

**1126 Jesus is the gate of sheep and Good Shepherd, one with Father - John (10) 1-42
(Verses refer to those in NASB95 unless otherwise specified, and by Whirlwind.)**

First of all, we have to emphasize again that our discussion here is still at an intellectual level, discussing the only Gospel that comes from the Triune God, and talking about how the Bible talks about it. We believe that the Bible is inspired by God, so we know that what God tells us through the Bible is consistent, and we will not discount the words of the Bible. Under these two premises, we can use logic to deduce some things. We must never forget that life can only come from God. "So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth."(1 Corinthians 3:7) Therefore, we must discern if a revelation is true one, be inside the revelation, and we must stand on the side of the Triune God even when there is no revelation.

Let's first see that the Lord Jesus is the door of the sheep. He comes to make our lives more abundant. What we have to do is to listen to His voice gently and not to extinguish the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Second, we talk about the Lord Jesus as the Good Shepherd. He was crucified and laid down His life for the sheep. He clearly said that His sheep are among the Gentiles and the Israelites. We saw that His answered prayer in Gethsemane was for us, for the completion of the plan of salvation. Third, He clearly stated that He and the Father were one. The Jews did not believe in Him, nor did they appreciate the good deeds He had done. Instead, they clung to the letter of the Law. The reason why they wanted to beat Him was simply because He told them the truth. We also explained why head covering is a relevant issue and why the Bible says that women are not required to have their heads covered materially because God has provided for them. Finally we briefly mention Jesus and John the Baptist, ending with John's testimony that Jesus is the Son of God.

1. The Lord Jesus is the gate of the sheep, wanting life more abundantly

"“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is a 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. When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.” This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them. So Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.””(John 10:1-10)

As for the sheep recognizing His voice, they must listen carefully, because the Old Testament clearly says, "So He said, “Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in

the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing."(1 Kings 19:11-12) We have seen what the Psalms say very clearly, the Lord "He makes the winds His messengers, Flaming fire His ministers."(Psalm 104:4) We have also seen that if you are not quiet in your spirit, you will not be able to hear this small voice, and "Do not quench the Spirit." (1 Thessalonians 5:19)

The Holy Spirit often moves us, but this is not the case every time when we encounter something, because God is not a God who commands every action. Seeing this, we can give an example. Although there is no limit to the Holy Spirit given by God the Father to the incarnate Jesus, when He met the blind men, "Moved with compassion, Jesus touched their eyes; and immediately they regained their sight and followed Him."(Matthew 20:34) It is clear that it was not the Holy Spirit who asked Him to do this, but He Himself moved with compassion. It can also be seen that Jesus in this time stands on God's side. As a matter of fact, He is always on the side of God the Father. Isn't this what we talked about before? Even without revelation, we must stand on God's side. Of course there are other examples, so I won't go into details. This is a bit like praying. Not every prayer is answered. Sometimes the answer is no, as Paul said, "...there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me—to keep me from exalting myself! Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." ..." (2 Corinthians 12:7-9) He knew the answer clearly which is no, he stops praying and accepts it. However, some people find it difficult to accept the 'no' answer. If we are convinced that our prayers are answered, we do not need to pray anymore, but we should give thanks and praise and wait for things to come to pass.

The Lord Jesus is the gate of the sheep, the only gate. We have discussed before that when Jesus uses "truly, truly," it is a very important declaration. It is used twice in these verses. Truly, "...there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved."(Acts 4:12) So the Great Commission says, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, ...teaching them to observe all that I commanded you;..."(Matthew 28 :19-20) Therefore, the Great Commission is the vocation of every Christian. Then some people will say, doesn't this conflict with this verse? "How will they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news of good things!"(Romans 10:15) People often says that I am not sent out as a full-time or part-time preacher, therefore I cannot preach.

This person forgot the previous sentence, "How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?"(Romans 10:14) Doesn't the Great Commission call everyone to preach? Maybe our life is not where we expected it to be, but we still know that we should be light and salt, because "...does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house."(Matthew 5:15) But don't forget that even if the lamp is placed under a basket, it still shines and has luminous life. How much life we have is what we cannot hide and can thus be revealed. At this time

we should see, "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:16) It is the good deeds to be produced in life which counts.

