

My sheep
know
my voice!



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Dear Partner,

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Let's begin this month by looking at Jesus, the Great Shepherd. In John 21:15-17 (*Amplified Bible, Classic Edition*), three times Jesus said, "Feed My sheep."

- 16 Again He said to him the second time, Simon, son of John, do you Love Me [with reasoning, intentional, spiritual devotion, as one Loves the Father]? He said to Him, Yes, LORD, You know that I Love You [that I have a deep, instinctive, personal affection for You, as for a close friend]. He said to him, Shepherd (tend) My sheep.

We are His sheep. That's easy. Get your Bible and read John 10:1, *AMPC*:

- 1 I assure you, most solemnly I tell you, he who does not enter by the door into the sheepfold, but climbs up some other way (elsewhere, from some other quarter) is a thief and a robber.

In verse 3, the man for whom the watchman opens the door is Jesus. Look again at the *AMPC*:

- 3 The watchman opens the door for this man, and the sheep listen to his voice and heed it; and he calls his own sheep by name and brings (leads) them out.

Now verses 9-11, *AMPC*:

- 9 I am the Door; anyone who enters in through Me will be saved (will live). He will come in and he will go out [freely], and will find pasture.
10 The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows).
11 I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd risks and lays down His [own] life for the sheep.

Remember Psalm 23? Don't you just Love what the Master said? He came so that we can not only have salvation, but "have it in abundance [to the full, til it overflows]." Glory to God!

You and I both know that the devil, satan, *always* comes to steal and kill and destroy—in that order. Mark 4:14-15 in the *AMPC* says:

- 14 The sower sows The WORD.
15 The ones along the path are those who have The WORD sown [in their hearts], but when they hear, satan comes at once and [by force] takes away the message which is sown in them.

Look at that again. He “comes at once” to steal The WORD of GOD!
Verses 23-24 in the *AMPC* say:

- 23 If any man has ears to hear, let him be listening and let him perceive and comprehend.
- 24 And He said to them, Be careful what you are hearing. The measure [of thought and study] you give [to the truth you hear] will be the measure [of virtue and knowledge] that comes back to you—and more [besides] will be given to you who hear.

Let's go now to Proverbs 4:20-23 in the *AMPC*:

- 20 My son, attend to my words; consent and submit to my sayings.
- 21 Let them not depart from your sight; keep them in the center of your heart.
- 22 For they are life to those who find them, healing and health to all their flesh.
- 23 Keep and guard your heart with all vigilance and above all that you guard, for out of it flow the springs of life.

The WORD of the living God must be first place and final authority in our lives! Remember, if anyone says something long enough it will get into his or her heart and mind, and then they'll say it! (See Matthew 6:31.)

Now back to “My sheep know my voice.” Joshua 1:8 in the *AMPC* says:

- 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe and do according to all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall deal wisely and have good success.

Wow! Meditate on it day and night! In other words, we haven't finished praying until we listen to what our Father is saying to us in His WORD. Having said that, go with me to Romans 12:1-2, *AMPC*:

- 1 I appeal to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and *well pleasing to God*, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.
- 2 Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].

“Well pleasing to God” which can only be accomplished by Faith (Hebrews 11:6). To renew the mind, always remember, as we talked about last month: **YOU CANNOT FIGHT THOUGHTS WITH THOUGHTS!** You must fight thoughts with words. So find the scriptures that cover your situation and put them in your heart and mind. Then meditate on them night and day.

Go to Mark 4:35 in the *AMPC*:

35 On that same day [when] evening had come, He said to them, Let us go over to the other side [of the lake].

Now look at verses 37-41, *AMPC*:

37 And a furious storm of wind [of hurricane proportions] arose, and the waves kept beating into the boat, so that it was already becoming filled.

38 But He [Himself] was in the stern [of the boat], asleep on the [leather] cushion; and they awoke Him and said to Him, Master, do You not care that we are perishing?

