

The Shepherd knows His Sheep; John 10:22-42
The Shepherd King celebrates The Feast of Dedication

Introduction

It is now several months later.

- The Fall Feasts are over.
- The day of Trumpets (Tishri 1) is past
- The 10 days of Awe are over (Tishri 1 to Tishri 10)
The very special day of Atonement is over; Tishri 10
- The Seven days of The Feast of Tabernacles, Tishri 15 thru Tishri 21, is over

It is now winter, Verse 22.

- The Feast of Dedication is NOT one of the official Feasts of the Lord described in Leviticus 23.
- Today we know it as Hanukah.
- It is a special celebration of the re-dedication of the Temple after it was desecrated by the Roman General known as Antiochus Epiphanes

Hanukah lasts Eight days

- It begins on the 25th day of Kislev or our December
- This year Hanukah will begin on 12 December and last until 20 December
- Jewish children sometimes get it confused with our Christmas celebration

But it is altogether different.

- The events precede Jesus by 164 years and are recorded in First and Second Maccabaeus
- It was referred to as The Feast of Lights by the historian, Josephus
- Though not sanctioned by God the Feast is honored by Jesus' presence recorded here in John 10

We notice that even after three months the Jews are still upset with Jesus

- Why should they be otherwise?
- He said they were not His sheep; therefore, they are not of the flock of God
- They are not His sheep because they refused to obey His voice and believe.

From this we summarize last week's lesson:

- We heard His voice
- We responded in faith to His voice
- We follow His voice (we are His disciples)
- Because we are His sheep we have eternal life.

Which brings us to our title: The Shepherd Knows His Sheep; Verse 27: *My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me!*"

Point One: Those who do not believe don't know Jesus, Verses 22-24

22 **Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter.** 23 And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch. 24 Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, "How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

It is possible that the events of Matthew 11 have already occurred; Matthew 11:2-5

2 And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples 3 and said to Him, "Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?"

4 Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: 5 The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. NKJV

The proof of Messiahship given John the Baptist is all the proof these Pharisees needed:

1. Answer this question: what have you seen me do and what have you heard me say?
2. You have seen me heal the blind

3. You have seen me heal the lame
4. You have seen me clean the lepers
5. You have seen me heal the deaf
6. You have seen me raise the dead from the grave
7. And you have heard me preach the Good News of God to the people!

This is all the proof anyone Jew would need to know Jesus is the Christ

- For only THE Christ could do ALL these things!
- Add the historical fact of His resurrection and any one should believe Jesus is the Christ.

This is why discipleship is so important.

- Disciples follow Jesus and only Jesus
- Disciples are made; not born
- Our children will only follow Jesus if we teach them and example discipleship in front of them
- We will be held accountable for what we should have known like Nicodemus, you are a teacher of the law and you do not know you must be born again.
- Actually, parents already know this is true. We expect our children to do what is expected. We shouldn't have to remind them every day to do their chores!

Which brings us to Point Two: You do not believe because you are not My sheep; Verses 25 thru 30

25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. 26 But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. 27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. 28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 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. 30 I and My Father are one."

Jesus is contrasting unbelievers and believers...

- **Verse 25:** Those who do not believe reject Jesus as the Son of God
 - **Verse 26:** Those who believe Jesus is the Son of God: does His Father's work
- Those who do not believe are not His sheep
 - **Verse 27:** Those who believe are His sheep
- Those who do not believe do hear His voice
 - **Verse 27:** Those who believe both hear His voice and follow Him
- Those who do not believe are not secure in Christ
 - **Verse 28:** Those who believe cannot be removed from His hand
- Those who do not believe do not have eternal life
 - **Verse 28:** Those who believe shall never perish because they have life eternal
- Why?
 - **Verse 29:** Because God has given Jesus those who are His and God is **greater than any power** in heaven or on earth therefore no one can take God's sheep from God's hand! This means no one or any one including thieves and robbers
 - **Verse 30:** BECAUSE GOD AND JESUS ARE ONE!

