

## **WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY**

### **The Glory of the Shepherd's Protection**

#### **Introduction**

Do you ever notice that “plainly” to some is sometimes not so “plain”?

Has anyone ever said to you, “It’s right there under your nose?” Have you ever noticed that seems plain to some people is totally out-of-sight to others? Whether you’re designing a carpentry project, gazing at a tree line, or trying to find that package of fish (as I did this week), some people see things really clearly and others find it impossible to see what you see.

The point is that some things can be plainly revealed yet totally out of sight depending on who’s looking at it. Paul writes about a similar scenario in Romans 1.

*“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.”* (Romans 1:18–20, ESV).

People today can plainly know there is a God. He is the Creator; and they can plainly know that He is omnipotent and divine. But their problem is not an intellectual impairment. Their problem is their heart.

Our text today is found in The Gospel of John 10:22–30 (ESV)

In this passage the Jews ask Jesus to plainly speaking to them. So, He does just that. He:

1. Plainly tells them He is the Messiah;
2. Plainly reveals to them that it’s only the Father’s sheep that see;
3. Plainly taught them that God’s sheep are eternally secure; and He.
4. Plainly teaches them that He is God.

The question is whether we see it or not. In order to see what God plainly reveals we need His grace. So we pray, “Open our eyes that we may see.”

## **1. Jesus plainly tells them He is the Messiah.**

Amid the annual celebration of Israel's victory over the Syrians, we know today as Hanukkah, celebrated on December 25<sup>th</sup> each year, the Jews ask Jesus this question: "***If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.***" (John 10:24, ESV). Immediately we see the response of Jesus, "I did." One might ask, "When did you tell them plainly?" Well Jesus referred them to His miracles, done in the power of His Father. Even up till that point in Jesus' life and ministry, the cumulative effect of all Jesus did and said screamed to the watching world, "I am the Christ."

Briefly recall what we've studied in the Gospel of John:

- Chapter 2—Jesus clears out the Temple in fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy.
- Chapter 3—John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets, testified that Jesus is the Messiah.
- Chapter 4—Jesus healed the dying son of a royal official without ever being in the same locality.
- Chapter 5—In this chapter Jesus called God his Father and called himself both the Son of God and the Son of Man, the latter being a title for the Messiah found in the book of Daniel.
- Chapter 6—Jesus miraculously fed five thousand men plus women and children. He then miraculously crossed a sea.
- Chapter 7—Jesus stood up at the Festival of Booths and applied a Messianic passage from Isaiah 55 to himself.
- Chapter 8—Jesus continued to preach to those at the Festival of Booths and this time he applied a Messianic passage from Isaiah 4 to himself.
- Chapter 9—Jesus healed a man born blind in direct fulfillment to Messianic prophecies in Isaiah.
- Chapter 10—Jesus applied Ezekiel's Messianic promises about the coming of a good shepherd to himself, making clear that he fulfills them.

"Tell us plainly," the Jews ask. "I did," Jesus answered. Why did they not see it? He goes on to explain.

## **2. Plainly reveals to them that it's only the Father's sheep that see.**

Why were these people so dull? Why could they not see what was plain? As I said, the problem was not their eyesight or ears. The problem was their hearts. What was their cause of their lack of perception, their insensitivity to the obvious, their dullness to what was readily apparent? The answer of our Lord is stunning.

*"but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep."* (John 10:26, ESV).

Our Lord does not say, "You are not my sheep because you do not believe." He said, "You do not believe because you are not my sheep." How in the world do we interpret that? Well if we remain committed to *scripture interpreting scripture*, we find a similar statement in John, chapter 6. Look at this with me.

*“Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.” (John 6:35–37, ESV)*

I conclude the following:

- In John 6 we see “you have seen me and do not believe” [but] “all that the Father gives me will [believe].”
- In John 10 we see “you do not believe because you are not my sheep”

John equates Christ’s sheep as “those the Father has given to the Son”. This is confirmed by John 10:27-29: “My sheep hear my voice . . . My Father, who has given them to me.”<sup>1</sup>

In other words, a paraphrase of John 10:26 could be this: “You do not believe because you have not been given to me by my Father.” To understand this passage we are obliged, each and every time we read the words “my sheep” it also means “those that the Father has given to Christ”.

I conclude based on these exegetical grounds that both statements are saying the same thing: You don’t believe because the Father has not given you to me. You don’t believe because you are not my sheep. All of this affirms the Biblical reality that the decisive, determinative cause of spiritual awakening and faith is God.

What should we learn from this? We should clearly and plainly understand that “unless God gives us the ability to hear the voice of Jesus, we will not be able to hear it. We must recognize our utter helplessness apart from Jesus to receive salvation and turn to him alone . . . This truth is pictured in the miracles on either side of this passage. Could the blind man make himself see (Chap. 9)? Could Lazarus raise himself from the dead (Chap 11)? Can a blind and dead sinner give himself sight and life? Only God can save.”<sup>2</sup> [Emphasis Mine]

Now again there are opponents to this teaching. The text itself brings clarity to the issue. Jesus Himself stated, “*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.*” (John 10:27, ESV). If you are His Sheep, if the Father has given you to the Son, you are a person who hears and follows Jesus. If we are not listening to Christ and following him, the Scriptures give no assurance that you are His Sheep, nor can you be confident that you are eternally secure.

