name and He calls us forth. (v. 3)

### **The Good Shepherd both leads and follows**

Just as He did in the Red Sea crossing, the Lord leads the way. He goes before them just as the Pillar of Fire by Day and Cloud by Night both led and followed the Children across the Red Sea. (v. 4) *“And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them: And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.”* Exodus 14:19-20 He leads us, too, out of dark places of sinful depravity into light and beauty. The Good shepherd goes before His sheep both to point the way and to defend against predators.

### **The worthiness of the Good Shepherd**

Our Lord is the only One worthy to be our Shepherd. His joy and comfort is united with our own since our safety and well-being is His greatest concern – even more than His own. His Wisdom is so high above that of His sheep that they have no comprehension of where to seek water and pastureland. But they know He will lead them to those resources without fail. Often they must traverse ravines, mountain slopes, and dry wilderness areas in following, but they know that there will be refreshing pasture and still waters at the end of their journey – because He knows. The dedicated Christian knows the voice of the Lord so well that no stranger can deceive them. There are MANY false prophets arisen in our day, but those Christians who are diligent in their Scripture study will recognize the false voice. (vs. 4 & 5)

### **The Good Shepherd cherishes the sheep individually as well as wholly**

He knows the name of each and calls them each, not severally, by name. Every one of His disciples today are known fully by the Lord just as they know Him. The relationship between the Shepherd and each lamb is personal as well as collective. He will carry the little lamb on His shoulders, or the injured will He treat with special love and kindness.

### **The Shepherd is great while the sheep are small**

The shepherd is not ‘obligated’ to care for the sheep. The sheep are meek and without power, but the great Shepherd is able to defend from every threat. His compulsion to care for the sheep is not in return for any profit – it is a factor of His great love for the sheep.

### **The Good Shepherd is not a hireling**

The hireling is very much like a soldier of fortune. He will fight for the highest bidder, but in time of grave danger, will flee his post. But the Lord assumes His role as shepherd based on Love, Truth, and Sacrifice. The Good Shepherd has proven Himself to be the only Shepherd of record for the sheep. In fact, He has laid down His life for the sheep in saving them. (v. 11) This the hireling will not do.

The poem below from Peloubet's, Suggestive Illustrations on the New Testament - The Book of John:

But none of the ransomed ever knew  
How deep were the waters crossed,  
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord passed through  
Ere He found His sheep that was lost.  
Out in the desert He heard its cry –  
Sick and helpless, and ready to die.

“But all through the mountains, thunder-riven,  
And up from the rocky steep,  
There arose a glad cry to the gate of heaven,  
‘Rejoice! I have found my sheep!’  
And the angels echoed around the Throne.  
‘Rejoice for the Lord brings back His own.’

A great truth is presented in the last line of the poem above: the lost sheep never ceased being a member of the Lord's own. It was lost, bleating (praying) in the wilderness – and the Lord surely finds all such lost sheep.