



Who is Yeshua the Messiah?
 Part 11: The Great I AM (Part C)
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{NOTE: The actual oral sermon and video recording may vary significantly and even materially from these notes, but this “transcript” gives you a general idea of the direction of the message.}

{Title slide—1} Shabbat shalom, brothers and sisters. We’re in part 11 of our series, “Who is Yeshua the Messiah?,” and this week we’ll continue looking at Yeshua’s “I AM” statements recorded in John’s Gospel, which we’ve been discussing for the past two messages and will continue to discuss in one more teaching after today. So far, I believe we have firmly established that Yeshua is One in being with the “Great I AM” revealed to us in the Tanakh, for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are One—we have One God. Please watch the past two messages if you haven’t seen them yet so that you can take hold of this Truth.

{Next slide—2} To give you a brief recap, our first discussion in this section of the series considered Yeshua’s various “I AM (He)” statements in our English translations, where the Word “He” was added by translators for readability, but was actually not present in the original Greek manuscripts. In the Greek, Yeshua referred to Himself plainly as “Egō Eimi (ἐγώ εἰμι),” and these are the same words used in the Greek Septuagint version of Exodus 3:14 when the LORD God commanded Moses to tell the sons of Israel that “I AM” was going to deliver them from bondage in Egypt. The point of that message was to explain how Yeshua’s ungrammatical use of “I AM” to refer to Himself was intentional. He meant to reveal His true identity as God to explain that we ought to worship, pray to, and obey Him as One in being with “The Great I AM.” In the second discussion, we explored two of the seven “I AM” statements of Yeshua that John chronicled in His Gospel. You can see those checked off on the screen {see the image to the right}. When Yeshua said, “I AM the Bread of life,” He taught

Yeshua said:	“I AM the Bread of Life” ✓
‘Egō Eimi’	“I AM the Light of the world”
‘ἐγώ εἰμι’	“I AM the Door”
‘I AM’	“I AM the Good Shepherd”
✓	“I AM the Resurrection and the Life” ✓
	“I AM the Way, and the Truth, and the Life”
	“I AM the True Vine”

that the promise of eternal life requires us to consume everything in His Word about Him, including the prophetic Word, the example He gave, the one-time sacrifice of His unblemished flesh as atonement for our sins, and the promises He offers to those who put their faith and trust in Him as the Messiah, the only Son of God. When we take Yeshua into ourselves spiritually in this way, He directs our lives with His Holy Spirit according to the Way He taught us, and we resultantly become increasingly like Him until we're made perfect at His coming. Also, when Yeshua said, "I am the Resurrection and the Life," He taught us to recognize how He would pour out His blood to establish the New Covenant foretold by the prophets. When we accept His one-time blood sacrifice on the cross for our atonement, and His resurrection from the dead to make a way for us into His Kingdom, we too inherit the promise of resurrection into eternal life. When we take His life into us—His spiritual blood, which is eternal—we inherit the same promise of incorruptible life that He has already demonstrated through His resurrection and ascension to sit at the Right hand of Power. We'll need one more week after today to get through all five of the remaining "I AM" statements in John's Gospel that we haven't covered yet. Today we're going to explore three more; namely, "I AM the Light of the world," "I AM the Door," and "I AM the Good Shepherd," and at least one of these concepts we'll also revisit next week because it has multiple layers of meaning. In any case, like the others, each of these statements fundamentally establishes that Yeshua the Messiah is One with the Father. These aren't random statements without meaning, but pointers to a whole universe of meaning found all throughout the Scriptures that theologically explain our LORD and our God. We're only going to scratch the surface in today's message, but it's still my hope and prayer that your eyes will be further opened.

{Next slide—3} The first statement we're going to look at today ties in with last week's "I AM the Bread of life" saying and also several of the messages earlier on in this series. Let's get right into it: When Yeshua walked into the Temple of God in Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles in the season before His crucifixion, according to John 8, verse 12, He boldly proclaimed: "I AM the Light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the Light of Life." The timing of this statement is what gives it so much power, but so do its references to the prophetic Word of God. You'll note in follow-up to this statement, Yeshua explained in John 9:5, "As long as I am in the world, I AM the light of the world." This is relevant to the setting of the Temple, which is where Yeshua said "I AM the Light of the world." I want you to remember from previous messages that Yeshua is "Immanuel," which means "God with us," and likewise John wrote in John 1:1 that "the Word was with God and the Word was God" and then in John 1:14, that "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we

beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” The words “Word,” “Light,” and “Glory” are intricately linked, which I’ve shown you and will show you again, but first I want to remind you that the Greek John chose when we read “the Word ... DWELT among us” is “skēnoō (σκηνώνω),” which literally means “to fix one’s tabernacle or to live in a tabernacle.” When Yeshua came in the flesh—when the Light of God came to dwell in a human body—He came to tabernacle among us so that He could be with His people and shine His light before men. This has been God’s desire from the very beginning. The “Great I AM” has always sought to dwell among His people. The whole of Scripture explains His various efforts to make this happen and how He will bring about the fullness of His promise at the very end, when He returns to take us to the place He has prepared for us. To Moses in the wilderness, Yahweh relevantly explained, as we read in Exodus 23:20, “Behold, I send an Angel before you to keep you in the Way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared.” We’ll get into the Angel of God in a future message, but for the time being I simply want to note that this Messenger is a pre-incarnate Yeshua who was sent to “keep Israel in the Way” and bring them to the place God prepared to dwell with them. I don’t have this up on the screen, but make a note of the Apostle Paul’s explanation in 1st Corinthians 10. There he notes that Yeshua was the One who went with Israel in the wilderness. And then Yeshua said this in John 14, verses 1-3 (and for those who notice these things, I only have verses 2-3 on the screen). We read: “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I AM, there you may be also.” I wanted to read verse one to you also to show you the connection between the Father and the Son. Yeshua Himself said, “You believe in God, believe also in Me.” This is a God-only statement. A man could not say this about himself. He was literally making Himself equal with God by saying this. But here’s the point, which is demonstrated in the verses that are up on the screen: Yeshua came in the flesh as the Word of God and we observed His glory—His light—as He tabernacled among us. While He was here in the flesh, He spoke of a future time when we would tabernacle with Him for all eternity in the place that He has prepared for us. This has always been His plan, and every Word He has revealed from Genesis to Revelation expresses this plan in more detail.

{Next slide—4} Next, I’m going to show you a few passages that tie all of this together. When Yahweh [יהוה] had delivered King David from the oppression of all his enemies, he wrote a song that’s recorded in 2nd Samuel 21. Important to our discussion, David wrote the following in verses 29-31. We read: “For You are my lamp, O Yahweh [יהוה];

Yahweh [יהוה] shall enlighten my darkness. For by You I can run against a troop; By my God I can leap over a wall. As for God, His way is perfect; The Word of Yahweh is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.” Do you see anything familiar here? David said that Yahweh, His God, is His lamp who enlightened the darkness around him. What is darkness other than the chaos and wickedness, which is separation from God, and the very definition of death itself. But God is the Light of Life, the one who is incorruptible and everlasting. He is the Great I AM. There never was a time when God was not. And so, this makes it all the more relevant when Yeshua said to His Apostles, “I AM the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.” There is no other way to read this than to acknowledge Yeshua is identifying Himself as God. In Yeshua, we are freed from sin and death, and can walk righteously with our God forever, which is also what David explained about God. Notice how David also wrote, “the Word of Yahweh”—the Word of God—“is proven.” When we trust in the Word of the LORD, we are protected from our enemies, and the greatest of our enemies are sin and death. Yeshua conquered sin on the cross, overcoming death Himself, and at His coming He will defeat death for all of us also. In 1st Corinthians 15:26, Paul wrote: “The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.” Yeshua, the Light of the world, who is One in being with the Father, has conquered death and now He invites us to trust in Him and follow Him so we can do the same. Let’s take this to another level. Look at what David wrote in Psalm 119:105. We read: “Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” In other words, the Word of God is the Light of God and the Light of God is the Word of God. God’s Word, who became flesh and dwelt among us, is what overcomes all darkness and shows us the Way we ought to go to inherit eternal life. He is the written Word of God in our Holy Scriptures, the Word of God who became flesh to dwell among us, and the Word of God that lives today within us by the power of God’s Holy Spirit. This Word is the Light that shows us the righteous path—the Way in which we ought to walk. Next, we read how David spoke to the LORD in Psalm 43:3 with even more alignment. There we read: “Oh, send out Your Light and Your Truth! Let them lead me; Let them bring me to Your holy hill And to Your tabernacle.” This is both a call for the Father to send the Son into the world and an expression of faith that God will in fact accomplish all that He has promised through His Son. The Truth is God’s Word, the Light is God’s Word, Yeshua is both the Word of God and the Light of God, and the Word and the Light have come to tabernacle among us. The Word and the Light is now leading us by His Holy Spirit to the place He is preparing for us on His Holy Hill, which is the everlasting Tabernacle of God. Even more, David began Psalm 27, explaining: “The LORD [Yahweh—יהוה] is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?” In other words, when we trust in Yeshua—our light and our salvation—there

is nothing in this life that can keep us from union with our God other than our failure to endure in this trust.

