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AN EXEGETICAL STUDY OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD IN JOHN 10:11-16

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CERTIFICATION

I certify that this memoir entitled, **An Exegetical Study of the Good Shepherd in John10:11-16**, submitted to the Department of Theology, Bigard Memorial Seminary Enugu, in affiliation with Pontifical Urban University of Rome is an original work carried out by **Ijeoma Stanley** under my supervision and it is accepted for the award of a Bachelor’s Degree in Theology (B.TH).

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DEDICATION

To Mary, who mothered Christ the Good Shepherd and who mothers all called into the ministry of shepherding; this work is dedicated that she may through her maternal intercession, whisper to them at Cana “whatsoever He shall say to you, do it”.

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ABSTRACT

The shepherd discourse of John 10 is one of the most significant sections of the Gospel of John. A study of the text both in its strict exegetical and theological context reveals probably a loose insertion of John 10 into the Gospel. But it goes beyond that as it shows also the salvation-historical framework of the text and the consciousness of Jesus in the mission given to him by his Father. This Memoir will employ the classical traditional historical- critical method to exegete on the above biblical verses. It will rely mainly on the diachronic and synchronic methods. At the end, it will examine the hermeneutic import of the text and its contemporary- theological relevance for the readers of today.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

“... And now the end has come. So listen to my piece of advice: exegesis, exegesis, and yet more exegesis! Keep to the Word, to the scripture that has been given to us”.¹

A scholarly investigation of the Bible is an intentional exercise that has its accompanied methodology. This is what is generally known today as exegesis.² In doing this, the exegete seeks amongst other things to discover what the author intends to communicate and its meaning for the faith community of today.

In the first edition of his great commentary on the “Gospel of John” in 1955, C. Barrett characterizes the fourth evangelist as perhaps the greatest theologian in the history of the Church, often referring to him as the Theologian. This is quite evident in the works of the Johannine literature, as evidenced also in the Shepherd Discourse of John 10. The text of John 10, being one of the most significant of the Gospel of John, draws with it a lot of theological and literary significances. However, a study of the text in its strict exegetical context reveals a loose insertion of John 10:1-18 into the text³. There is also the theological question of the appropriate context of the interpretation between the legitimate and illegitimate shepherd together with the salvation-historical framework of the gospel and the consciousness of Jesus’ mission as portrayed in the 10:14-18. These burning concerns about the text provide a background for the discourse that will be engaged in this Memoir.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

¹ A Speech given by Karl Barth on the event of his formal farewell to his students in Bonn, just prior to his expulsion from Germany in 1935. Quoted in Eberhard Busch, Karl Barth: *His Life from Letters and Autobiographical Texts* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 20.

² Mark McEntire, *A Guide to Biblical Exegesis* (Belmont: Belmont University School of Religion), 1.

³ George Modley, “The Shepherd Discourse of John 10” (Master Degree Project, University of Durban-Westville, 1994), 7.

This Memoir will address the problem of the loose insertion of John 10:11-18 into the Johannine text. It also seeks to address the problem of the appropriate context of interpreting the good shepherd discourse.⁴Addressing these problems will be one of the ways this Memoir hopes to bring about the original meaning of the text for the Johannine audience and its implications for today's readers.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This work will pose the following research questions:

1. What is Textual Criticism?
2. What is the context of the Shepherd Discourse in John 10?
3. What is the general structure of the passage of John 10?
4. How do we arrive at a diachronic analysis of our text?
5. What is the historical-cultural background of the text?
6. How do we arrive at a synchronic analysis of our text?
7. What are the motifs of the passage?
8. What is the historical relevance of the Johannine shepherd discourse?
9. What is the import of the text today?
10. To what extent can it be said that the text has a contemporary significance?
11. What are some of the recommendations/attitudinal changes that can be gleaned from the text?

1.4 AIMS/GOALS OF THE RESEARCH

The first aim of this research is to discover what the text has to say in its original setting. With the aids of the historical critical methods which shall be used, I hope to arrive at conclusions that are scholarly plausible and intersubjectively verifiable and acceptable.

⁴ This is actually a problem because some scholars like George Modley tend to favour the Johannine context over the historical context of the shepherd discourse in their understanding of the Johannine text.

This work will also seek to foster and investigate further on the faith that the words of the biblical texts already bear testimony to.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The overriding methodological style of this thesis is the Library research method. This Memoir is hinged on the pillars of faith and reason which aids this research work in carrying out its exegetical work in keeping with the appropriate standards. As an exegetical and systematic study, the hermeneutics of faith is employed throughout the entire work. This essay will also draw extensively from the Sacred Scriptures, exegetical materials and sources that come from tradition and magisterial teachings of the Church. Scientific citation is done in keeping with the Chicago Turabian Method of referencing and footnoting. Biblical references are from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 BEATRIX THOMASIA: “JESUS AS THE GOOD SHEPHERD IN JOHN’S GOSPEL” (2015)

In the work, “Jesus as the Good Shepherd in John’s Gospel”, Beatrix Thomasia examines one of the “I am” sayings of Jesus Christ. It is in the “I am sayings of Jesus Christ that we find Jesus identifying himself as the Good Shepherd.”⁵ In doing this, she applies the lessons learned from this discourse to the task of shepherding in the contemporary ministry paying close attention to the roles of the bishops and priests as shepherds. In writing this biblico-theological work, the author made use of the New Revised Standard Version. She also relied on commentaries like the Commentary on the Gospel of John by Raymond Brown and some biblical dictionaries. She also made use of journals, articles and some church documents like “Presbyterorum Ordinis”, “Pastores dabo vobis” and “Christus Dominus”. However, this review will not explore the in-depth analysis of the Good Shepherd in John’s Gospel as was done by the author.

The work to be reviewed is divided into three chapters and is analytical in nature. The first chapter titled, “The Shepherd Imagery in the Bible” dwelt on the biblical foundations of shepherd based on shepherds in the Ancient Near East, shepherds in the Old Testament and shepherds in the New Testament. Going through the work, one sees that “the shepherd imagery was used in a figurative way throughout the Ancient Near East and in the Hellenistic world. It is quite natural that the Old Testament and the New Testament should also use the shepherd imagery.”⁶ This chapter also gives us a general survey of shepherd/shepherding in the Ancient Near East and in the Bible. To achieve this, it relied on biblical dictionaries like

⁵ Beatrix Thomasia, “Jesus as the Good Shepherd in John’s Gospel” (Master’s Degree Project, Catholic University of Portugal, 2015), 1.

⁶ Beatrix Thomasia, “Jesus as the Good Shepherd in John’s Gospel”, 4.

the Anchor Bible Dictionary and the Harper's Bible Dictionary. Its goal is to "understand shepherding in its original context in order to appreciate Jesus who states in John's Gospel, I am the Good Shepherd. Because of the richness of the day to day experience of the shepherd, it became the primary metaphor for the leaders in the bible."⁷ Both the leaders of Israel and God himself are portrayed as the shepherds of their flock.

In the second chapter titled, "The Good Shepherd in John's Gospel", one sees the "incarnate Son of God being presented as the Good Shepherd."⁸ In contrast to Jesus the Good Shepherd, the Fourth Gospel exposes and accuses the Jewish religious leaders as acting as wicked shepherds who are not concerned for the hurting and troubled sheep and who abuse the sheep of God's flock for their own personal gain. Jesus the Good Shepherd showed the full extent of his selfless love for the flock by dying for them. As it is written, the Good Shepherd lays down his life for his sheep (John 10:11). This is the highest expression of his love for them. The author acknowledges that this is the first time in the Fourth Gospel that the topic of shepherding is being addressed as such. The author in this chapter relied more on the works of Raymond Brown especially, his "Introduction to the New Testament" (1997) and "Introduction to the Gospel of John" (2003).

The third chapter titled, "Shepherding in the contemporary ministry" examines the roles of the shepherds in the Church today beginning with the pope, bishops down to the priests and deacons. Here, we see the author's efforts to engage some contemporary works beginning with the magisterial teachings down to some authors like Lawrence Mick (Understanding the Sacraments: Holy Orders, 2006), Patrick Maliti (Priesthood: A Call to Imitate Christ the Good Shepherd, 1997). To feed the sheep does not just entail giving them food but also to guide and guard them spiritually. It requires "bringing them closer to God

⁷ Beatrix Thomasia, "Jesus as the Good Shepherd in John's Gospel", 5.

⁸ Beatrix Thomasia, "Jesus as the Good Shepherd in John's Gospel", 13.

and showing them the love of Christ for them.”⁹ The Church will always need good shepherds like Jesus because there are lost, wandering and wounded sheep in the Church. The writer also acknowledged the important contribution of the religious and the lay men and women. These people are to collaborate with the ministry of bishops, priests and deacons.

The work is praise-worthy for its efforts to discuss at length the shepherd discourse in John 10 and its ability to apply it to the contemporary shepherds of today. The method of approach of the author is descriptive and analytic. However, its exegetical methods are insufficient as only few methods of the historical method are applied to the text of John 10. This does not make for a sound exegesis. Methods of textual criticism, redaction criticism and form criticism are visibly absent from the work.

Conclusively, I observed the efforts of the author to interact with various materials especially recent Church documents like Pope Francis’ “*Evangelii Gaudium*” and the “*Instrumentum Laboris*” of the 2001 Synod of Bishops, even though they are not explicitly mentioned here. This gives the work a very refreshing outlook. The insights gathered so far from this work will spur this current exegetical work on John 10 to delve deeper into the meaning of the text.

2.2 GEORGE MODLEY: THE SHEPHERD DISCOURSE OF JOHN 10 (1994)

In this work, George Modley explores the history of research on John 10:1-18. He attempts to make contribution to the understanding of this very important chapter in John by using literary theory for exegetical purposes. He also draws some conclusions with regard to the Christology of John and opens some avenues for the understanding of the significance of the shepherd metaphor for our own context. This work is exegetical in nature and uses to a commendable extent the diachronic and synchronic methods of exegesis. It made great use of the scriptures and a good number of commentaries and lexica in order to carry out this

⁹ Beatrix Thomasia, “Jesus as the Good Shepherd in John’s Gospel”, 31.

scientific task. This review will not go into full details of the exegetical methods and steps used by the author. It shall move straight to the main ideas of the work. This work addressed the shepherd discourse of John 10 in five chapters. It began by addressing the history of research: John 10:1-18, John 10:1-18 and the Christology of John, and John 10:1-18 and the Christology of John in the local context.

In the first chapter on the History of Research on John 10:1-18, the author followed the edited version of J. Beutler and F. Fortna's work titled "The Shepherd Discourse of John 10" (1991). Some of the issues that were addressed in this chapter include the problems of the shepherd discourse which the writer states came from the loose insertion of John 10:1-18, he also examines the Old Testament and Jewish background of the shepherd discourse, the history of religions origin of the shepherd discourse and the relationship between tradition, history and John's interpretation of the shepherd discourse.

The second chapter provides a brief overview of the theory that was used which is the theoretically founded exegesis. This theory accounts for the linguistic or syntactic semantic and literary features of a text. The results of the exegesis can then be interpreted in terms of the "social, cultural or political context in which the text functions."¹⁰

The third chapter is the main exegetical chapter. Here the structure of John and the interaction of John 10:1-8 with the Gospel as a whole is addressed. At the end of the exegetical study, one is able to draw three preliminary conclusions. The first is that in both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the shepherd metaphor was used to denote kings. Thus in John 10, this denotes Jesus' kingship especially his activity as the shepherd- king. The second is that since the texts from Jeremiah, Ezekiel and John all drew from the historically specific conventions concerning shepherding, the descriptions of the Christology of John 10 must be based on the elements which were abstracted from the conventional level of the parables. The third is that,

¹⁰ George Modley, "The Shepherd Discourse of John 10", 99.