39 And He arose and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, Hush now! Be still (muzzled)! And the wind ceased (sank to rest as if exhausted by its beating) and there was [immediately] a great calm (a perfect peacefulness).

40 He said to them, Why are you so timid and fearful? How is it that you have no Faith (no firmly relying trust)?

41 And they were filled with great awe and feared exceedingly and said one to another, Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey Him?

Now they came "to the other side [of the lake]" as the Master had said, by Faith, in verse 35. He's a Faith Man, so after He gave the command, He went to sleep. Now read verse 41 again, *AMPC*:

41 And they were filled with great awe and feared exceedingly and said one to another, Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey Him?

Jesus intended for His disciples to use *their* Faith and stop the storm! In other words, "You could have done the same thing. I was asleep. Where is your Faith?" So now let's read Romans 10:17, *AMPC*: "So Faith comes by hearing [what is told], and what is heard comes by the preaching [of the message that came from the lips] of Christ (the Messiah Himself)."

We can see from that scripture why Jesus expected them to use *their* Faith. Now, dear Partner, we can see what this is all about. Look at Mark 5:2, *AMPC*:

2 And as soon as He got out of the boat, there met Him out of the tombs a man [under the power] of an unclean spirit.

We're talking about hearing from The LORD. We've looked at this story before. It's a great example of hearing from God. Now meditate again on this: Faith prepares before it goes. This is where we meditate on this man who was cutting himself with stones. Now think about this and "see it." Meditation in The WORD of God is like God's simulator. When you get caught up in it, you begin really and truly to get over into a realm where God can show you some things.

This man was now clothed and in his right mind. As I was meditating on this and praying in the spirit, I could "see" Jesus' disciples bathing the man in the lake and maybe using the same stones to cut the man's hair. Then we both

know that Jesus probably healed the scars the man had gotten from cutting himself. Peter may have baptized him in water, and Jesus probably looked him in the eyes and forgave him for whatever sin had opened the door to the unclean spirit in the first place. Then meditate some more about where they may have gotten the clothes to put on the man. Remember, Jesus had made His disciples fishers of men, so for 3 ½ years He and His 12 apostles were well taken care of by His Partners!

Look at what it says about this in Luke 8:1-3 in the AMPC:

- 1 Soon afterward, [Jesus] went on through towns and villages, preaching and bringing the good news (the Gospel) of the kingdom of God. And the Twelve [apostles] were with Him,
- 2 And also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had been expelled;
- 3 And Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager; and Susanna; and many others, who ministered to and provided for Him and them out of their property and personal belongings.

We'll continue to meditate on the phrase "and many others," and also the fact that poor people have no need for a treasurer such as Judas who "had the bag" for Jesus' ministry (John 12:6).

So how does one know the voice of The LORD? I started with something simple like asking The LORD which socks to buy—the black ones or the blue ones. I held the blue ones in my hand first, close to my upper chest, and asked, "This one?" And then I just listened for the "inward witness." Then I did the same thing with the black pair. If you struggle with this, start with, "I Love You, LORD," and then listen for the answer. The WORD says that David "inquired of The LORD." When I walk into my closet, for instance, I'll ask The LORD what I should wear. And with just about everything else I, like David, inquire of The LORD first.

Spend more quality time with The LORD just being still and quiet before Him, and learn to listen from your spirit, or heart. Minister to Him with praise or pick a psalm and read it to your heavenly Father. Keep a small pad with you, listen for Him and write down what you hear.

As you sow your BLESSING seed this month remember that God Loves you. We Love you, and Jesus is LORD!

Love,



Ps. 23	Ps. 112	Eph. 1:16-23	1 Thess. 5:23
Ps. 91	Ps. 118	Eph. 3:14-20	Rom. 15:13
Ps. 103	ISA. 54	Col. 1:9-11	Rom. 15:29
			Zech. 9:11-12

October



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