{Next slide—5} As we move on, I truly want to share all of Psalm 56 with you—it's a beautiful song of victory, one that our lovely Aidan Rose has set so beautifully to music. Today verses 9-13 of the Psalm will do. I want you to listen to these words recorded by King David carefully. We read: "When I cry out to You, Then my enemies will turn back; This I know, because God is for me. In God (I will praise His Word), In the LORD (I will praise His Word), In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me? Vows made to You are binding upon me, O God; I will render praises to You, For You have delivered my soul from death. Have You not kept my feet from falling, That I may walk before God In the LIGHT of the living?" Do I even need to explain it? OK, here goes: When we confess the name of Yeshua with our mouth and believe in our heart that He is risen from the dead, we will be saved. David, who made a vow to God, wrote that when he praises the Word, which He literally calls His LORD and His God, and when He trusts in His God, who is One in being with His Word, his soul will be delivered from death. The vows he made to the Word of the LORD are binding upon him—this is the confession made with his mouth—the faith of His salvation. He even declared that he would walk in the presence of God in the LIGHT of the living. This means that David trusted that He would inherit eternal life in God's Kingdom because of his faith in the Word of God, which is the Light to His path, as we read earlier. It ought to be clear by now that when Yeshua said "I AM the light of the world," He meant that God had come into the world to deliver His people from darkness, and those who trust in Him can now share in His Light. He was making Himself equal to God, who is "The Great I AM." If you want another witness besides David, look to Isaiah in chapter 60, verses 1-3. These verses are part of a much longer and more complicated prophesy, and even though I'm showing you just a snippet here, I can assure you the context is consistent with what I'm teaching. In Isaiah's prophesy, God is speaking to His children who sleep in the grave. We read: "Arise, shine; For your Light has come! And the glory of the LORD is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; But the LORD will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you. The Gentiles shall come to your Light, and kings to the brightness of your rising." Now, the complication in these words is only that they're speaking about the two visitations of Yeshua in the same passage; both His first and His second coming. But when you understand the revelation given by the Apostles in the New Covenant Scriptures, this prophetic Word lives outside of time and space and becomes quite clear. When we read the command: "Arise and shine" to those who sleep in the grave because their Light has come, we ought to understand

that Yeshua has returned to call them forth from their graves. He is the Light that has Himself risen from the dead Who will return to raise the dead. The glory of the LORD will shine upon all of His saints on that day. While a day of darkness is coming upon the earth—and indeed, the time of tribulation has persisted from after Yeshua’s ascension and will continue until the very Last Day when He returns—we can rest assured that the LORD’s resurrection has provided a Light for the path of all who trust in Him. Even the Gentiles would come to the Light of Yeshua and His people Israel, something we have ourselves witnessed in the history of the past 2,000 years. Though men and the darkness that encompasses them will attempt to thwart the righteous path of God’s saints, who walk in the Light of God, we should never be afraid of them. What can man do to us? As Yeshua said Himself, we should fear God alone, for He has the power to cast His enemies into eternal darkness (Luke 12:4-5), but those who trust in Him, He will bring with Him to dwell in His eternal Light.

{Next slide—6} John himself saw this very same vision of the coming Kingdom of God, which he recorded in Revelation 21:22-26, where we read: ““But I saw no temple in it, for the LORD God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. The city had no need of the sun or of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God illuminated it. The Lamb is its light. And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it. Its gates shall not be shut at all by day (there shall be no night there). And they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.” In God’s Holy Kingdom, the Light of God will illuminate the Temple—the Tabernacle, and the House of God in God’s Kingdom is literally God Himself. The Lamb, a reference to Yeshua, is also the Temple, because God the Father and God the Son are One. But God is not just the temple, but also the Light that shines within it. We read: “The glory of God” illuminates the temple, but then we also read: “The Lamb is its light.” This is yet another testimony of God’s complex unity. Do you see that Yeshua is the Great I AM who is also the Light of the world? That being said, recall that He has now gone out of the world so that His light now shines within us. When we follow Yeshua, the Lamp to our feet and the Light to our path, we walk in the Light, which is to live IN Messiah Yeshua. And when we endure on this path and vow to trust in the Light, He will come to bring us to the place He has prepared for us, where we will dwell in the Light of His Holy habitation forever. When He returns to take us to the place He has prepared for us, we will also bring with us the very Light that He has put within us—that is: the Holy Spirit that He gives to all who trust in Him as our LORD and our God. He gave us the Spirit to teach us all things and lead us in the way that He has shown us. The Holy Spirit instructs us according to His Word, which is the Light of God. With all this noted, we can also understand why Yeshua said in Matthew 5,