John 10 as in the cases of Jeremiah 23 and Ezekiel 34 cannot be limited to one ecclesiological or allegorical perspective. It must be interpreted in the context of the scripture as a whole.

The fourth chapter addresses the issue of John 10:1-18 and the Christology of John. It also makes a connection with Jeremiah 23:1-8 and Ezekiel 34:1-6. This chapter maintains that as shepherd- king of the covenant, Jesus fulfills all the pastoral requirements as promised and expected for the shepherdless covenant people of Israel. Jesus does this in accordance with the divine will of God because the covenant community belongs to God. As Shepherd King, Jesus provides real pasture in accordance with the prophetic and divine expectations of the coming of a David branch. Also, the pastoral activities of the shepherd king expand covenant Israel incontrovertibly to include people from other nations into the unitary social group of the universal covenant or spiritual Israel. Finally, this chapter states that shepherd king is socio- pastoral and not political. Its aim is to establish the universal covenant of peace which brings about a new unity in the universalized community of the covenant Israel.¹¹

The final chapter of the work described the notion of contextualization as metaphoric practice based on the thought of D. Smith (“The Composition and Order of the Fourth Gospel”, 2015). Then it went ahead to identify the shepherdlessness of the local covenant community as a horizon which can be regarded as “a broad common denominator in Jeremiah 23:1-8 and Ezekiel 34:1-6.”¹² It concluded by raising some questions about the possibility of exploitation by Church officials, the quest for healing and restoration in the post-Apartheid era in South Africa and how the Church’s care can be embedded in the shepherd Christology.

¹¹ George Modley, “The Shepherd Discourse of John 10”, 177.

¹² George Modley, “The Shepherd Discourse of John 10”, 187.

The main points of this work are that the basic horizon underlying John 10:1-18, Jeremiah 23:1-8 and Ezekiel 34:1-6 is that of the shepherdlessness of the covenant community of God and that the basic Christology which addresses this situation is a pastoral Christology that presents Jesus as the Shepherd King of covenant or spiritual Israel.

The work, however, fails to show the relationship between the shepherd metaphor and the older strata of the Gnostic writings which have their origins in the Jewish wisdom traditions. Be that as it may, the work remains relevant today for those who wish to understand a great deal about the Johannine discourse in John 10 and also for religious leaders who are shepherds in their different capacities. Furthermore, a review of this work will further enrich the present exegetical study on John 10:11-16 especially in its efforts to study it from a synchronic and diachronic approach.

2.3 ULRICH BUSSE “OPEN QUESTIONS ON JOHN 10” (1991)

This article was published by the members of the Johannine Writings Seminar in their work titled the “Shepherd Discourse of John 10 and its Context”. In this work, Ulrich Busse seeks to raise literary and theological questions that arise from the studies of the tenth chapter of John. The author was able to raise scholarly questions on this passage by relying on biblical commentaries and works of authors on this text. This review will not explore the questions of the origin and the later use of the shepherd imagery together with the significance of biblical allusions for the interpretation.

In order to present his questions, the work was mainly divided into literary and theological problems with an introduction and conclusion. Under the literary problems, the writer notes that one of the literary problems of John 10 is usually “the loose insertion of the shepherd speech in its context.”¹³ He however pointed out that this enigma can be solved in

¹³ Ulrich Busse, “Open Questions on John 10,” *The Shepherd Discourse of John 10 and its Context*, eds Johannes Beutler and Robert Fortna (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 6.

two ways. The first is by exploring the traditional historical growth model. The second is by following the rearrangement hypothesis. This has the advantage of “easing the abrupt new beginning of 10:1 by means of skillfully rearranging the texts”.¹⁴ The work acknowledges that the rearrangement hypothesis has received criticisms especially from scholars like Ernst Haenchen and Adolf Julicher who think that the time for the rearrangement hypothesis is over. Already Julicher suggested that critics have called for a gospel written the way they would have written it. This is also true of Rudolf Bultmann’s large commentary. Another issue raised as part of the literary problem is the problem of determining the genre of John 10:1-18 or of 10:1-5. Sometimes these verses are called allegory, parable, concept, similitude or simply imagery. Scholars like B. Bauer (as mentioned in the author’s work) see it as a high abstraction. Quoting Bauer, he said: “it is only by the means of this abstraction that the narrator is able to unfold the significance of the *paroimia* a number of times consecutively and to strike a balance in terms of its depth and significance.”¹⁵

Under the theological problems, the author states that the Christological function that Jesus is the Son of God finds its subsequent legitimization because of the shepherd’s caring attitude, which leads to his giving up himself.¹⁶ This is akin to securing Jesus’ divine Sonship which is an interest that dominates the entire gospel. He also points out that there is also the main question of the identity of the historical Jesus with the preexistent Son. He, however, believes that the confession of faith that Jesus is the pre-existent Son is retracted in John’s Gospel. This is because the evangelist sees the danger that “the concreteness of the salvation which is revealed in Christ Jesus can be watered down by an over emphasis on a Christology of pre-existence which features all the negative aspects of speculation.”¹⁷

¹⁴ Ulrich Busse, “Open Questions on John 10”, 6-7.

¹⁵ Ulrich Busse, “Open Questions on John 10”, 11.

¹⁶ Ulrich Busse, “Open Questions on John 10”, 16.

¹⁷ Ulrich Busse, “Open Questions on John 10”, 17.

Busse, in this work, fails to give an in-depth analysis of the theological questions raised in John 10. Also, John 10 has more issues than just literary and theological issues. The issue of culture and environment of the text was not given proper attention. However, the work in a nutshell provides us with salient questions and areas of concern and dispute that have been raised by scholars about this text. It has a unique way of launching us into the thoughts and arguments of these scholars. A review of this work remains quite relevant for this Long Essay because it raises questions about the context and theological nature of John 10 which shall be addressed in this essay.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 EXEGESIS OF SELECTED TEXT

3.1 TEXTUAL CRITICISM

Textual Criticism can be defined as the scientific procedure of assessing the transmission of the New Testament text.¹⁸ Textual Criticism seeks to establish the original wording of the biblical text.¹⁹ This is because the texts as we have them today are not presented to us in their original manuscripts, but rather in variant versions. What we have today is often called the copies of copies of copies of the original manuscripts. As a result of this, there seems to be a “chronological gap between the original manuscript written by a biblical author or compiled by an editor and the earliest preserved copy.”²⁰

The New Testament textual criticism is somewhat different from the Old Testament textual criticism. In doing a textual Criticism of the New Testament, the exegete has to know that the modern editions of the Greek New Testament and the Standard English translations are not based primarily on any single Greek New Testament. The books of the New Testament were all written in the second half of the first century of the Common Era. Despite their differences, they attempt to describe and keep in mind the common kinds of changes in the text including the changes that scribes who hand-copied ancient texts tended to make. These changes can be classified into intentional and unintentional changes. They will be outlined here briefly because, they will serve as a guide to the textual criticism of the exegetical passage of this Memoir. Biblical scholars like Mark McEntire have identified four of the most common types of intentional changes. They include:

- a) A simple expansion. This means a word or a phrase that is added to the text by the scribe.
- b) Some changes in the text appear to be attempts to improve the grammar or style of the writing.
- c) Some biblical texts have approximate or precise parallels in other parts of the Bible. In cases where these parallels do not match exactly, it appears that scribes attempted to alter them so that they would.
- d) It appears that scribes sometimes wrote notes on the margins of the manuscripts, perhaps as commentary on, or clarification of the text. At a later time, such marginal notes may have been incorporated into the

¹⁸ Stanley Porter, ed *Hand Book to Exegesis of the New Testament* (Boston: Brill Academic Publishers, 2002), 51.

¹⁹ Ohajuobodo Oko, “The Bible and Scholarly Investigation”, 16.

²⁰ John Hayes and Carl R. Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner’s Handbook* (London: 1998), 34.

text. This kind of change sometimes referred to as gloss could be classified as a combination of intentional and unintentional.²¹

Under the unintentional changes we have:

- a) Frequently, a letter, word or phrase may have been mistakenly copied twice. This is known as dittography.
- b) There is also the error of haplography. This is the opposite of the mistake of duplication. It is the accidental omission of a letter, word or phrase.²²

The practice of textual criticism follows a variety of rules that are agreed upon for evaluating variant readings. The guiding thought behind these rules is not mainly for a rigid application of these rules but to place the interpreter imaginatively in the world of the ancient scribe. The rules include:

- a) The shorter of two possible readings is more likely to be correct. Scribes added something to the text more often than they removed something from it.
- b) The more difficult of two readings is more likely to be correct. A scribe was more likely to have changed a text to make it easier to read than to make it more difficult.
- c) Readings which actually exist in ancient manuscripts should be given primary authority over suggested corrections proposed by later interpreters. The latter type is called an emendation and should be avoided except in cases where a text is completely unreadable in its present form.
- d) The context of a variant reading should be considered in evaluating the possibilities.
- e) The reading which is best to explain the existence of the other alternatives is most likely to be correct.²³

3.1.1 TOWARDS A TEXTUAL CRITICISM OF JOHN 10:11-16

In this study, three manuscript readings were consulted. They include: Byzantine text form, Textus Receptus Stephanus and Textus Secundum. On a closer scrutiny, one discovers that Textus Receptus Stephanus is very similar to the Byzantine Text form. It is in this light that the textual criticism will be carried out by comparing the Byzantine text form and the Textus Secundum.

3.1.2 A COMPARISON OF THE BYZANTINE TEXT FORM AND THE TEXTUS SECUNDUM²⁴

²¹ Mark McEntire, *A Guide to Biblical Exegesis*, 16-17.

²² Mark McEntire, *A Guide to Biblical Exegesis*, 19.

²³ Mark McEntire, *A Guide to Biblical Exegesis*, 21-22.

²⁴ The Byzantine Greek Text used here was compiled and arranged by the center for the study and preservation of the majority text in 2014. This center is located at Oregon in the United States while the Textus Secundum is the manuscript that was used in writing the Lexham English-Greek Inter-Linear Bible in 2010.

Verses	Byzantine Text Form	English Translation	Verses	Textus Secundum	English Translation
11	ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός. ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων.	I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd renders his life for the sheep.	11	Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν ὁ ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν τίθησιν αὐτοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων.	I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.
12	ὁ μισθωτὸς δὲ καὶ οὐκ ὢν ποιμὴν, οὗ οὐκ εἰσὶ τὰ πρόβατα ἴδια, θεωρεῖ τὸν λύκον ἐρχόμενον καὶ ἀφίησιν τὰ πρόβατα	The hireling (but and not being the shepherd) of which are not the sheep his own views the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf seizes them by force and disperses the sheep.	12	ὁ μισθωτὸς καὶ ὢν οὐκ ποιμὴν οὗ ἴδια τὰ πρόβατα ἔστιν οὐκ θεωρεῖ τὸν λύκον ἐρχόμενον	The hired hand who is not the shepherd whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf approaching and abandons the sheep and runs away and the wolf seizes
13	καὶ φεύγει· καὶ ὁ λύκος ἀρπάζει αὐτὰ καὶ	And the hireling flees, for he is a	13	καὶ ἀφίησιν τὰ πρόβατα καὶ φεύγει καὶ ὁ λύκος	them and scatters them.