For example, when brothers and sisters are needed to have some food, we can do it if our love tells us to do so, instead of having to follow others' actions. Some people are finally baptized because they see the love of their brothers and sisters and are willing to join this big family. Doesn't this mean that working with God in this way gives this person a chance to receive salvation? Therefore, wherever your life takes you, use your existing life to preach there, and do not do things beyond your life. Just like the example above, it is something that everyone can do, and it fulfills the Great Commission. You really don't need to wait until life is mature before you take action. If this is the case, you may not have the opportunity to preach at all. At least I have not met anyone who is conformed into the image of Jesus (see Romans 8:29). Don't be fooled by the trick from Satan! Because the Lord is the only door, anyone who does not enter the kingdom of Christ through Him is from Satan and has sneaked in. Just as the scripture says, "For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ." (Jude 1:4)

For those who do not practice what Jesus teaches, no wonder He said, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'" (Matthew 7:21-23) From a human perspective, the things they did seemed to be good things, but what they did was obviously not from God, so we must discern and do what God wants us to do.

Indeed, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." (John 10:10) Only those who are willing to stay in the sheepfold of the Lord Jesus can be saved and go in and out to find grass, have their lives changed from the inside out, and gain a more abundant life. Of course, sometimes we are not aware of this slow change. Thinking about it, Moses had to undergo forty years of training in the wilderness before he was used by God. We will not wait so long. But if a Christian truly does not have this kind of life change from the inside out, it is time to reflect!

2. The Lord Jesus is the Good Shepherd

"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me, even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I

must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father." A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words. Many of them were saying, "He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?" Others were saying, "These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?"(John 10:11-21)

Jesus spoke of the duty of the Good Shepherd. He was not a hired hand who would lay down His life for the sheep. He "but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."(Philippians 2:7-8) He "...and the Father are one."(John 10:30) During the time of His incarnation, He obeyed God all His life. As the scripture says, "...I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. ..." (John 14:31) This can also be seen in His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, "saying, "Father, ...yet not My will, but Yours be done.""(Luke 22:42) At that time, "Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground."(Luke 22:43-44) He is a complete man, which is what the book of Hebrews says, "In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety."(Hebrews 5:7) So the prayer at that time was an answered prayer. When He went to the cross, He clearly knew that the answered prayer was not to request Him to avoid death. What then was the purpose of that prayer? What did He pray for? Although the Bible does not say it explicitly, we can see clues from the scriptures. The scripture says that when Jesus tasted the vinegar on the cross, "... He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."(John 19:30) The plan of salvation was indeed completed in His part, and His prayer, "...not as I will, but as You will."(Matthew 26:39), was indeed answered. He was praying for us, not for Himself to avoid death. We have seen again that what God tells us through the Bible is consistent!

He said, "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; ..." (John 10:16) What exactly does this mean? He was speaking to the Jews, so this refers to the Israelites, which is why Paul said, "who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises."(Romans 9:4) The other sheep refer to the sheep among the Gentiles, because there are only Israelites and Gentiles, and Paul said very clearly, "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law."(Romans 3:28) To give an example of how it is God's will for Gentiles to believe and be justified, let us take look what happened in the house of Cornelius, "Opening his mouth, Peter said: "I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him."(Acts 10:34-35) This means, "...I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd."(John 10:16).

Then it talked about His crucifixion, which He voluntarily gave up His life, and also talked about the command of God who would be resurrected Him from the dead. Isn't this what Ephesians says, how this command is fulfilled in the world. "which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places."(Ephesians 1:20) During the period of His incarnation, the Lord Jesus never used His divinity.

The last paragraph clearly records that the Jews had another quarrel because of Jesus' words. We can also see that His words were caused by the healing of a man who was born blind. It is true, "...It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him."(John 9:3) In addition to healing the man who was born blind, Jesus also did other things on him, displaying the works of God.

3. Jesus and God the Father are one

"At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem; it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon. The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, "How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father's name, these testify of Me. But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, 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. I and the Father are one." The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?" The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God." Jesus answered them, "Has it not been 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'? If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father." Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp."(John 10:22-39)

The Feast of the Dedication is not among the festivals to be observed in the Old Testament. It came about later. During the Feast of the Dedication, Jesus made it clear that the Jews really did not believe in Him. They did not even look at the things He did in the name of the Father! They clung to the letter of the Law rather than its true meaning, like the Sabbath. He emphasized that He knew His sheep and they would follow Him, and that no man could take them away. In the High Priestly Prayer, He said, "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled."(John 17:12) He did the same as He said when He was arrested. At that time, " Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; so if you seek Me, let these go their way," to fulfill the word which He

spoke, "Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one." (John 18:8-9) Whether they are Gentiles or Israelites, He will now protect everyone who belongs to Him in the same way.

