

The Gate Into The Kingdom of God

International Bible Lesson

John 10:7-18

Sunday, May 13, 2012

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

“I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture” (John 10:9—KJV).

“I am the gate. Those who come in by me will be saved; they will come in and go out and find pasture” (John 10:9—GNB).

“I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture” (John 10:9—NRSV).

People can think of Jesus as a spiritual gate to a spiritual sheepfold, city, or palace. A gate provides a legal place of entry; enemies or thieves would seek other ways into a city or house and harm those inside. Jesus described His care for His sheep; those He knows and those who know Jesus (John 10:14). Later, when Jesus was on trial, He told Pilate that His kingdom was not of this world. Jesus serves as the gate of admittance to His kingdom for all those He loves and those who love to follow him. Therefore, in addition to saving all those who trust in him from the practice of sin and the consequences of having practiced sin, Jesus also saves His people from those who come “only to steal and kill and destroy” (John 10:10). Though some of His followers may suffer a martyr’s death, Jesus will protect them from false prophets and teachers who would rob them of their faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Jesus will rescue His sheep from the very jaws of spiritual death and grant them everlasting life in the kingdom of God.

As the good shepherd, Jesus leads His followers into a safe shelter. Then, He leads them back into the world where they can work to meet their daily needs, but also where wolves might snatch them and scatter them. However, Jesus laid down His life and took it up again so He could save spiritually the sheep of His fold, and He still wants to bring into His sheepfold, His kingdom, everyone who will trust and follow him. – L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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Thinking Further

1. Why do you think “thieves and bandits” is a good description of false messiahs, false prophets, false teachers, and false religious leaders?
2. As the sheep of God, what are some things we can do so we do not get tricked into listening to religious, spiritual, or psychological “thieves and bandits”?
3. What are some things God has done and does for His sheep to keep them safe?
4. Why does Jesus speak so pointedly of there being only one gate, only one flock of sheep, and only one good shepherd?
5. Why might it have been important for Jesus to teach that His Father had commanded Him to use His own power when He laid down His life in death and when He took it up again in rising from the dead?