	σκορπίζει τὰ πρόβατα.	hireling and there is no care to him		ἀρπάζει αὐτὰ καὶ	because he is a
14	ὁ δὲ μισθωτὸς φεύγει, ὅτι	concerning the sheep.	14	σκορπίζει.	hired hand and he is not
	μισθωτός ἐστι καὶ οὐ μέλει αὐτῷ	I am the Good Shepherd and I know the ones that		ὅτι ἐστὶν μισθωτός καὶ οὐ μέλει αὐτῷ περὶ	concerned about the
15	περὶ τῶν προβάτων.	are mine and I am known by the ones	15	τῶν προβάτων	sheep.
	ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός, καὶ	of mine.		ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὁ καλός ποιμὴν	I am the good shepherd, and I know my own, and my own know me,
	γινώσκω τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ γινώσκομαι	As the Father knows me, I also know the Father, and my life I place for the sheep.		καὶ γινώσκω τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ τὰ ἐμὰ	
16	ὑπὸ τῶν ἐμῶν, καθὼς γινώσκει με ὁ πατήρ		16	ἐμὰ γινώσκουσί με	just as the father knows me and I know the father, and I lay down my life for the
	καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με	And other sheep I have which are not of this yard; and those it is necessary for me to lead, and		καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με	sheep.
	ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με			καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με	
	καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με			καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με	
	καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με			καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με	
	καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με			καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με	
	καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με			καθὼς ὁ πατήρ γινώσκει με	

μου τίθημι ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων. καὶ ἄλλα πρόβατα ἔχω, ἃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τῆς αὐλῆς ταύτης· κάκεϊνά με δεῖ ἀγαγεῖν, καὶ τῆς φωνῆς μου ἀκούσουσι, καὶ γενήσεται μία ποιμνη, εἷς ποιμήν.	my voice they shall hear; and there shall be one flock, one shepherd.	γινώσκω τὸν πατέρα καὶ τίθημι μου τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων καὶ ἔχω ἄλλα πρόβατα ἃ ἔστιν οὐκ ἐκ ταύτης τῆς αὐλῆς με δεῖ ἀγαγεῖν κάκεϊνα καὶ ἀκούσουσιν μου τῆς φωνῆς καὶ γενήσονται μία ποιμνη εἷς ποιμήν	And I have other sheep which are not from this fold. I must bring these also, and they will hear my voice, and they will become one flock one shepherd.
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3.1.3 OBSERVATIONS

A critical look at the two manuscripts reveals differences in them as shown in verses 12, 13 and 14.

Byzantine Verse 12 ὁ μισθωτὸς δὲ καὶ οὐκ ὢν ποιμήν, οὗ οὐκ εἰσὶ τὰ πρόβατα ἴδια, θεωρεῖ τὸν λύκον ἐρχόμενον καὶ ἀφήσει τὰ πρόβατα καὶ φεύγει· καὶ ὁ λύκος ἀρπάζει αὐτὰ καὶ σκορπίζει τὰ πρόβατα. The hireling (but and not being the shepherd) of which are not the sheep his own views the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf seizes them by force and disperses the sheep.

Textus Secundum Verse 12: ὁ μισθωτὸς καὶ ὧν οὐκ ποιμὴν οὐ ἴδια τὰ πρόβατα ἔστιν οὐκ θεωρεῖ τὸν λύκον ἐρχόμενον καὶ ἀφίησιν τὰ πρόβατα καὶ φεύγει καὶ ὁ λύκος ἀρπάζει αὐτὰ καὶ σκορπίζει. The hired hand who is not the shepherd whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf approaching and abandons the sheep and runs away and the wolf seizes them and scatters them

There are three observations to be made in this verse. The Byzantine text form added the word **δὲ** (but). This is absent in the Textus secundum. Also we note the use of **εἰσὶ** (are) in the Byzantine text and the use of **ἔστιν** (are) in the Textus Secundum. Finally, the use of **τὰ πρόβατα** (the sheep) is absent in the Textus Secundum.

Byzantine 13 ὁ δὲ μισθωτὸς φεύγει, ὅτι μισθωτὸς ἐστὶ καὶ οὐ μέλει αὐτῷ περὶ τῶν προβάτων. And the hireling flees, for he is a hireling and there is no care to him concerning the sheep.

Textus Secundum 13 ὅτι ἐστὶν μισθωτὸς καὶ οὐ μέλει αὐτῷ περὶ τῶν προβάτων- because he is a hired hand and he is not concerned about the sheep.

Here, one notices the addition of **ὁ δὲ** (and the) in the Byzantine. This is absent in the Textus Secundum. Also the Byzantine text adds **φεύγει** (flees) which had already been repeated in verse 12. This is also missing in the Textus Receptus.

Byzantine 14 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός, καὶ γινώσκω τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ γινώσκομαι ὑπὸ τῶν ἐμῶν, I am the Good Shepherd and I know the ones that are mine and I am known by the ones of mine.

Textus Secundum 14 ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν καὶ γινώσκω τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ τὰ ἐμὰ γινώσκουσί με I am the good shepherd, and I know my own, and my own know me

The Byzantine text form adds **ὑπὸ τῶν ἐμῶν** (by the one of mine). This is absent in the Textus Secundum. The Textus secundum also adds **τὰ ἐμὰ** (my own) **με**(me).²⁵

3.1.4 SUBMISSION

Following the rules in Textual Criticism that the shorter of two possible readings is more likely to be correct, I am of the view that Textus secundum is more likely to be correct

²⁵ I think the addition of these words by the Textus Secundum makes more meaning to the text than when it was absent as in the byzantine text.

than the Byzantine text form. This is because there are more additions in the Byzantine than we have in the Textus Secundum. These additions are efforts of scribes more than it is of the original author himself.

3.1.5 FURTHER OBSERVATIONS AS SEEN IN THE TEXTUAL COMMENTARY ON THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT BY BRUCE METZGER

John 10:11 (τίθησιν, to lay down)- Here, the author points out that the expression to lay down one’s life is characteristically Johannine.²⁶ But then he goes further to say that this expression is substituted by the expression “to give one’s life” as seen in the synoptic Gospels (Matt 20:28, Mk 10:45).

John 10:16 (μία ποιμνη, one flock)- The author identifies the fact that all known manuscripts except the Latin Vulgate agree to read “one flock”.²⁷ He also states that, Jerome’s erroneous rendering of *unum ovile* (one fold) was followed by some translators like Wycliff and the translators of the Cromwell’s Great Bible and also the authorized King James Bible.

3.2 PROVISIONAL TRANSLATION

At the beginning of an exegetical work of this nature, one cannot overemphasize the importance of a provisional translation. Ohajuobodo Oko makes insightful remarks about this that demands to be quoted in full. He says,

Provisional translation represents the real first intensive preoccupation with the text. With the wording closest to the original manuscript established, the exegete goes on to make a working translation of the text to be examined. The exegete strikes a good balance between a slavish word-for-word and content-oriented translation.²⁸

The text which is to be translated was originally written in Greek. Thus, there is need to make recourse to the Greek Bible. Its manuscript is the Textus Receptus Stephanus. The Greek text reads thus:

Verses	Greek Translation	English Translation
11 12	εγώ ειμι ο ποιμην ο καλός ο ποιμην ο καλός την ψυχήν αυτού τίθησιν υπέρ των προβάτων	I am the Good Shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

²⁶ Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971), 230.

²⁷ Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, 231.

²⁸ Ohajuobodo Oko, “The Bible and Scholarly Investigation”, 16.

13	ο μισθωτός δε και ουκ ων ποιμήν ου ουκ εισί τα πρόβατα ίδια θεωρεί τον λύκον ερχόμενον και αφήσει τα πρόβατα και φεύγει και ο λύκος αρπάζει αυτά και σκορπίζει τα πρόβατα	The hired hand who is not the shepherd, sees the wolf approaching and abandons the sheep and runs away and the wolf seizes them and scatters them.
14	ο δε μισθωτός φεύγει ότι μισθωτός εστι και ου μέλει αυτώ περί των προβάτων	because he is a hired hand and he is not concerned about the sheep.
15	εγώ ειμι ο ποιμήν ο καλός και γινώσκω τα εμά και γινώσκομαι υπό των εμών	I am the Good Shepherd, and I know my own, and my own know me,
16	καθώς γινώσκει με ο πατήρ καγώ γινώκω τον πατέρα και την ψυχήν μου τίθημι υπέρ των προβάτων και αλλά πρόβατα έχω α ουκ έστιν εκ της αυλής ταύτης κακείνά με δει αγαγειν και της φωνής μου ακούσουσι και γενήσεται μία ποιμνη εις ποιμήν	just as the Father knows me and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep which are not from this fold. I must bring these also, and they will hear my voice, and they will become one flock one shepherd.

3.3 DELIMITATION OF TEXT

The main exegetical text is John 10:11-16. However, there shall be need to make recourse to the early verses of John 10 (especially verses 1-9) and also look at the beginnings of John 9 so as to have a better grasp of the shepherd discourse. When looking at the preceding texts and the texts following John 10:11-16, one sees theological relations that plays significant roles in the placement and understanding of this passage. In verses 7 and 8, Jesus

with the greatest possible emphasis and openness removes all doubt about his intent by referring to himself as the “door of the sheep”. By referring to himself as the door, he distinguishes himself from thieves and also points to himself as the Good Shepherd that is seen in verse 11. Because he is the door of the sheep, he has access to the sheepfold and can exercise pastoral care over the flock. Also as the door of the sheep and invariably the Good Shepherd, Jesus reveals himself as the one in whom our salvation is centered. This is brought out in its full and critical significance when he says “all who came before me are thieves and robbers”. In verses 17 and 18 which follow the main passage used in this Memoir, one sees that the theme of the Shepherd’s death announced in verses 11 and 15 is now elaborated. Here, it is shown that the Father’s love for the Son is linked with the Son’s death for the world. The Father has willed that the Son should lay down his life for humankind and the Son obeys in freedom. This portrays the Father’s chief initiative in our salvation history.

3.4 CONTEXT OF TEXT

In order to arrive at a holistic context of the exegetical passage, this work shall examine the historical and the Johannine context of the passage. The historical context is limited to the Ancient Sumerian world and especially the Old Testament.

3.4.1 HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Within the limits of history, scholars have ascertained that the term “shepherd” appears in various cultures that are related to the entire biblical period. As Donald Fowler points out, a good number of ancient Sumerian kings call themselves “shepherds” as early as the third millennium. This goes often with adjectives such as righteous, humble and

obedient.²⁹ Donald Fowler goes further to give us an example of this as seen in the title of Adad-nirari (ca. 1307-1275).

Finally, one sees that several instances of the use of shepherd can be gleaned from the Old Testament. In Psalm 80:1 and Psalm 23, it is clearly a title for God, “Oh Shepherd of Israel, hear us”, and “The Lord is my Shepherd”. In Isaiah 40:1, “The Lord God rules like a shepherd”. The shepherd metaphor was also used for the leaders of the country in such passages as Jeremiah 2:8, 23; 25:34-36: 50:8 and most importantly Ezekiel 34 which has been attributed as the chapter “Christ had in mind for his discourse in John 10”.³⁰ Other instances include Micah 5:1-4 and Psalm 45.

3.4.2 JOHANNINE CONTEXT

The explanation of John’s reliance on the Old Testament is usually divided. While some scholars trained in Semitics are of the view that John appealed to the Old Testament, scholars trained in the classics explains the Gospel in the light of Hellenistic motifs and ideas which permeated the Semitic world. I tend to align with scholars like David Fowler who said that “the chapter in John 10 corresponds to the Old Testament traditions. There is however a decisive difference in John 10 namely that the shepherd is not thought of as a messianic ruler since there are no traces whatsoever of the kingly figure.”³¹ Furthermore, John 10 is treated as an allegory, even though; John does not introduce the story with the word “allegory” but rather uses *paroimia* which is an equivalent of the Hebrew word *masal* (parable, allegory). In the rest of the New Testament *paroimia* appears in 2 Peter 2:22, John 16:25 and 16:29. In John’s usage, it appears to mean hidden and obscure speech.