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<sup>1</sup> [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 10:27–29). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>2</sup> Carter, Matt. Exalting Jesus in John (Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary) . B&H Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

### **3. Jesus plainly taught them that God's sheep are eternally secure.**

Jesus makes the clearest statement about the care and preservation of the sheep.

*"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."* (John 10:27–29, ESV)

These verses "form one of the most beautiful presentations of the security of the believer in Scripture. Note the language, which teaches a two-handed security—the believer is enfolded and protected in the hand of Jesus, which itself is enfolded and protected in the hand of the Father—a double-edged protection detail!"<sup>3</sup>

Those who believe are given eternal life. The implication of this eternal life is explained this way: they will never perish, and no one can snatch them out of Christ's hand. Now notice: "I give them eternal life". Many Christians today sadly believe that salvation is a gift and eternal security is a work of self-determined, self-effort. But this passage teaches that the gift of eternal life which includes security and protection are also gifts. You cannot earn a gift. You cannot buy a gift. You don't deserve a gift. It is a gift. The gift is given with double protection: Christ's hands and the Father's hands.

The sheep that belong to the Lord's flock are characterized by obedience, recognition of the shepherd, and allegiance to him. They are guaranteed eternal life and permanent protection. All the resources of God are committed to their preservation. Eternal life is given to them, not earned by them, and they themselves are given to Christ by the Father. Christ promises his personal protection to the sheep that the Father has given him: "No one can snatch them out of my hand."<sup>4</sup>

Eternal security is given to those who are His Sheep – and His Sheep are those who hear His voice and follow Him. I can offer you no security if you are ignoring the voice of Christ and are not following Him.

### **4. Jesus plainly teaches that He is God.**

*"I and the Father are one."* (John 10:30, ESV). The most basic confession of faith in Judaism is found in Deuteronomy 6:4: *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one."* It is called The Shema or "Hear". When Jesus claimed that He is one with the Father, He made a plain declaration that He is God. Some people claim that Jesus was only saying that He has the same purpose as God the Father. If He meant that the Jews certainly didn't understand it that way. It was that statement that moved them to stone Him.

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<sup>3</sup> Osborne, G. R. (2018). [John: Verse by Verse](#). (J. Reimer, E. Ritzema, D. Thevenaz, & R. Brant, Eds.) (p. 260). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>4</sup> *Expositor's Bible Commentary, The*, Pradis CD-ROM:John/Exposition of John/II. The Public Ministry of the Word (1:19-12:50)/E. The Manifestation of Opposition (9:1-11:57)/3. The debate in Solomon's Colonnade (10:22-42), Book Version: 4.0.2

The wording is crucial: “‘I and the Father’ preserves the separate individuality of the two Persons in the Godhead; the neuter pronoun ‘one’ (*hen*) asserts unity of nature or equality.”<sup>55</sup> There is no clearer, plainer, simpler statement asserting the truth that Jesus is God.

## **APPLICATION**

Jesus met these Jews as they emerged in Solomon’s Porch from celebrating Hanukah. In the year 176 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes IV the Syrian commander invaded Palestine, desecrated and destroyed the Temple. A rural priest by the name of Mattathias and his sons led a revolt against the invaders. These guerilla fighters called the Maccabees succeeded in overthrowing the Syrian invaders and in the year 165 B.C. on December 25<sup>th</sup>, the Temple was restored, and worship was reinstated.

The festival is observed annually by lighting the candles of a candelabrum with nine branches, called a menorah (or Hanukkah) as Jews celebrate the victory. Sadly in 63 B.C. Rome conquered Israel.

These Jews left this celebration of a short-lived victory in Israel and stared in the face of their Messiah who promised them eternal life and everlasting security. What a paradox! In the words of the late Jim Elliott, what fools! You remember what he is quoted as writing in his journal:

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

These Jews just spent 8 days rejoicing in a victory that was temporary and failed to embrace a victory that’s eternal. There before them in plain sight was the Savior and they would soon pick up rocks and try to stone Him. Fools!

Please don’t be a fool. Give your life to Christ today. If the Holy Spirit is speaking to you today I plead with you because of the mercies of Christ, give your life to Him, a living sacrifice – it is the only reasonable response.

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<sup>55</sup> *Expositor's Bible Commentary, The*, Pradis CD-ROM:John/Exposition of John/II. The Public Ministry of the Word (1:19-12:50)/E. The Manifestation of Opposition (9:1-11:57)/3. The debate in Solomon’s Colonnade (10:22-42), Book Version: 4.0.2