verses 14-16: “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” When we follow Yeshua and trust in Him, His light will shine through us and we will become His ministers of reconciliation on the earth so that others can also experience His light. Through our faithful and enduring trust in Yeshua and obedience to God’s Word—which is His Light—all who trust in Him will be gathered together into God’s Kingdom to tabernacle with Him, and there we will dwell in His eternal Light. Before we move on to the next “I AM” statement, I want to share with you the end of Yeshua’s prayer to the Father that we read in John 17. It’s complicated theologically, but it also expresses powerful Truth about the Great I AM and our ultimate reunion with Him. This is Yeshua praying, when we read in verses 22-23: “And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.” Please don’t get carried away with this passage. We are not all going to become gods, as some false religions teach. The faithful followers of Yeshua are His Bride, and He is the Bridegroom. Without getting into another major metaphor and theme carried throughout Scripture, let me just say that I believe this communicates our union with God in His Kingdom, where we will all be with Him forever. It’s another way to communicate what we’ve been studying. And, as I said earlier, this is precisely what God has desired for us since He created us. He has lit up the path for us to return to Him, and the Light for our path is Yeshua, the Word of God, who is our LORD and our God, the Great I AM.

{Next slide—7} Truly, I could continue with the Light metaphor all day, but I want to show you another “I AM” statement that essentially communicates the same thing, but also ties back to what we spoke about last week. According to John 10:11, Yeshua said: “I AM the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep.” It is on account of Yeshua’s sacrifice that we have the opportunity to live eternally with God, and this Truth is certainly communicated here, but Yeshua was saying much more than this. Yeshua was calling Himself the “Good Shepherd,” and this statement means only one thing; namely, Yeshua was equating Himself with God. Some of the critics out there are going to have a problem with this assertion. They will tell you that there are a lot of shepherds in Scripture. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Saul, and David—among many others—all of these men are identified as shepherds in Scripture. And if you understand the word “shepherd” to mean “pastor,” and it certainly does have that meaning, then you might even say that ‘yours truly’ is also a

“shepherd,” and you’d be right. But I am not God, though I pray He’s living within me, and none of these men that I mentioned were God either. With the exception of Yeshua, who is risen, all these other men are dead and buried, and soon I will be, too. So how then is this statement, “I AM the Good Shepherd” a declaration of Yeshua’s divinity? Do you remember when Yeshua asked Peter, “Who do you say that I AM?” and his answer was, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Yeshua asked people this question all the time in many different ways. One of the more important examples of such rhetoric is found in Matthew 19, verses 16-17. There we read: “Now behold, one came and said to Him, ‘Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?’ So He said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.’” Now usually when I bring up this passage, I’m referencing Yeshua’s answer to what we have to do to inherit eternal life. That message is plain: “If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.” In other words, follow the Word, “the Lamp to your path and the Light to your feet.” But that’s not why I’m bringing you here now. I want you to notice Yeshua’s question, “Why do you call Me good?” Which He follows up with, “No one is good but One, that is God.” This is akin to Yeshua’s question to Peter, “Who do you say that I AM?” It’s the same question. Many people look at this passage and use it to explain that Yeshua is saying He’s not God, but the context shows exactly the opposite. Who else but God knows the answer to the question, “What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?” Who else can legitimately answer that question? With that being said, we can think about Yeshua’s rhetoric a different way. If we were to rephrase Yeshua’s question, we might consider the following wording: ‘Only God is good, and He is One. Are you acknowledging that I AM God?’ In other words: “Who do you say that I AM?” He later invited the man to follow Him, the Light of the world, into the eternal kingdom. That invitation stands for every man, woman and child alive today, and with God, remember, all things are possible. Back to the point: Yeshua is “good” because He is God, and God is One. How can I say this? Because He literally said in John 10:11, “I AM the Good Shepherd.” And He also said, according to John 10:14, “I AM the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.” This is a testimony of two, and it isn’t ambiguous. When I show you the prophecy this refers to, you’ll understand what I mean. This “Good Shepherd,” Yeshua the Messiah—the One who said, “I AM the Good Shepherd”—His sheep know who He is. His sheep know that He is God. Let me show you.