The Johannine context of the good shepherd of John 10 begins from chapter 9 of the same gospel. D. A. Carson suggests that the veracity of John 10 only makes sense when

²⁹ Donald Fowler, “The Background to the Good Shepherd Discourse in John 10”, *Faculty Publications and Presentations Paper* 152 (1991): 1, accessed December 9, 2020, <http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu>

³⁰ Donald Fowler, “The Background to the Good Shepherd Discourse in John 10”, 3.

³¹ Donald Fowler, “The Background to the Good Shepherd Discourse in John 10”, 4.

it stands with John 9 both internally and relationally.³² In chapter 9, the Pharisees are significantly troubled by the healing of the man born blind. These religious elites do not consider the Israelites as sheep but as an uneducated people. Jesus gives sight to the man born blind, triggering an argument with the Pharisees who completely rejected that Jesus had carried out a miracle. Speaking in relation to this, Lesslie Newbigin says, “the light of the world passes judgment on the willful and the intractable blindness of the Pharisees- the false shepherds of Israel who do not love the sheep but in contrast drive them out of the fold”.³³

The story of the man born blind from birth ended with him directing testimonial proof to Jesus and the Pharisees driving the man out. This is a poignant and sardonic incident in which the man born blind is blessed with spiritual insight as well as physical sight while the spiritual leaders of Israel refuse to see (John 9:35-41). It is in this dimension that some scholars avow that, the figure of the sheepfold and its Shepherd Jesus offensively accentuates the absence and shortcomings of the fabricated guardians of Israel.³⁴ The dark backdrop of Jesus Good Shepherd discourse is therefore the irresponsibility he perceives in the Jewish religious leadership.

3.5 STRUCTURE OF THE TEXT

The text of this Memoir will be structured under two strands. The first is John 10:11-13 and then John 10:14-16.

The verses of John 10: 11- 13 form a unit because Jesus as the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep is here contrasted with the hired servant.³⁵ At this stage, one sees that the writer here reduces the parabolic statement about the Good Shepherd to the laying down

³² D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994), 379.

³³ Lesslie Newbigin, *The Light Has Come* (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 125.

³⁴ Anthony Kelly and Francis Moloney, *Experiencing God in the Gospel of John* (Boulevard: Paulist Press, 2003), 215.

³⁵ George Modley, “The Shepherd Discourse of John 10”, 144.

of the life of the shepherd. As George Modley further illustrates, “the *Εγω ειμι* introduction draws the whole statement about the shepherd laying down his life into a narrational domain”.³⁶

Verses 14 and 15 are identified as parallels. This is because of the mutual knowing of the good shepherd/Jesus-sheep/disciples and the Father-Jesus that exists in an inverted parallelism or chiasm.³⁷ It is called a chiasm because Jesus’ knowledge of the sheep and the disciples’ is equivalent to that of his knowledge of the Father and his sheep and his disciples’ knowledge of him is equivalent to that of the Father’s knowing of him. This similarity is evident in the use of the word *καθως* (-as). This adverb introduces a commentary that draws the relationship between Jesus and the sheep/disciples in the whole Gospel narrative. Thus, one discovers in verses 11-15 the universal claim of Jesus that he is the good shepherd, that he knows his sheep and regards them as his own.

In Verse 16 this global and universal claim is taking further. This statement of Jesus has been interpreted to signify a different congregation. However, what is important here is that this statement opens the way to include more people than a unitary closed circle of believers. Thus, if there is only one shepherd and if the flock comprising many different people form different groups, then there is no reason not to accept this as one of the universal statements by Jesus in John.

3.6 ANALYSIS UNDER DIACHRONIC ASPECT

3.6.1 LITERARY CRITICISM

Literary theory has become a very important contributor in the field of New Testament exegesis. This is not surprising when one considers, “the many stylistic portions scattered throughout the New Testament such as the beatitudes (Matthew 5) or the Christ

³⁶ George Modley, “The Shepherd Discourse of John 10”, 144.

³⁷ George Modley, “The Shepherd Discourse of John 10”, 146.

hymn of Philippians 2:6-11”.³⁸ Furthermore in literary criticism, the exegete seeks to “address the question of the unity and the integrity of the text, seeks to discover, isolate and reconstruct what belongs to the written sources and what belongs to redaction”.³⁹

3.6.1.2 LITERARY PROBLEMS OF THE JOHANNINE SHEPHERD DISCOURSE

Here, two literary problems shall be examined. The first is the problem of the loose insertion which will be followed by the problem of the literary genre.

3.6.1.3 THE PROBLEM OF THE LOOSE INSERTION OF JOHN 10:1-8

The question of the loose insertion of John 10:1-18 into its particular place in the Shepherd passage has been identified as a problem. This is because of the “apparent abrupt change of the topic and its transition to a different narrative genre”.⁴⁰ Traditionally, scholars have attempted solving this problem by using the growth model or the rearrangement hypothesis. The rearrangement approach moves 10:1-18 to follow 10:28. The growth model approach reconstructed earlier collections of sources (9:4f, 39-41; 10:1-18, 24-38) which were later expanded by the evangelist through a narrative material (example 9:1-3).⁴¹ It is good to note that this method is not accepted by all the scholars because they consider its presuppositions implausible.

3.6.1.4 THE PROBLEM OF THE LITERARY GENRE

Another literary problem which is open for discussion is the literary genre of the whole of John 10. The Good Shepherd discourse has been identified as an allegory, similitude, parable, concept or image by some scholars. C. Barrett is of the view that “it is neither a parable nor an allegory, though it is related to both forms of utterance. It is a symbolic discourse in

³⁸ Stanley Porter, *Handbook to the Exegesis of the New Testament*, 241.

³⁹ Ohajuobodo Oko, *The Bible And Scholarly Investigation*, 17.

⁴⁰ U. Busse, “Open questions on John 10”, *The Shepherd discourse of John 10 and its context. Studies by members of the Johannine writings seminar*, eds J. Beutler and R.T. Fortna. (Cambridge: University Press, 1991), 6.

⁴¹ George Modley, “The Shepherd Discourse of John 10”, 8.

which symbolism and straightforward statement alternate and stands side by side”.⁴² From this, one can glean that there is a high concentration of metaphorical and figurative language in John 10. It is more of an “image field which is approached from all angles, the author plays with the entire metaphorical range available.”⁴³ This is especially achieved by virtue of contrasting the shepherd with the thief, robber and the hired servant.

3.6.1.5 THE LITERARY CONTEXT OF JOHN 10

Scholars regard John 10:1-13 as the primary context in which John’s Gospel as a polemical text is to be understood.⁴⁴ John 10:1-13 turns on the antithetical sections in 10:1-3a between those who climb over the wall and the shepherd who comes through the door and in 10:3b-5 between the shepherd whose voice the sheep know and with the stranger whose voice they do not know. The shepherd and thief are again contrasted in 10:7-10 and in verses 11-13 we find the contrasting of Jesus as the Good Shepherd and the hireling.

As far as the redactional history of John 10 is concerned, Beutler maintains that “the different levels of interpretation of 10:1-5 found in verses 6ff do not necessarily indicate redactional activities.”⁴⁵ Thus even though one can see that John 10 together with John 21:15-17 and Acts 20:28ff deal with some pastoral aspects related to ecclesiastical life, it is not enough reason to argue that ecclesiastical sections were added to John 10 at large. I think it is more appropriate to say that these pastoral texts have a common ground in the Old Testament. This is why there are links with the Old Testament and Jewish background as evidenced in John 10.

I consider it necessary to look at some of them briefly. The first is the corrupt shepherds and wolves evidenced in Jeremiah 23:1-8 and Ezekiel 34. There is also the

⁴² C. K. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John. An Introduction with Commentary and notes on the Greek text* (London: SPCK, 1967), 304.

⁴³ George Modley “The Shepherd Discourse of John 10”, 14.

⁴⁴ J. Beutler and R. T. Fortna eds. *The Shepherd discourse of John 10 and its context*, 20.

⁴⁵ J. Beutler and R. T. Fortna eds. *The Shepherd discourse of John 10 and its context*, 22.

eschatological good shepherd seen in books like Genesis 49:24, Hosea 4:16, Psalms 28:9 and Psalm 23:1-3. One also sees the death of the shepherd and the salvation of the sheep as seen in Isaiah 53:1-12 and Zechariah 13:7

3.6.1.6 THE UNITY AND RELATIONSHIP OF JOHN 10 WITH THE REST OF THE GOSPEL

As far as the relationship between John 10 and 11 is concerned, Thyen argues that “the caesura between John 10:42 and 11:1, the analeptic reference to the baptizer in 10:4 ff and his return to Perea in 10:40ff all indicate a break between chapter 10 and 11”.⁴⁶ He also believes that John 10 also represents John’s account of the trial of Jesus. Then the narrative about the resurrection of Lazarus in chapter 11 points forward to the resurrection narrative in John 20-21 and forms an envelope structure that indicates the unity of John 11-21. Against this background, Thyen further argues that “the markers, revelation and cosmos, are better accounted for in terms of καταβασις and αναβασις of Jesus and not the other way round. This view allows the division of John in terms of the activities of the baptizer as one who inaugurates Jesus’ αναβασις (1-10) and the emphasis on the resurrection as the goal of both καταβασις and αναβασις”.⁴⁷

This could be the reason why John’s gospel is an attempt to harmonize the synoptic gospels and not just to be wrongly seen as only a Gnostic text. Although there are differences between John and the synoptic gospels, the basic kerygmatic content about Jesus still remains the same.

3.6.2 TRADITION CRITICISM

Tradition Criticism is concerned with the changes that have occurred in a particular literary unit through time. In the view of Mark McEntire, “this criticism assumes

⁴⁶ H. Thyen, “John 10 in the context of the fourth Gospel,” *The Shepherd discourse of John 10 and its context. Studies by members of the Johannine writings seminar*, eds J. Beutler and R.T. Fortna. (Cambridge: University Press, 1991), 125.

⁴⁷ H. Thyen, “John 10 in the context of the fourth Gospel”, 126.

that the bible consists of materials that reflect the central traditions of certain communities of faith. Through the history of these communities, these traditions were used in varying ways to meet the social needs of the communities.”⁴⁸ Tradition criticism began within the Old Testament studies and reached its peak in the work of two German Scholars, Gerhard von Rad and Martin Noth. The nature of tradition criticism is such that it depends heavily upon how the Old Testament literature came into being. This is why it is used in the New Testament.

Tradition criticism has often been criticized as a forest type of tools that looks at a broader picture. The implication of this is that one builds too much on little evidence making the final results improbable.⁴⁹

3.6.2.1 TOWARDS A TRADITION CRITICISM OF JOHN 10:11-16

This passage presents Jesus as the Good Shepherd par excellence. A unique feature of this good shepherd is that he (unlike the hireling) will never abandon the sheep in times of trouble, and is willing to lay down his life for the sake of the sheep. The employment of the shepherd imagery in this text has been described relatively in several places that preceded this text (Ezekiel 34:13, Isaiah 56:8, Ezekiel 37:21-22). It is good to note that in contrast to the practice among several oriental nations who described their kings as shepherds, Israel originally did not do it.⁵⁰ It was only at the time of the Deuternomist at the end of the monarchy that Israel started to use this metaphor for their monarchs and rulers.⁵¹

One sees in the Book of Ezekiel a strong condemnation of the corrupt shepherds who acted as hirelings. The Ezekiel tradition (especially 34) prophesied against these shepherds and accused them of feeding themselves instead of the flock. One also sees in

⁴⁸ Mark McEntire, *A Guide to Biblical Exegesis*, 69.