He made it clear that He and the Father were one. The Jews did not believe in Him, nor did they appreciate the good deeds He had done. Instead, they clung to the letter of the Law. The only reason they wanted to beat Him was because He told them the truth. Even so, He patiently quoted this scripture, "I said, 'You are gods, And all of you are sons of the Most High.'" (Psalm 82:6) This sentence is true is to whom the word of God came, how much more is to the person who really is the Son of God? Although they tried to take Him, He escaped from their hands and walked away. Once again, we saw that no one could touch Him until His time came!

We see that the words "I and the Father are one" (John 10:30) were spoken by Jesus when He was incarnate. So as we shared before, He was still fully God at that time, but he never used His divinity. For He "but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men." (Philippians 2:7) Just like the example of the prince we gave, when the prince becomes a beggar for some reason, such as rebellion, etc., and he will still be a prince, because the identity of a prince is innate. There is an order during the time of the incarnation. The Father sends the Son, but if the Son does not go and the Holy Spirit does not come, and during this time, "...every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:11) But it is not as someone said that Christ had to cover His head before God the Father. This was definitely added by himself by looking at things from a human perspective. This is why Paul only said, "...as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body." (Ephesians 5:23) It is never told that Christ had to cover His head before God the Father because he knew that even during the time of His incarnation, Jesus was still one with the Father. If we look at it from another angle, we will reach the same conclusion, "But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ. Every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head." (1 Corinthians 11:3-4) The Bible makes it very clear that men should not cover their heads. Jesus Christ was a man, so how could He cover His head and disgrace God?

Since the issue of head covering is discussed here, let's discuss what the Bible says about this controversial issue. Those who believe that women should have their heads covered materially often quote these two verses: "But every woman who has her head uncovered (G177) while praying or prophesying disgraces her head, for she is one and the same as the woman whose head is shaved." (1 Corinthians 11:5) and "Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels." (1 Corinthians 11:10) This word G177 only appears twice. The other time is here. "Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered (G177)?" (1 Corinthians 11:13) So its meaning is very clear. The question is whether God has already prepared materials for women to cover their heads, or does it require another material head covering? Regarding the latter, even those who believe in material head coverings can see that the Bible does not clearly state what materials are needed. If this is really the case for every woman to have the material head covering, the Bible will clearly state the material, so everyone can follow it.

So what does the Bible say? Let us look at this verse, "but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her hair is given to her for a covering (G4018)." (1 Corinthians 11:15) Since the original text uses different words in 1 Corinthians 11:13, we must look at the meaning of the word G4018. This word also appears twice. The other time is in this verse, "And like a mantle (G4018) You will roll them up; Like a garment they will also be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not come to an end." (Hebrews 1:12) So looking at the word used, we should know that God has given women long hair as a head covering. If you still don't see this, look at another verse, "Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him." (1 Corinthians 11:14) This is not talking about hair, but long hair. Women already have glorious and voluntarily growing long hair as a covering, so why do they need another physical covering? Women with material coverings are just telling others that I am very pursuing, forgetting that God looks at the heart, not the appearance, just like "...the LORD said to Samuel, "...for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."" (1 Samuel 16:7)

Some people say that Satan is afraid of the situation that women would all wear material head coverings. This is completely unfounded, and it is exactly the opposite. Satan is eager for such women to obliterate the work of God. Isn't this a wishful thinking of Satan? Specious. Weren't the words he used when he tempted Eve a mixture of right and wrong? Isn't this the same about what Eliphaz the Temanite said in the book of Job?

4. Jesus and John the Baptist

"And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there. Many came to Him and were saying, "While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true." Many believed in Him there." (John 10:40-42)

This passage is written very clearly, and there is no need to explain anything. John (the Baptist) indeed did not perform a single miracle, so we will end with his testimony for Jesus. First of all, we see that John was appointed by God and knew the mission God had given him, "...the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness. And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." (Luke 3:2-3) He had the mind and ability of Elijah, walking before the Lord and being the pioneer of Jesus. (See Luke 1:17, Matthew 17:10-13, John 1:22-23)

One of his testimonies about Jesus was, "John testified saying, "I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him. I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, 'He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.' I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God."" (John 1:32-34) Jesus is indeed the Son of God.