{Next slide—8} In His iconic song, Psalm 23, which most people know, whether Judeo-Christian or not, King David wrote and we read in verses 1-3: “The LORD [Yahweh—יהוה—that is] is my Shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green

pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake." Now, if Yahweh is David's shepherd, then King David is referring to himself as a sheep that God Himself cares for. Notice that there's a similar theme in this passage to what we spoke about before relative to the Light of God. The LORD leads His people along His righteous path, which is His Word, the "Light" to our feet. Indeed, the LORD restores our soul through His Word, which He uses to shepherd us. As the Psalm continues, David explained: "even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for YOU are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me." That's a shepherd's rod and staff, which guides and guards the sheep, but it refers to the discipline of the commandments of God, which the LORD has given us in His Word. Notice the same imagery as before. There's darkness all around, but the shepherd keeps His sheep within the Light and no evil can come near. Because of David's trust in the LORD, he concludes in verse 6 (and I don't have this verse on the screen). We read: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever." Because of David's trust in the LORD, His Shepherd, He will inherit eternal life. He keeps a balance of both "goodness and mercy," because this is the very instruction that God has given us through His Word. Let's look at this from the opposite perspective. In Psalm 80, Asaph wrote to the LORD pleading for His guidance in the midst of his trouble. We read: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, You who lead Joseph like a flock; You who dwell between the cherubim, shine forth! Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, Stir up Your strength, And come and save us! Restore us, O God; Cause Your face to shine, And we shall be saved!" Joseph, Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh are symbolic for God's Holy people Israel, but Asaph refers to them as a flock of sheep who need their Shepherd, who dwells between the cherubim. There is no one else who dwells between the covering cherubim than the Almighty, the Great I AM. He is the ONLY Good Shepherd who saves and who causes His face to shine. And so, you might ask, how can we get to a place where Yeshua can call Himself "the Good Shepherd"? And do you see why those who didn't believe in Him accused Him of blasphemy? Well, I could show you prophecies all day that point forward to Yeshua as the promised Messiah, the Son of God who had every right to make Himself equal to God, because He is God.

{Next slide—9} But let's look at Isaiah 40, where the prophet explained that God was coming to answer Asaph's prayer. In verses 10-11, we read this: "Behold, the LORD God shall come with a strong hand, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him. He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those

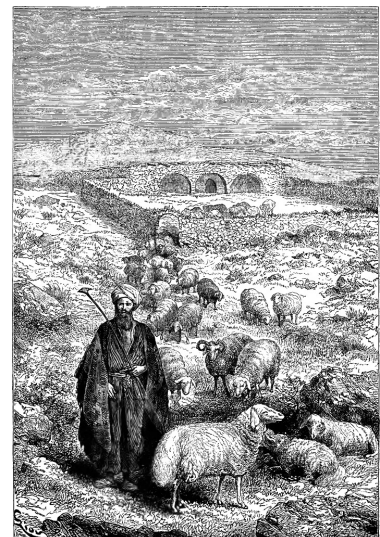
who are with young.” This is precisely what Yeshua accomplished, and now He sits at the right hand of the Father. After Yeshua was crucified, died, and was resurrected from the dead, He appeared before His disciples for 40 days and taught them from the Scriptures all of the ways He had fulfilled them. We read in Mark 16:19 “So then, after the LORD had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God.” He came in the flesh. No one could oppose His pure righteous teaching while He lived. They could not find fault. He fed His people with His Word, which was the Bread of life, and He gathered together His people and gently invited His lambs to follow Him in faith. According to Matthew 11:28-30, He said: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” While He lived, He didn’t stop doing the work that He was sent to do. According to John 5:17, He said: “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.” His work was to save those who were lost and give them their reward—eternal life for all who believe. Yeshua is the Good Shepherd who had come to gather His sheep, and now He rules us from His throne on High. He intercedes for us, He guides us, and He protects us, just as a Good Shepherd should.

{Next slide—10} There’s probably no other image in Scripture that has more prophetic writings attached to it than the “Good Shepherd” concept—so I can’t possibly get to everything. That being said, I do want to take you to John 10 and at least explain the context of Yeshua’s “I AM the Good Shepherd” statement and how it relates to you and me as well as others who are living among us in the world. Within the same passage, Yeshua would also proclaim, “I AM the Door of the sheep.” I’m going to introduce this third concept today, also, but only explain how it relates to Yeshua as our Good Shepherd. I’ll plan to begin our next message by taking you to another level of meaning for “the Door.” OK? So, before we get into the passage, I have to give you a some context, and it ties back to Yeshua’s “I AM the Light of the world” comment. This passage really serves as a bridge for all three of the concepts we’re covering today. In John 9, before we get to the passage I want to cover, Yeshua had come across a man born blind and decided to restore His sight. In this way, Yeshua was literally bringing “light” to this man’s world. In explaining to His disciples why He was going to heal the man, Yeshua said in verses 4-5: “I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” Remember what we read in Isaiah 40? “Behold, the LORD God shall come forth with a strong hand ... His reward is with Him and His work before Him. He will feed His flock like a shepherd.” Now, after the LORD healed the man by