⁴⁹ “Traditions Criticism” in *Threads from Henry’s Web*, henryneufeld.com. Accessed 18th December, 2020.

⁵⁰ J. Jeremias, “*θυρᾶ*” *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Vol III, ed. G. Kittel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1965), 484.

⁵¹ J. Beutler and R. T. Fortna eds. *The Shepherd discourse of John 10 and its context*, 25.

Hosea 4:16, Psalms 28:9, 80:2, various catalogues that refer to God as the shepherd of Israel. He is seen as the eschatological Good Shepherd who will gather his flock after the dispersion in exilic and post-exilic prophetic texts. Even though there is no evidence of a suffering and dying shepherd in the Old Testament, scholars have pointed out that “Isaiah 53:1-12 and especially the references to lamb and sheep provide the closest parallel to this notion.”⁵²

This section will be concluded by raising questions in keeping with the style of tradition criticism. Such questions include, what is the purpose of the good shepherd discourse in John’s Gospel? What is the understanding of the good shepherd that is presented here? What does the description of the good shepherd reveal about the meaning of being a shepherd at this particular point in the development of the tradition?

Coming down to the first question, the purpose of the good shepherd discourse is to present the image of Jesus as the figure of the good shepherd, to differentiate his ministry from that of the false shepherds, and to stress the voluntary nature of his sacrifice for humans. The second question is the understanding of the good shepherd in this text. For the people of the biblical times, the shepherd was an autocrat over his flock; most times the shepherd imagery evoked that of sovereignty.⁵³ The understanding of the good shepherd here is to present Jesus as the true ruler in contrast to all false shepherds. Coming down to the final question, one can say that at the time of the development of this tradition, the concept of the good shepherd was almost like a revolution of what was obtainable during the New Testament times. The good shepherd does not only look after his sheep, he goes the

⁵² The relationship or similarity between the synoptics and John as regards John 10 is intentionally not examined here. This is because I align my thoughts with the likes of George Modley which has been quoted here and also that of Smalley S. in his 1992 work on “John- Evangelist and Interpreter”. These scholars are of the view that John and the synoptic got their materials from a common tradition. This means that John likely did not consult the synoptic in writing this text.

⁵³ Leon Morris, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1971), 497.

extra mile in the sense that he is willing even to lay down his life for the sake of his sheep. This signifies the apex of love he has for his sheep.

3.6.3 FORM CRITICISM

Form criticism is interested in the “literary genre and life setting of the text (Sitz-im-Leben). It raises questions such as: “what kind of text is this and what is its purpose? The exegete also investigates whether the text is narrational or reflective, argumentative or pedagogic,... parabolic or hymnal”.⁵⁴ Form criticism came into existence in Germany following the war of 1914-1918. It is a development of literary criticism. As Lovell opines, “literary criticism failed to deal adequately with difficulties connected with the pre-literary stage of the gospels. Knowledge of the situation in which the study of the gospels was left prior to 1914 shows the need for additional study”.⁵⁵ The important and outstanding scholars preceding 1914 in Germany were Bernard Weiss, Holtzmann, Wrede, Johannes Weiss and some others. Each of these men by one method or another, helped to lay the foundation for the appearance of form criticism.

The process of form criticism is commonly outlined in three steps. The first is the isolation of the individual unit in order to determine where the unit of scripture begins and ends. The second is to classify the unit based on its literary type. The third and final step is to determine its life situation.

3.6.3.1 FORM CRITICISM OF JOHN 10:11-16

A) ISOLATION OF THE UNIT- This deals with a detailed analysis of the structure of the text. As stated earlier in this Memoir, verses of John 10: 11- 13 form a unit because Jesus as the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep is here contrasted with the hired servant. At this stage, one sees that the writer here reduces the parabolic statement about the

⁵⁴ Ohajuobodo Oko, “The Bible and Scholarly Investigation”, 17.

⁵⁵ Basil Redlich, *Form Criticism* (London: Duckworth 1939), 19.

good shepherd to the laying down of the life of the shepherd. This is contrasted with the activities of the hired servant. The wolf that stalks the sheep introduces a kind of conventional event. The author, drawing from his conventional wisdom, believes that if the owner of the sheep is also the shepherd, the owner will guard and defend the sheep even at the cost of his life (verse 11). There is no personal attachment between the hired servant and the sheep as shown in verse 12; that is why it is easier for the hired servant to leave the sheep in the face of danger. The end of this will be the capturing and the scattering of the sheep. The idea of the good shepherd is a foil to the acts of the hired servant.

Verses 14 and 15 as stated earlier are parallels. This is because of the mutuality between Jesus and his Father. Then in verse 16, there is the clear instance of the global and universal dimension of the mission of the Good Shepherd.

B) LITERARY GENRE OF THE TEXT- As stated earlier, the case for the literary genre of this passage is still an open discussion. It has often been identified as allegory, similitude, parable, concept or image. This work is of the view that the passage is more of a symbolic discourse in which symbolism and straightforward statements (like “I am the Good shepherd”) alternate and stand side by side. There is also the use of highly figurative languages in the form of metaphors (shepherd, sheep, hireling). These metaphors and figures are used for the benefit of the reader and for identification purposes. They give us more information about the personality of Jesus in the text while revealing his true nature to us.

i) JOHN 10:11-16 AS NARRATIONAL- This text is narrational. Using the narrative theory of Durand, one sees the function of prolepses and analepses, the relationship between story time and narrative time, together with the question of character development.⁵⁶ Prolepses (as seen in 10:11) functions to increase the tension in John 9-10; analepses (10:15) portrays the

⁵⁶ J. A Du Rand, “A syntactical and narratological reading of John 10 in coherence with Chapter 9” *The Shepherd discourse of John 10 and its context. Studies by members of the Johannine writings seminar*, eds J. Beutler and R.T. Fortna. (Cambridge: University Press, 1991), 112.

identity of Jesus. The relationship between the story time and narrative time is described in terms of scenes, summaries and pauses. This could comprise of one or two days (9:1-41) or a day (10:1-18). The character portrayal is typological and static. Jesus characterizes himself by his deed and his works. He calls himself the Good Shepherd (10:11).

C) LIFE SETTING OF THE TEXT- I am of the opinion that the life setting is catechetical in nature. This is because in this text, Jesus wishes to instruct and teach his audience firstly about himself as a Good shepherd and also to draw their attention to the dangers that bad shepherds can bring about in the community. As regards the original situation John was addressing with this text in his Christian community, I share the ideas of George Murray (in his 1987 Word Biblical Commentary) that the Christological issue is at the fore and dominates the shepherd discourse. John uses the shepherd imagery to set forth for his audience the significance of Jesus, since it was well known to the Jews and Gentiles as a picture of leadership and salvation for humanity. In the Christian setting it has the deeper dimension of mediation of the rule and redemption of the Lord of the universe. This was to draw the attention of the Christians away from the pantheon of savior gods, divinized men and powers of the Gnostic pleroma.

3.6.4 REDACTION CRITICISM

Redaction criticism is interested in the last stage of the process that led to the final editing of the biblical books. In the Gospel criticism, it describes the editorial work carried out by the evangelists on their sources when they composed the gospels. It looks at the gospel as complete documents and sees the evangelists as authors in their own rights. In this criticism, the exegete seeks to establish whether the text in its final form is simply a collection and codification of older materials, an alternate formulation or really a new

composition.⁵⁷ Redaction criticism came to the fore after the Second World War and is associated in the first place with the names of three prominent German scholars: Gunther Bornkamm, Hans Conzelmann and Willi Marxsen.

3.6.4.1 TOWARDS A REDACTION CRITICISM OF JOHN 10:11-16

The shepherd discourse in John is not an entirely a new composition in the biblical corpus. In as much as the work has its peculiarities and distinctions, it is good also to note that there are striking parallels that can be seen in the work and some other biblical texts. The focus here will be to bring out the similarities of the text with that of Ezekiel 34. This is in order to show that it is likely that some editorial work was carried out by the author of this gospel in writing John 10 and it also goes to show that it is most likely that he relied on the tradition in which Ezekiel 34 was written.

In verse 6 of Ezekiel 34, there is the mention of God gathering the scattered sheep that wandered over the mountains and on every hill. Coming to John 11:16, Jesus talks of bringing together other sheep of his who are elsewhere but do not belong to the fold. Ezekiel 34:8 talks about the prey and wild animals that have begun to eat the sheep as a result of the poor leadership of the shepherds. This is akin to what is seen in John 10:12 where Jesus speaks of the incompetence of the hired hands that even flee at the sight of the wolf coming to snatch and scatter the sheep. The Johannine text proves its uniqueness in the fact that Jesus will go to the extent of even laying down his life for the sheep (verse 15). Furthermore, in verse 15 of Ezekiel, God proclaims himself, the True Shepherd of his sheep. This is the same declarative statement made by Jesus in John 10:11 when he says, “I am the Good Shepherd”. One sees in Ezekiel 34:23 that God talks about setting up David as the one shepherd who will feed his people. The author of the Fourth Gospel takes up this point again in John 10:16 where

⁵⁷ Ohajuobodo Oko, “The Bible and Scholarly Investigation”, 17.

Jesus is presented as the new David who will lead the flock so that there will be the unity of one flock under one shepherd.

From all these, one could say that notwithstanding the ingenuity of this text, the author is likely to have relied on other materials especially that of Ezekiel 34 in order to present the text in its final form as it is seen today. Thus, the text is not entirely a new composition.

3.6.5 HISTORICAL-CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE TEXT

3.6.5.1 SHEPHERD AND SHEEP IN ASIA MINOR

“Sheep” here is understood as a metaphoric term for human beings as frail and dependent creatures who are not able to conduct their lives on their own. It is in this light that the shepherd is understood as the leader of the people. According to J. Turner, the characteristics that were applied to Apollo and Hermes- two Greek deities which were regarded as shepherds- are similar to the characteristics of the shepherd in John 10.⁵⁸ His argument is that the two prominent features between Hermes and Jesus as metaphorical shepherds are their function as gatekeepers and also their task of leading of their sheep to pasture or the realms of the afterlife. Turner further identifies the following characteristics which Apollo shares with Jesus: he is described as the attendant of the sheep, the pastoral and the door keeper who averts evil from entering the gates of the city,⁵⁹ these go to show the possibility of the influence of Greek thinking and philosophy on John.

3.6.5.2 SHEPHERD AND SHEEP IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

Turner points out that, the imagery of the shepherd and flock is used in the Ancient Near East more frequently than in Greek Literature.⁶⁰ The shepherd’s crook is usually

⁵⁸ J. Turner, “The History of Religious Background of John 10,” *The Shepherd discourse of John 10 and its context. Studies by members of the Johannine writings seminar*, eds J. Beutler and R.T. Fortna. (Cambridge: University Press, 1991), 36.

⁵⁹ J. Turner, “The History of Religious Background of John 10”, 37.

⁶⁰ J. Turner, “The History of Religious Background of John 10”, 38.

an emblem of royal authority. The Egyptian pyramid texts apply the shepherd image to the ruler of the world who is to come. Osiris or the dead Pharaoh is here portrayed as the one who protects his subjects even in the underworld. During the time of the middle kingdom, the reigning king is also portrayed as a shepherd.