Which brings us to Point Three: Therefore, they tried to kill Him, Verses 31-38

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. 32 Jesus answered them, "Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?" 33 The Jews answered Him, saying, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God." 34 Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, "You are gods"?' 35 If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken), 36 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'? 37 If I do not do the works of My Father, do not

believe Me; 38 but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him." 39 Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

Of course, they did The Law required death.

IF Jesus was NOT who He said He was, He deserved death.

- Lev 24:15-16: "*Then you shall speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin. 16 And whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall certainly stone him, the stranger as well as him who is born in the land. When he blasphemes the name of the Lord, he shall be put to death.* NKJV

Jesus begins His defense using human reasoning:

- For what good thing that I did do you stone me?
- For what perfect act of God the Father did I do that you must stone me?

The Jews missed the point.

- Jesus was reminding them that it was for His acts of mercy that they rejected Him.
- More precisely, His acts of mercy done on the Sabbath in violation of their law, was why they were about to execute Him.
- But now, they think they have Him boxed in: blasphemy; Claiming to be God.
- Yes, Jesus claimed to be equal to God regardless of what others say!

Now for the hard verse: Verse 34

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

Thanks to one of the men from our Thursday night Bible study we have a great starting place to understand Jesus' use of the word 'gods' here. He is quoting from Psalm 82:

1. *God stands in the congregation of the mighty; He judges among the gods.*
2. *How long will you judge unjustly, and show partiality to the wicked? Selah*
3. *Defend the poor and fatherless; Do justice to the afflicted and needy.*
4. *Deliver the poor and needy; Free them from the hand of the wicked.*
5. *They do not know, nor do they understand; They walk about in darkness; All the foundations of the earth are unstable.*
6. *I said, "You are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High.*
7. *But you shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes."*
8. *Arise, O God, judge the earth; for You shall inherit all nations.*

There are THREE thoughts as to the use of the small 'g' gods by Asaph

First, that Asaph is referring to angels who have violated the commandments of the Most High, Verse 6 and have been judged. That is, condemned to darkness, Verse 5 like that of the other followers of Satan (one of the princes) Verse 7. If Asaph is referring to angels this may be the only reference to angels having the power to judge over the acts of men.

Second, that Asaph is referring to humans on earth who have violated the commandments of the *Most High* and have misused their positions of power to judge God's people on earth and have thus been judged. This seems to fit the judgment of judges as God reserves for Himself judgment for those in power (including teachers!).

Third, that Psalm 82 is entirely prophetic pointing to the reign of The Messiah who will, Verse 1: Stand in the congregation of the Mighty and judge because it is The Messiah who will inherit all nations, Verse 8. Therefore, the small 'g' gods are the Pharisees of John 10 and the false religious leaders of today who walk in darkness, Verse 5.

This would fit the context: Feast of Tabernacles and the research of one of our home Bible studies regarding the evidence of Jesus returning during Tabernacles to "dwell" with us, Immanuel

Here is what we know from the Hebrew text.

- Each word translated God is the word Elohim, which is the same Hebrew word translated God in Genesis 1:1; Elohim
- God is the ultimate Judge

Here is what we see in context:

- Jesus is claiming to be the Son of God by referring to His actions as the works of God
- Jesus is claiming to be the Messiah because THESE are the miracles reserved for the Christ
- Jesus is preaching the gospel; Verse 38: ***"but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."***
- That they would believe and by their belief receive eternal life!

Which brings us to our Conclusion; Verses 39-42

Therefore, they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand. And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed. Then many came to Him and said, "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true." 42 And many believed in Him there.

Life Principle: When times become hard return to your beginning.

Not that Jesus was in a hard place

But God's sheep were...so He led them to still waters and greener pastures beyond the Jordan

It was here that John was baptizing

It was in Bethany that Jesus was baptized

It was here that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead

Where did your faith begin?

Where can you go to revive your first love?

Where is your prayer closet or quiet place that you can go to hear the voice of your Shepherd?

Remember, if you feel far from God, God did not move...nor did He remove you from His hand

You moved.

If you are hiding like Adam and Eve in the nakedness of the guilt of sin

Then hear the voice of God calling you to repentance!