

free from the consequences of sin by him. Going back to Exodus 12, the blood on the doorposts pointed to him. The lamb that was slain pointed to him. Our attention is directed to him.

The Door, The Shepherd and the Blood

By
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Exodus 12:21-23 So we see here that this is part of God's plan to rescue Israel from the Egyptians. They instructed the blood of the lamb on the two doorposts and the beam over the door. Notice Israel is not exempt from the destruction coming, but they are given a way to be spared. The blood-soaked door is the way Israel is saved from the death angel. We see the double reference to Jesus in this picture. Jesus himself is the Door (John 10:9) and it is by his blood we are saved.

John 10:7 The passage in which Jesus tells us he is the door. *"Truly, truly, I say to you."* He is emphasizing what he is about to say is explicit. This is a solemn truth. *"I am (I Am) the door of the sheep"—or "I am the sheep's door."* He goes on *"All those others were up to no good ... Anyone who goes through me will be cared for—will freely go in and out, and find pasture."* Think again about how God protected Israel from the destroyer...The door did not allow entry. The role of Jesus expands on that while still fulfilling that role.

Ancient sources tell us that during the winter months sheep were kept inside a pen at night. The pen often had a stone wall which might have briars top of it. It's portrayed as a protection from wolves and other predators. In them was an opening by which the sheep came in and went out; but there was no door of any kind. What happened was that at night the shepherd himself lay down across the opening and no sheep could get out except over his body. In the most literal sense the shepherd was the door.

We see that as similar to the door that protected the Israelites which kept "wolves" out. But Jesus, the Door, also allows entry and exit. He expands the role of the "door." (V9) *"I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and go in and out and find pasture."* (V11) He goes on to say *"I am the good shepherd."* The door is also the shepherd.

Psalms 121:1-2 *"The Lord will keep you going out and your coming in"*

from this time forth and forevermore." The Life Application Study Bible comments *"Not only is God all-powerful, but he also watches over us like a sentinel or shepherd, alert to danger and ready to help with our needs. Nothing diverts or deters him. We are safe."*

John 10: The emphasis is on the safety and the fulfilled life of the sheep. The shepherd has no business looking after his own interests. His priority are the sheep. **Tom Wright** comments *"Find a king like that and you have found the Lord's anointed."* Or probably more accurately, we have been drawn to a King like that. King Jesus, the Good Shepherd, who lays down his life for the sheep.

Luke 15:3-7 Another passage that refers to sheep and about how much God cares for us even when we do go astray, when we wander off, when we get distracted from the shepherd's lead. Perhaps pulled away by Satan himself. God doesn't give up on us! **Barclay** comments on this passage *"The whole village would be upon watch, and when, in the distance, they saw the shepherd striding home with the lost sheep across his shoulders, there would rise from the whole community a shout of joy and thanksgiving."* "So we have not only the shepherd rejoicing but all who have care for the sheep.

Ezek 34:11-12,15 ; Ps 23: It emphasises divine provision and protection, the underlying reality is probably God's providential guidance. And how much we need that don't we. Day by day, hour by hour. Sometimes moment by moment. *"I will never leave you, fail you or forsake you"* says the Lord. *"I will strengthen you and help you."*

John 10: We have seen that the shepherd's task is to care for, look after and tend the sheep. To do all in his power to keep them safe. But I wonder how many would actually die for his sheep? That certainly is a massive thing to ask of anyone. To not only care for someone but to literally, not metaphorically, die in their place. To put up their hand and say *"kill me instead. I will suffer whatever death you choose."* Perhaps a mother or father may say that in regard to their child? I don't know. But it is certainly an ultimate call, isn't it?

John 1:29,36 John identifies Jesus as the Lamb of God. So the

shepherd also takes on the role of a lamb. A lamb is the weakest member of the flock. And this Lamb dies as a sacrifice not just for those close to him, but for everyone even for those who hate him. Jesus turns everything upside down. The greatest shall be the one who serves. Jesus the Son of God serves to the ultimate. He gives his life for the world.

Eph 1:7 Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, his blood poured out on the altar of the cross, we're a free people—free of penalties and punishment chalked up by all our misdeeds. And not just barely free either. Abundantly free? **Equipper** - *"Jesus is the true Firstborn who belongs to the Father. When Jesus gave his life for the sake of the world, he is fulfilling the role of the firstborn by doing his Father's will. His sacrifice on the blood-soaked wood of the cross provides salvation for all. He stands in for us who are destined for death under the rulership of evil. And he shares his firstborn status with us, making us all sons of glory."* **Wright** comments *"God's plan is for the whole cosmos, the entire univers, his shaping and directing us in the Messiah are connected with the larger intention...the point is that we aren't chosen just for our own sake, but for the sake of what God wants to accomplish through us"*

Equipper - *"On the night before his crucifixion, Jesus shared a Passover meal with his disciples. During the meal, he took bread and wine and gave them new meaning. This is the occasion Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. He showed them that he himself is the Passover Lamb (again I'm struck by the humility of this man who was identified as the God Shepherd, in charge of the sheep, and then chose to become the lamb, the one who would be sacrificed. It's mind-blowing. You couldn't make this up). "Jesus is the true Passover Lamb. He lived a faithful life that we could never live. He entered our broken world. He carried our sin. He faced our death. On the cross he took upon himself everything that enslaves humanity. And through his resurrection he opened the way into a new life. Jesus does not merely show us the way to freedom. He becomes our freedom."*

Luke 4:18 We remember him in the synagogue reading from the scroll of Isaiah. *"The Spirit of the Lord is on me ... He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners."* We have been set free haven't we? Set