Apart from its use of the shepherd metaphor for Joshua (Numbers 21:17) and Moses (Deuteronomy 31:1), the Old Testament does not usually use the shepherd imagery for the Israelite kings. It is usually reserved for God to portray his care and the nature of his rule of the people of Israel (Ps 23:1-4, 74:1, Ezekiel 34 and many other such passages). In the New Testament, the application of the shepherd metaphor to God is continued in the Jesus parables (Lk 15:4-7, Mt18:12-14). Jesus is referred to as the one who cares for the lost and the one who oversees the flock. In Revelation 7:17, he is described as both the victorious shepherd and the lamb who leads those who survive the tribulations to the spring of living waters.

3.6.5.3 THE ORIGINS OF SHEPHERD METAPHOR

Ancient Israel regarded the city as a source of luxury, corruption and inequality. They viewed the nomadic desert existence as spiritually advantageous. The real duplicity of the shepherd's real existence however comes to the fore in the figure of Enkidu in the Akkadian Gilgamesh epic. Enkidu's transition from wild to civilized life at the shepherd's hut situates the hut on the border between civilization and the wild. This indicates what George Modley calls the "liminality of the shepherd's existence as well as the shepherd himself as a luminal figure oscillating between the isolation of the wilderness and the hustle and bustle of the settled communities, between nature and culture".⁶¹

This liminality is also seen in the Old Testament. After Moses inherits a flock from Jethro, he leads them into the wilderness and encounters God in the burning bush

⁶¹ George Modley "The Shepherd Discourse of John 10", 33.

episode. In the kingship history of Israel, David the shepherd boy is chosen and the city candidates rejected. It seems as if the withdrawal from the city signified innocence and moral virtue.

It is against this background about the liminality of the shepherd's social existence that one can understand why the metaphoric imagery associated with the shepherd was used to denote the ideas between the divine and the worldly (city). In this context, the calling of the shepherd and the following of the sheep is not a calling of a shepherd leading the sheep but the calling of the sheep out of the mixture of the world. As Turner states, the sheep uniquely recognizes their shepherd's voice not on the grounds of habit, but because they are the shepherd's own, they share some affinity with the shepherd that enables them to recognize his voice above all others.⁶² This calling out of the world not only links up with the shepherd's perception of evil and darkness in John 10 but also with his idea of knowing the sheep (verse 15) and calling them together as one flock (verse 16).

3.7 ANALYSIS UNDER SYNCHRONIC ASPECT

3.7.1 SYNTACTIC ANALYSIS

Here, the aim is to look beyond just the individual meaning of words to find out if the author intends his words to be understood literally, figuratively or symbolically. It looks out for metaphoric, symbolic and literal meanings found in the text.

3.7.1.2 TOWARDS A SYNTACTIC READING OF JOHN 10:11-16

The first step that will be undertaken here is to determine the **general literary form**. The passage of this Memoir is a prose. This is because of the presence of the natural flow of speech and grammatical structure. It lacks a metrical structure and it can be divided into paragraphs.

⁶² J. Turner, "The History of Religious Background of John 10", 41.

Having done that, the next will be to determine the **context**. This has been done previously in the section on the life setting of the text and would not be treated here again to avoid repetition. Having already dealt with the context, the next will be to delve into the study of the words and expressions as shown in the text. This will be done in a verse by verse mode:

Verse 11: I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

The sentence “I am the good shepherd”, is a declarative statement. Jesus in this passage declares himself to be the good shepherd. The emphasis here is not just on being a shepherd but the adjective “good” is added to denote the kind of shepherd he is. In this passage one notes Jesus use of the imagery of the shepherd to denote himself and the sheep to denote human beings. Furthermore, in this verse he goes on to talk about the chief feature of the good shepherd, this is seen in the laying (τιθησιν) down of his life for his sheep. One observes that the verb “laying down” as used in this text shows the extent of his sacrifice. The imagery of the shepherd and sheep used here is very significant. Shepherds are known beginning from the Old Testament for leading the sheep to pasture and water; they protect them from wild animals and carry the weak ones in their arms.⁶³ This shepherd-sheep relationship is what the writer of this passage portrays as the relationship between Jesus and his people.

Verse 12: the hired hand who is not the shepherd, sees the wolf approaching and abandons the sheep and runs away and the wolf seizes them and scatters them.

There is the introduction of the hireling and wolf imageries. The hireling is a worker who is paid wages. He is a mere laborer. One could also call him a hired hand. The text contrasts him with the shepherd. Because he is a hired hand, his level of commitment to the sheep is not the same as that of the shepherd. At the sight of the wolf, he abandons the sheep and runs away, as the text says. When he runs, the wolf now has the opportunity to seize and scatter. The verbs “seize and scatter” typify the wicked acts of the wolf on the sheep. The wolf is used here because it is the greatest enemy of the sheep. It is known for its boldness and fierceness of attack. The wolf is also used symbolically to describe deceitful and greedy people (Gen 49:27, Jer 5:6, Ezek 22:27).⁶⁴ The imagery of the wolf here stands for all who make attempts to frustrate the spiritual progress of those who wish to follow the way of Christ the good shepherd.

Verse 13: because he is a hired hand and he is not concerned about the sheep.

⁶³Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Shepherd”. (Tennessee: Holman Bible Publishers, 1998), 2749.

⁶⁴ Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Wolf”, 2684.

This verse gives reasons why the hired hand does what he does. It begins with the conjunction “because”. The hired hand cannot help what he does because he remains a hired hand and has no concern for the sheep. The verb “concern” is a specific lack in the nature of a hireling.

Verse 14: I am the good shepherd, and I know my own, and my own know me,

In this verse, Jesus makes the same declarative statement as in verse 11, “I am the good shepherd”. He goes ahead to say that as a good shepherd he knows the sheep which he expresses in a possessive statement as “my own”. This sheep in turn knows him. It is necessary to look at the verb “to know” a bit more closely. In the gospel of John, knowledge is a key concept; ⁶⁵although John here does not use the noun “knowledge” but rather the verb “to know”. The knowledge of Jesus here is an omniscient one. He knows all things and understands beyond measure. He knows the secret thoughts of the minds and hearts of the sheep. The knowledge the sheep has here is not just theoretical knowledge. It is more of an experience of the reality and wonders of Jesus in their lives and of course trying to conform one’s lives in the footsteps of the good shepherd.

Verse 15: just as the Father knows me and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.

The first part of this verse continues to talk about the knowledge of Jesus. Here it shows that Jesus and his Father have a mutual knowledge. The second part of this verse is a repetition of what is seen in the second part of verse 11.

Verse 16: And I have other sheep which are not from this fold. I must bring these also, and they will hear my voice, and they will become one flock one shepherd.

In this verse, Jesus goes further to show that his possession of sheep extends even to those who are not of the present fold. Jesus puts himself under a strong necessity and imperative when he uses the expression “I must”. By this he means that he is compelled and bound to bring these sheep into the one fold. The use of the noun “voice” is a medium of bringing about the unity of the flock. When they are brought together and they hear the voice of Jesus, then there will be one flock under one shepherd, which is another way of saying one flock, one shepherd.

⁶⁵ Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Knowledge” 1592.

3.7.2 SEMANTIC ANALYSIS

The word “semantic” is used in two senses, according to Boyer. The first is as a technical term in the science of linguistics. The second is as a more general sense of linguistic and grammatical studies into the meaning of words.⁶⁶ It is in the second sense that it is being used in this Memoir. Semantic analysis will be used here to understand the meaning of the individual words and how these words are combined in order to bring about the author’s intended meaning. Besides the study of the individual words and their meanings, this section will also lay emphasis on the usage of words; in this case it will be how the Greek words are used in other texts. To carry this out, this Memoir will employ “The Concise Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament” written by Frederick William Danker.

3.7.2.3 TOWARDS A SEMANTIC ANALYSIS OF JOHN 10:11-16

Verse 11 Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ὁ καλός ποιμὴν ὁ ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν τίθησιν αὐτοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων

Ἐγώ- This means “I”. It is a first-person pronoun. Sometimes it can be used to convey emphasis as seen in John 10: 11 and in other places like Mat 3:11, 5:22. At other places, no emphasis is discernible especially in passages echoing Semitic usage of the first person (Mat 11:10, Mk 12:26).⁶⁷

εἰμι- This means “am”. It serves as a verb here and also as a function word. It can be used to connect a subject with a predicate as seen in this verse and also in places like Mt 11:29, 23:30b, Mk 3:11. It can also be used to connect a person or thing with a site or temporal moment as seen in Mt 2;13. It also does the work of locating an entity on a narrative scene (Mk 8:1). It can also serve as auxiliary verb (Mk4:38).

⁶⁶ James Boyer, “Semantics in Biblical Interpretation”, in *Grace Journal* 3.2 Online Edition (1962):1, accessed January 12, 2021, www.grace.edu.

⁶⁷ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 107.

ὁ meaning “the”. It is a definite article in the nominative case, singular and in the masculine gender. This word originally is a demonstrative pronoun functioning as a personal pronoun of the third person which gradually weakened to become the definite article “the”.⁶⁸ It can function as a demonstrative (Acts 17: 28); it can also serve as a defining marker (Mt 1:24, Mk 16:1).

καλός means “good”. It is an adjective that qualifies “the shepherd” noun that follows it. It can also mean things that are of high quality and are therefore exceptionally satisfying as seen in Matt 3:10, 13:45. It points to “a focus on moral aspect or personal merit (Matt 5:16, 15:26)”⁶⁹.

ποιμὴν means- “Shepherd”. It is a noun in the nominative singular and in the masculine gender. Besides this passage, the word is also seen in places like Mt 9:36, 25:32, Mk 6:34 and Luke 2:8. It has a very governing effect in the present text as well as in other passages like Mt 26:31, Ephesians 4:11.

ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν τίθησιν- “The good shepherd lays down”. Here there is need to take note of τίθησιν since other words have been examined. Τίθησιν is a verb which means “lays down”. Its use here is to show clearly the action of the good shepherd. It is also seen in John 3:16 and John 15:1.

αὐτοῦ- “his”. This is a pronoun. It can also serve as a reflexive pronoun. It functions here as an intensive marker laying emphasis on the action of the subject (lays down).⁷⁰ Some other passages of similar instances include Mt 1:21, Mk 8:10, Lk 1:36. This word can also function as a close marker that establishes close identification with focus on continuity, preceded by the article with or without a noun as seen in Mk 5:46, Mk 14:39.⁷¹

⁶⁸Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 245.

⁶⁹ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* ,186.

⁷⁰ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* , 62.

⁷¹ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 62.

Τὴν ψυχὴν- “Life”. The first word is a definite article in the accusative case singular and in the feminine gender. Its gender is feminine in order to agree with the word that follows it which is a feminine noun. The definite article is used here to refer to the specified noun ψυχὴν. ψυχὴν is a feminine noun which means “life”. It is the quality without which a body is physically dead as seen in this text. This usage is also seen in places like Mt 2:20, Mk 3:4. It also means that which possesses a vital being as seen in Acts 2:41, 3:23, 7:14. It can also mean “that which is integral to the person’s being beyond mere physical function as seen in Mt 6:5, Mt 10:28, Mt 20:28”.⁷²

ὕπερ- This is a preposition meaning “for”. In this text, it serves as a marker of stance or concern or interest relating to someone or something. It can also mean “on behalf of” or “in the interest of”. Some other passages with similar usage are Mt 5:44, Mk 9:40, Lk 9:50. It can also function as a “marker of a state or condition that exceeds in measure or degree (Lk 6:40, Acts 26:13, 1Cor 4:6)”.⁷³

τῶν προβάτων- “The Sheep”. The definite article that precedes the noun is in the genitive plural in the neuter gender. The sheep (προβάτων) is a plural noun in the genitive case with a neuter gender. The sheep is an animal that is in the care of the shepherd. It is seen in places like Mt 7:15, Mk 6:34, Lk 15:4.