rubbing mud in his eyes and instructing him to wash in the pool of Siloam, there's a lengthy dialogue that follows. The man, reveling in the miracle of sight that came through faith, went to share his testimony with the Pharisees in the synagogue, but they weren't all that pleased by the news. These Rabbis were already opposing Yeshua's ministry and had strictly forbidden any of their congregants to speak of it, but this man couldn't contain himself, saying about Yeshua, "If this man were not from God, He could do nothing." As a consequence, they threw the man out of the synagogue. Now, as we pick up the narrative starting in verse 35, we read: "Yeshua heard that [the Pharisees] had cast him out; and when He had found [the formerly blind man], He said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of God?' He answered and said, 'Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?' And Yeshua said to him, 'You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.' Then he said, 'LORD, I believe!' And he worshiped Him. And Yeshua said, 'For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.'" Yeshua, the Light of the world, had brought vision to this blind man so he, being a babe, could teach those who considered themselves wise. In his innocent faith, the man came to confess Yeshua as Yahweh, the incarnate Son of God. This leads into John 10, where Yeshua began to explain His prophetic role as the Good Shepherd.

{Next slide—11} Let's look at John 10, verses 1-6 to start. We read: "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the 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. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.' Yeshua used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them." Do you understand the things He spoke to

them? Notice that in this illustration, Yeshua explained that He is the shepherd who leads His sheep through the door, which is kept by the doorkeeper. It may seem like there are two individuals involved here who are protecting the sheep—the doorkeeper and the shepherd—while a third individual, the stranger, is a thief and a robber who the sheep will not follow. At this point in the parable, this distinction is intentional, and I'll show you why in a moment. Before I do, I want to point out that the robber Yeshua



was referring to here represents the false teachers who were opposing His ministry. The Pharisees who had thrown the formally blind man out of the synagogue are represented by the thief and the robber, who have no right to the sheep or the fold. The sheep, represented by the man who regained his sight, now follow the Light of God by listening to the voice of the Shepherd, who leads them in and out of the sheepfold, and the doorkeeper lets them in. To be clear: The Shepherd is Yeshua and the Doorkeeper is the Father.

{Next slide—12} Now, here's one reason Yeshua separated the symbolism of the doorkeeper and the shepherd. Consider what we read in Jeremiah 23, which is a direct prophesy that points forward to Yeshua's day. In the prophesy, Yahweh was speaking through the prophet Jeremiah. And so, we read, starting in verse 1: "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!" says the LORD." Pause here. What did the Rabbis do to the formerly blind man? They threw him out of the synagogue because he testified that Yeshua had restored his sight. They were scattering the sheep of the LORD's pasture. The LORD's response was clear: "Woe to these shepherds." This is analogous to what Yeshua said at the end of John 9; namely, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." Continuing from there, let's read John 9:40 into John 10, verse 1. I pray you see this comparison: "Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, 'Are we blind also?' Yeshua said to them, 'If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains. 'Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.'" The Pharisees were supposed to be teachers of Israel, and yet they were blind to the One the people were waiting for. Thus, they were thieves and robbers trying to get into the sheepfold some other way. Continue in Jeremiah 23, verse 2, we read: "Therefore, thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: 'You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,' says the LORD." These men were going to be punished, and as the LORD continues speaking to them, we'll see this clearly, but what of those men of Judah and Israel who were listening to the voice of their Good Shepherd?

{Next slide—13} The LORD continued in Jeremiah's prophesy, in Chapter 23, verse 4; where we read: "But I will gather the remnant of My flock out of all countries where I have driven them, and bring them back to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase. I will set up shepherds over them who will feed them; and they shall fear no

more, nor be dismayed, nor shall they be lacking,' says the LORD." These shepherds the LORD is referring to here are the Apostles, who would bring Yeshua's doctrine to all with ears to hear—Jews and Gentiles alike. The prophecy is jumping ahead though. It's also referring to people like this blind man who was healed. As Yeshua said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see." This blind man, who could now see, would become a teacher in Israel. If we look back at the dialogue in John 9, the healed blind man was literally teaching the Pharisees about Yeshua. In verse 30-34, for example, we read: "The man answered and said to [the Pharisees], 'Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.' They answered and said to him, 'You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?' And they cast him out." The thieves and robbers had tossed a true sheep of the LORD's flock out of the fold, and the LORD was not about to let this go.