VERSE 12 ὁ μισθωτὸς καὶ ὧν οὐκ ποιμὴν οὐ ἴδια τὰ πρόβατα ἔστιν οὐκ θεωρεῖ τὸν λύκον ἐρχόμενον καὶ ἀφήσιν τὰ πρόβατα καὶ φεύγει καὶ ὁ λύκος ἀρπάζει αὐτὰ καὶ σκορπίζει

ὁ μισθωτὸς- “The hired hand”. The meaning of ὁ has been seen in the previous verse. μισθωτὸς is a singular nominative noun with a masculine gender. This word also appears in Mk 1:20.

καὶ- “and” is a conjunction. It is used as a function word to indicate a connection or an addition.⁷⁴ In this text, it connects the hired hand and the shepherd. It can also join single words (Mt 13:55, Lk 6:14-16), clauses and sentences (Mat 1:23, 3:12). It can also serve as a marker of a narrative transition (Matthew 4:23) and a marker of conclusion/apodosis Luke 2:21, 7:12

⁷² Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 388.

⁷³ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 362.

⁷⁴ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 183.

ὄν- “is”. This is a verb that describes more the action of the hired hand.

οὐκ ποιμήν- “not the shepherd”. οὐκ is a particle used in denial or negation. It serves the function of a negative response here, telling the reader more about the hired hand in opposition to the shepherd. This role is also seen in places like Acts 16:37. It can also be used in the “negation of a statement, verb form or other term (Mat 1:25, 10:26,22:11) or in a question that anticipates an affirmative answer (Mt 6:26, 27:13)”.⁷⁵

οὗ- “whose”. Here it is playing the task of a relative pronoun. It can serve as an introduction to an information or activity relative to a place, condition or document (Mt 2:9, 18:20) or a focus on direction (Mt 28:16, Lk 10: 1).

ἴδια τὰ πρόβατα- “own the sheep”. ἴδια can also mean “belonging to oneself”. In some instances, it is equivalent to a personal pronoun. It focuses on distinctiveness, peculiarity or appropriateness.⁷⁶ (Matthew 22:5, 25:15). Here, it points out that the sheep does not actually belong to the hired hand.

ἔστιν οὐκ- “are not”. The emphasis here is on ἔστιν. οὐκ has been explained earlier. ἔστιν describes the action of the hired hand who does not actually regard the sheep as his own. οὐκ portrays this by its negating role.

θεωρεῖ- “sees”. This is a verb that describes the action of the hireling. This word can also mean to pay attention to and to observe (Mt 27:55, Mk12:4, Lk 14:29). It also means a conclusion based on personal experience (Acts 4:13) or an in-depth awareness (John 14:17).

τὸν λύκον- “the wolf”. The noun “wolf” refers to what is being seen together with its preceding definite article. Other instances include Matt 10:16, Lk 10:3.

ἐρχόμενον- “approaching”. “Approaching” is a verbal word. It can also mean “coming” or “arriving”. In this text, it points to the approaching of the wolf.

καὶ ἀφίησιν- “and abandons”. The verb “abandons” with its connective “and” is a pointer to the action of the hireling on sighting the wolf. ἀφίησιν in its use as “abandon” is found in Rom 2:4 and Rev 2:4. This word can also mean a “release from one’s presence (Mt 13:36), a release from an obligation like a monetary debt (Mt 18:27)”.⁷⁷

τὰ πρόβατα- “the sheep”. What is being abandoned here is described with the noun “sheep”. Sheep has been explained earlier in the previous verse.

καὶ φεύγει- “and runs away”. “To run away” with its conjunction “and” could also mean making a decisive movement away, leaving a specific location in order to avoid a hazard

⁷⁵ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* , 256.

⁷⁶ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* , 173.

⁷⁷ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* , 64.

as seen in this text as the action of the hireling and in other places like Mt 2:13, 8:33. It could also appear as an “imagery of avoiding a moral or spiritual damage (1 Cor 6:8) or an apocalyptic scenario (Rev 16:20)”.⁷⁸

καὶ ὁ λύκος ἀρπάζει αὐτὰ- “and the wolf seizes them”. The emphasis here is on the action of the wolf (seize) since the other words have being examined before. ἀρπάζει in its infinitive form “to seize” is also seen as robbery in the standard Greek usage, but it is sometimes considered contextually improbable; hence there is a preference for thing grasped.⁷⁹ It is seen in other places like John 6:15, Acts 8:39, 2Cor 12:2.

καὶ σκορπίζει- “and scatters them”. The actions of the wolf are further described with the verb σκορπίζει together with its conjunction καὶ. It is good to note that this word in its secondary sense is a military device that is designed to discharge arrows that will speed its way in various directions (dispersing and scattering). One can also see instances of this in Mat 12:30, Lk 11:23.

VERSE 13 ὅτι ἐστὶν μισθωτός καὶ οὐ μέλει αὐτῷ περὶ τῶν προβάτων

ὅτι ἐστὶν μισθωτός- “because he is a hired hand”. ὅτι does the work of conjunction here. It indicates causality. It explains the cause of things. The hired hand runs away because that is exactly what his name depicts. Further instance of this causality is seen in Mt 2:18, 9:36. It also serves as a link between two sets of data by defining a demonstrative pronoun (Jn 3:19, Romans 9:6).

καὶ οὐ μέλει αὐτῷ- “and he is not concerned”. This phrase depicts further the character of the hired hand. There is need to note the role of the negating particle οὐ and the verb μέλει. Verse 11 has earlier explained the role of the negating particle. Μέλει can also signify concern and interest in a particular person or thing (Matthew 22:16, Mark 4:38).

περὶ τῶν προβάτων- “about the sheep”. This explains the object of his lack of care which is the sheep. This is introduced through the preposition περὶ.

Verse 14 ἐγὼ εἶμι ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν καὶ γινώσκω τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ τὰ ἐμὰ γινώσκουσί με

ἐγὼ εἶμι- “I am”. These two words as seen earlier introduce the reader to the declarative statements of Jesus. ἐγὼ is a first person pronoun used here to convey emphasis (see also Mt 3:11, 5:22). Other times no emphasis is discernible especially in passages echoing Semitic usage of the first person (Mt 11:10, Mk 12:26). The verb εἶμι serves as a “function

⁷⁸ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 370.

⁷⁹ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 55.

word that connects the subject with the predicate (see also Mt 11:29, 23:30). It can also be used to locate an entity on a narrative scene (Mk 8:1).”⁸⁰

ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν- “the good Shepherd”. This is the predicate of the “I am” statement of Jesus. The adjective “good” together with the definite article qualifies and gives more information about the nature of the shepherd. Καλός could also mean a meeting of a high standard; something that is of a high quality and exceptionally satisfying (Mt 3:10, 13:45). It could also mean a focus on a moral aspect or personal merit (Mt 5:16, 15:26).

καὶ γινώσκω τὰ ἐμὰ- “and I know my own”. γινώσκω here denotes a personal relationship involving recognition of another’s identity or value as seen also in Matthew 7:3, Lk 24:35. It goes beyond mere awareness. τὰ ἐμὰ which serves here as a pronoun shows that the good shepherd possesses and personalizes the sheep.

καὶ τὰ ἐμὰ γινώσκουσί με- “and my own know me”. The words “my own” and “know” show the complementary relationship that exists between the sheep and the shepherd. Not only does the shepherd know the sheep, the sheep also knows the shepherd.

Verse 15: καθὼς ὁ πατὴρ γινώσκει με καὶ γὰρ γινώσκω τὸν πατέρα καὶ τίθημι μου τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων

καθὼς- “Just as”. This is a conjunction. Here, it serves as a marker that emphasizes similarity, conformity, proportion or manner.⁸¹ Other instances in the Gospels include Mt 2:16, Mk 1:2, Lk 17:16.

ὁ πατὴρ γινώσκει με καὶ γὰρ γινώσκω τὸν πατέρα- “the Father knows me and I know the Father”. The similarity emphasized by καθὼς is seen here. It is a similarity that lies in the mutual knowing between the Father and the Son.

καὶ τίθημι μου τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων- “and I lay down my life for the sheep”. The Good Shepherd goes further to emphasize here again that he lays down his life for the sheep. This he expressed through the verb τίθημι. A similar statement to this was made in verse 11.

Verse 16 καὶ ἔχω ἄλλα πρόβατα ἃ ἔστιν οὐκ ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ἀλῆς με δεῖ ἀγαγεῖν κάκεινα καὶ ἀκούσουσιν μου τῆς φωνῆς καὶ γενήσονται μία ποίμνη εἰς ποιμὴν

καὶ ἔχω ἄλλα πρόβατα- “and I have other sheep”. The verb ἔχω plays a very important role here to indicate the possession of other sheep. “To have” is not just something that has been gotten but goes a lot to indicate that what is gotten is possessed and under one’s control.

⁸⁰ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 110.

⁸¹ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 183.

The word ἄλλα should also be noted. It serves as an “adversative particle used adverbially to suggest other matter or varying view point of consideration.”⁸²

ἃ ἔστιν οὐκ ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ἀλῆς- “which are not from this fold”. ἃ plays the role of a pronoun referring to the sheep. Then there is the verb ἔστιν with its negating word οὐκ. ἐκ does the work of a preposition relating in general to matters of origin (see also Mt 2:6, 3:9). ταύτης τῆς is the definite article that states clearly that the other sheep are outside the reach of the shepherd. ἀλῆς (fold) could also mean an enclosed space like the courtyard (Mt 26:58) or a court of the temple (Rev 11:2)

με δεῖ ἀγαγεῖν κάκεινα- “I must bring these also”. με here is in the accusative of ἐγώ. δεῖ which means “must” is an impersonal verb. It implies a necessity and appropriateness. The shepherd feels himself bound. (See also examples of these in Mt 16:21, Acts 1:16). The verb ἀγαγεῖν is about causing movement by taking the lead. It can also mean “to carry along”. κάκεινα (also) as a pronoun refers to someone or something mentioned earlier. Here the reference is to the sheep. Other examples of these can be seen in Mk 12:4f, Lk 11:7.

καὶ ἀκούσουσιν μου τῆς φωνῆς- “and they will hear my voice”. The sheep is expected to hear the voice of the shepherd. This is seen in the important verb here ἀκούσουσιν which is in the dative plural. It focuses on the willingness to listen to or heed the substance of what is said (see also Acts 28:28). It can also mean hearing with comprehension (1 Cor 14:2) or receiving information aurally with focus on receipt of specific instruction (Mt 14:13, Jn 1:5).⁸³ The voice is expressed in a possessive form with the use of μου and its preceding definite article τῆς. φωνῆς is an auditory impression otherwise known as “voice” whether uttered directly or indirectly through a mechanical medium (see also Mt 12:19, Mk 5:7, Lk 17:13).

καὶ γενήσονται μία ποίμνη εἷς ποιμήν- “and they will become one flock, one shepherd”. This final part draws out the consequence of hearing the shepherd’s voice. καὶ plays the role of conjunction while γενήσονται is the verb. It is a multivalent verb in which its meaning depends on the context. Apart from meaning “become”, it can also be translated as “turn out to be or come to be”⁸⁴ (see also Mt 1:12, Lk 14:12). What they will become is one flock (μία ποίμνη); the use of μία is to show that the flock is feminine. Its masculine is εἷς which agrees with ποιμήν which is masculine. εἷς or its feminine μία is a numerical term with its focus on singleness (see also Mt 5:41, 6:27).