{Next slide—14} Before we get into the next part of John 10, I want to take you back to Jeremiah 23, verses 5-6, where we read a very important part of this prophecy that is going to explain one of the most important points of the passage. We read: "Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." In the Hebrew, the name of this King is literally "Yahweh Tzid'kay'h'u (יהוה צִדְקָנוּ)." To quote Pastor Daniel, "You can't make this stuff up!" The Messiah, the Son of David, the promised Seed, the One who will bring righteousness is literally Yahweh Himself—Yahweh who came in the flesh, that is. Many read this and assume that it's referring to a kingdom in this world—that the Messiah will literally come and reign over the physical Kingdom of Israel and bring in a golden age—but Yeshua had made it clear when He spoke to Pontus Pilate that this was not true. He said: "My Kingdom is not of this world." And in Hebrews 11, the writer makes it clear that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob knew they were living for the Kingdom of God, and not a kingdom in this world. We read in verses 9-10: "By faith [Abraham] dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." I alluded to this earlier in today's message. In Revelation 22-23, we read about the New Jerusalem that descends from Heaven to the Earth, and

this is the place where God and the Lamb will be the temple as well as the Light of the temple, and all of God's people Israel, made up of both Jews and Gentiles who trust in Yeshua and keep the commandments of God, will dwell with the LORD forever. This will be the "New Heaven" and the "New Earth." In the meantime, the LORD Yeshua reigns from His throne in Heaven, and Judah has been saved, and Israel does dwell in safety—those among Judah and Israel who trust in their King, Messiah Yeshua, the Branch of Righteousness. Those among Israel and Judah who reject Messiah Yeshua and teach against Him are in for a rude awakening, and this Truth will come to light as we continue reading John 10.

{Next slide—15} So let's get back to it. In verses 7-10, Yeshua said to the Pharisees: "Most assuredly, I say to you, I AM the door of the sheep. All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I AM the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life,



and that they may have it more abundantly." If you look at the image on the screen {see above right}, it depicts a sheepfold in the Israeli wilderness, with a shepherd literally serving as the door protecting his sheep at evening. Historically speaking, this image depicts how shepherds would literally live out in the fields and keep watch over their flocks by night (Luke 2:8). Yeshua, using this imagery that the people of Israel were all familiar with, explained that He is the door of the sheepfold, but He said quite literally, "I AM the door of the sheep." If you recall, Yeshua had made a distinction between the "doorkeeper" and the "shepherd" in His first illustration, but now in His second illustration He was stating clearly that He is the "door." He is the "Doorkeeper." In other words, and to be straightforward, He was saying, "I am God." "I am the Great I AM." "I AM" both the "Good Shepherd" and the "Door" itself. As He said elsewhere, "I and My Father are One." Or as the Sh'ma from Deuteronomy 6:4 proclaims, "Sh'ma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad," which is to say, "Hear O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is One." Now, we can get into the details concerning the thief who comes to steal, kill and destroy—was this the Adversary? The leader of "The Spiritual Hosts of Wickedness?" Was it the false prophets who testified against Yeshua's ministry? Was it the false teachers who had, at least in this instance, sent the formerly blind man out of the synagogue? In a word: "yes." Here's a conclusive thought from 1st

John 2, verses 22-23, where we read: “Who is a liar but he who denies that Yeshua is the Messiah? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.” This is not ambiguous. Let’s be very clear about what Yeshua is saying in His parable. We must have faith that Yeshua is God and enter into the Kingdom of God through this faith, and no one can get in any other way. Yeshua came into the world to give abundant life to the sheep who listen to His Voice, for He is the Good Shepherd who calls His sheep into His Kingdom. Those who deny Him are simply not going to make it. More on this next week.

{Next slide—16} Let’s continue into the next section, John 10, verses 11-18, where we read two more iterations of Yeshua’s declaration: “I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD.” In this last illustration, there will be no mistake what Yeshua was talking about nor what the prophecies we read earlier were pointing to. Starting in verse 11, we read: “I AM the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. I AM the Good Shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and One Shepherd. Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.” Yeshua is not parsing words. He is the Good Shepherd—the One who poured out His life on the cross to atone for our sins and institute the New Covenant by His blood. He rose from the dead so that He could bring His sheep, who listen to His voice, into His fold, which is the eternal Kingdom of God. And the Shepherd’s voice is nothing other than the Word of God Who became flesh and dwelt among us. His sheep know Him. They listen to Him. They obey His commandments because they love Him. As John said in His 2nd letter, “he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.” Yeshua and the Father are One. As Yeshua had said earlier in John 6:40: “this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the Last Day.” The sheep hear Yeshua’s Word and follow Him into His eternal Kingdom, because we have believed that He is “The Great I AM” who has redeemed us from our sins and shown us the path to Life. He shined His light on it.

{Next slide—17} False teachers cannot acknowledge that Yeshua is “the Great I AM.” They do not know Him. They live in darkness. These are the hirelings, the Jewish leaders who denied Yeshua, and the wolves, anyone who denies Yeshua today and teaches others to deny Him. These are people who do not care about the true children of God—and their work does real damage to the Kingdom of God. In Matthew 7, verse 15, Yeshua said: “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruit.” The fruit of wolves is to lead believers away from Yeshua and His Word. These may think they know the Father. They may give lip service to “a higher power.” They even might say they know Jesus, that he was a great teacher, or a prophet, or even the Messiah, but they will deny His identity as God. In doing this, they prove that they do not know God, because “Those who do not know the Son do not know the Father.” They scatter the sheep that God desires to come into His fold, because they do not listen to the Good Shepherd’s voice. These are the same types of people Yeshua rebuked in Matthew 23:13, where we read: “woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.” They don’t have to be Jewish leaders; they can be anyone, Jew or Gentile, who leads God’s sheep away from Him—pagans, witches, atheists, evolutionists, or even other so-called Christians or Messianic Jews who have not believed in the Word of God. At the end of John 10, we read in verses 19-21, “there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings [of Yeshua]. And many of them said, ‘He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?’ Others said, ‘These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’” Indeed, Yeshua came to bring division. He even said in Matthew 10:34: “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword.” Yeshua came to divide the sheep from the goats, the wheat from the tares, and the wise virgins from the foolish virgins. These metaphors are all over Scripture. This division in John 10 not just about the Jews who believed and the Jews who did not believe, it’s about anyone who believes and anyone who doesn’t believe, whether Jew or Gentile, Slave or Free, Male or Female. We must know the voice of our Good Shepherd if we expect to be called into the Kingdom of God when He comes.

{Next slide—18} I want to call your attention to one more element of this parable before we close for today. When Yeshua said, “And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and One Shepherd,” He was referring specifically to you and me. Yes, Yeshua came to save Israel, and indeed He did and indeed He will. But He has also called for Gentiles

who were previously not a part of Israel to come in and become a part of her, and people who come to be born, whether Jew or Gentile, well after His death and resurrection. Paul explained this best in Romans 11 and Ephesians 2. There are all kinds of references to this Truth in the prophets. For now, I simply want to leave you with what the Apostle Paul wrote in Ephesians 2, verses 19-22. There—Paul—writing to the Gentiles, said this: “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Messiah Yeshua Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the LORD, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.” The Household of God is Israel, and this will never be taken away from God’s Holy people, but only those who believe in Messiah Yeshua can remain in Israel and only those Gentiles who believe in Messiah Yeshua can be grafted-in to Israel. We don’t replace Israel. We’re grafted-in among Her children, who are the children of God. I invite you to watch a sermon I gave on this topic, called “Grafted-In” to get a fuller picture of this piece of the puzzle. For now, I just want you to see that even in Yeshua’s Shepherd parable, there are not two flocks of people. Jews and Gentiles do not have separate paths into God’s Kingdom; the only path is through Messiah Yeshua, who is the Door for the sheep into eternity. Jews and Gentiles do not have different expectations from God, either, for both have to follow the Light of the world and also shine His light within them. It is only the grace of God that justifies us through our faith in Messiah Yeshua so that we can walk righteously before our God. As John wrote in Revelation 14:12, “Here is the patience of the Saints; Here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith in Yeshua.” This is the testimony of two that everyone needs. And to the point, faith in Yeshua also means that as one flock we also have One Shepherd, who is the “Great I AM.” The Father and the Son are One. I’ll leave you with this, which we’ve covered several times before, In John 8:24, Yeshua said, “If you do not believe that I AM He, you will die in your sins.” No matter what our background, we have one clear road ahead, and it is Yeshua. May you join me in following this narrow—but well-lit—path all the way into His Kingdom. We’ll plan to finish the “I AM” statements from John’s Gospel in our next message from this series. Shabbat shalom.