3.7.3 ANALYSIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD MOTIF

⁸² Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 16.

⁸³ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 13.

⁸⁴ Fredrick Danker, *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 78.

The “good shepherd” remains the dominant theme in the passage of this Memoir. As shown earlier, Jesus appropriates this imagery to himself as shown in John’s Gospel. The image of the shepherd has been layered with deep and abiding messianic ideas in the writings of the Second Temple period. Francis Moloney writes that the “idea of one shepherd leading one people of God comes from the biblical tradition and continues to be used in later Jewish literature. But there is newness in Jesus linking his self-gift with the gathering of others into the one fold under the one shepherd”.⁸⁵ The good shepherd in John lays down his life for the sheep. This means “to stake one’s life, to risk it, to be prepared to lay it down”.⁸⁶ A shepherd was known to have at least two protective instruments on his person, a rod to protect the flock from human or animal aggression, and a staff to maintain order within the flock. Kenneth Bailey notes that the staff is not a walking stick, but it is the shepherd’s primary offensive weapon for protecting the flock from enemies, be they wild animals or human thieves.⁸⁷ In this light, the shepherd sacrifices his life as the last hope rather than a normal way of doing things. However, the Johannine Jesus came for the express purpose of voluntarily laying down his life.

The Good Shepherd is so called because of his relationship with the Father, and this relationship involves a specific mission of subjecting himself to death for the sake of his sheep. On another dimension, the Good Shepherd informs the audience about the presence of the other sheep which are from another fold that must be brought into the same fold as those which are presumably in his audience. In the Jewish setting, the idea of one shepherd ruling Israel was already common place in Jewish thinking. Jesus extends the traditional idea here by referring to other sheep that will be brought over into the same fold. As a Good Shepherd who seeks the unity of the flock, his aim will be to bring the other sheep together so that there will be one flock and one shepherd.

3.7.4 CONCEPT ANALYSIS

In this section, there shall be an analysis of the underlying concepts and ideas that are seen in this text. It is good to note that, these concepts have been examined in the semantic and syntactic analysis. But a closer attention shall be given to them here with special emphasis on the background against which they were used. The first is the word **shepherd**.

⁸⁵ Francis Moloney, *Signs and Shadows* (Augsburg: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1996), 138.

⁸⁶ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A commentary* G.R. Beasley et al (trans) (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 370.

⁸⁷ Kenneth Bailey, *The Good Shepherd: A Thousand-Year Journey from Psalm 23 to the New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014), 50.

A shepherd is one who pastures or tends a flock of sheep. Many important figures in the history of the Hebrews were shepherds including Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Nomadic peoples like the Amaleikites and Midianites were shepherds, but the economic importance of sheep meant that many villagers and townspeople also tended flocks on a part time or full-time basis. In addition to being a major sacrificial animal, sheep provided the ancients with meat, milk, fat, wool, skins and horns.⁸⁸ The work of the shepherd is not always that easy. It involves the routine of leading the sheep to food and water, and then returning them to the safety of the fold. Due to the vulnerability of the sheep, the shepherd has to be on the watch out for the strays and count the sheep as they enter their enclosure for the night (Lev 27:32, Jer 33:13). If any was missing, it is the duty of the shepherd to look for and rescue the lost (Ezek 34:11-12). Special attention was given to the sick and to the new born lambs. In addition to the fieldstone, the shepherds also made use of staff to control the movement of the flock and the rod to ward off enemies. Some passages in the scripture like Job 30:1 talk of the use of dogs in order to help manage the movement of the sheep. Other instances of shepherd in the New Testament include Matthew 18:12-14, Lk 2:8-10.

The next is the word **Life**. Life is the principle or force considered to underlie the distinctive quality of animate beings. It is used in the Bible to describe the animating force in both animals and humans (Gen 1:20).⁸⁹ This physical bodily existence is subject to suffering, illness, toil, death, temptations and sin (Ps 89:47, 103:14). Life as used in the Bible however has a much wider application than only to physical, bodily existence. The Old Testament refers mainly to “one’s life span on earth (Deut 4:9) and is often contrasted with death”.⁹⁰ Death is often understood as the end of life. No soul or part of a person lives on after death. In the New Testament, “life generally refers to life after death, eternal life even though the New Testament often uses the Old Testament understanding of the term”⁹¹. In the text of John 10:11, the Good Shepherd who is Jesus lays down his earthly life as man for the sake of the flock.

The next word to be examined is the **sheep**. The sheep is seen as a ruminant mammal related to the goat. Sheep are mentioned in the Bible more than five hundred times.⁹² In the Old Testament, the sheep is used in the literal sense (Deut 32:14, Num 32:24) while in the New Testament, they are mainly used as metaphors (Matt 10:6, Heb 13:20). The Bible

⁸⁸ Harper Collins Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Shepherd”. (Bangalore:Theological Publications, 2009), 1012.

⁸⁹ Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Life”, 1654.

⁹⁰ Harper Collins Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Life”, 607.

⁹¹ Harper Collins Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Life”, 607.

⁹² Harper Collins Bible Dictionary, s.v. “Sheep”, 1008.

provides various references to the skill of the shepherd who knows each of the animals by name and whose voice is recognized by the sheep (John 10:3-4, Ezekiel 34:15-16). The constant search for greener pasture remains the regular task of those who tend the sheep (1 Chronicles 4:39-40).

Another word is **Hireling/ Hired hand**. This is a servant who is paid wages (see also Job 7:2, Mal 3:5). The law protects their rights and their terms of service are usually specified. John 10:12-13 contrasts the cowardice of a hired shepherd with the owner's concern for the sheep. The Mishnah states that "the hired servant had to compensate the owner for any loss due to negligence. The name could also imply inferior".⁹³

The **wolf** also appears in this text. The wolf is a member of the species *canus lupus* which belongs to the dog family. Apart from John 10, it is also seen literally in Isaiah 11:6. All other usages are metaphorical references to the wolf's hunger or destructive nature against the innocent (Ezekiel 22:27, Habakkuk 1:8).

3.8 ANALYSIS UNDER HERMENEUTICAL ASPECT

3.8.1 VERSE 11 Ἐγὼ εἶμι ὁ ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν ὁ ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν τίθησιν αὐτοῦ τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων (I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep)

This verse introduces the second description of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. By describing Jesus both as the Door and the Good Shepherd, John wants to emphasize that in Jesus, all the promises of the Old Testament find their fulfillment. The two predicates go hand in hand in the shepherd discourse; they intend to give a complementary picture of the identity of Jesus in relation to the community of disciples. As Nicholas Cachia asserts, "Jesus is the new salvation offered by God to men, he is like a living tabernacle walking ahead of the people. Both predicates coincide in the messianic "I" of Jesus".⁹⁴ The construction "I am" followed by the predicate in the mouth of Jesus and in reference to himself is exclusive to John in the New Testament. Rudolf Bultmann says that these "I am" statements are recognition formulae with the exception of chapters 11, 25 and 14 which he considers to be identification formulae. He goes further to say that "the recognition formulae are polemical statements for in the concept of the Gospel, the *ego* is strongly stressed and is always contrasted with false or pretended revelations."⁹⁵ Through this *ego eimi* formula, John wants to present Jesus in a solemn way as the Messiah who fulfils in himself the Old Testament

⁹³ Harper Collins Bible Dictionary, s.v. "Hireling", 425.

⁹⁴ Nicholas Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd* (Rome: Test Gregoriana, 1997), 149.

⁹⁵ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Westminster: Westminster John Knox Press, 1971), 225.

Promises. The predicates used in this verse have the particular advantage of making the saving character of Jesus' mission visible in impressive images and symbols. As C. Barrett puts it, "John finds in the person of Jesus Himself that which the synoptic find in the Kingdom of God."⁹⁶ By referring to Jesus as the Good Shepherd, John indicates the excellence of the shepherd and his uniqueness.⁹⁷ This makes him the model and the ultimate measure of what it means to be a good shepherd. Some biblical scholars like C. Barrett are of the view that the use of *καλος* (good) here is the same as the word true as seen in John 15,1 while others like Nicholas Cachia are of the view that with this adjective John wanted to say that Jesus as the Shepherd accomplishes completely in himself all that being a shepherd means. Bultmann states that *καλος* refers not only to his absoluteness and decisiveness but also to his "being for".⁹⁸ Having identified himself as the good shepherd, Jesus now goes on to explicate what being the good shepherd means. The phrase "lays down his life" is typically Johannine as it is seen 8 times in John.⁹⁹ To lay down one's life here does not necessarily imply the giving up of one's life. If it were to be the case, then the wolf would have triumphed. What is implied here is "to risk, hazard one's life with the hope that one escapes from such danger".¹⁰⁰ Rudolf Bultmann goes ahead to say that, "while it is characteristic for a shepherd to risk his life for his sheep, it is not characteristic for him to sacrifice it for them".¹⁰¹ In relation to Jesus, this indicates his readiness for self-giving for others.

3.8.2 Verse 12 ὁ μισθωτὸς καὶ ὃν οὐκ ποιμὴν οὐ ἴδια τὰ πρόβατα ἔστιν οὐκ θεωρεῖ τὸν λύκον ἐρχόμενον καὶ ἀφήσιν τὰ πρόβατα καὶ φεύγει καὶ ὁ λύκος ἀρπάζει αὐτὰ καὶ σκορπίζει (the hired hand who is not the shepherd, sees the wolf approaching and abandons the sheep and runs away and the wolf seizes them and scatters them) and **VERSE 13** ὅτι ἔστιν μισθωτὸς καὶ οὐ μέλει αὐτῷ περὶ τῶν προβάτων (because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep)

The description of the good shepherd in verse 11 is immediately followed by an antithesis, that of the hireling who flees for his life at the approach of danger and leaves the sheep at the mercy of the wolf. J. Bernard comments that "the hireling might be an honest man but the care of the herdsman who comes for wages to look after a flock of sheep can never equal to that of their own shepherd who knows each one and is ready to give his life

⁹⁶ C. Barrett, *The Gospel according to St John* (Westminster: Westminster John Knox Press, 1955), 307.

⁹⁷ Nicholas Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd*, 151.

⁹⁸ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 364.

⁹⁹ Nicholas Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd*, 154.

¹⁰⁰ J. Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to John* (New York: Charles Scribner's sons, 1929), 154.

¹⁰¹ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 384.

for theirs”.¹⁰² The contrast between the shepherd and the hireling is original to John though this re-echoes what was shown by the prophets that took place between the action of the wicked shepherds and that of God who will take their place as the shepherd of Israel (Ezek 34:1-16). The behavior of the hireling here points to the fact that “a true being for others is grounded in a mutual relationship”.¹⁰³ The verb “to flee” creates an interesting contrast with v.5 where the verb is again used; there the sheep flee from the stranger for their safety. Here, the hireling who should secure safety for the sheep, flees from them leaving them at the mercy of the wolf. The wolf is one of the biggest dangers of the flock. It serves here as a symbol. When the wolf comes after the hireling has fled, it snatches and scatters the sheep.

Following the parenthesis describing the devastating action of the wolf, verse 13 returns to the hireling, reiterating as it were the reason why he flees: because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. The verb “care” as used here is a verb of emotion meaning concern and involvement in something.¹⁰⁴ J.Holtzmann says that as the Pharisees were considered to be wicked shepherds so unfaithful leaders of the Christian community were characterized as hirelings.¹⁰⁵ E. Hirsch sees in the hireling the Gnostic heretic who flees from martyrdom.¹⁰⁶ J Soucek refers to these hirelings as the pretentious and faithless leaders in the Christian communities in John’s time like Diotrefes.¹⁰⁷ From the varying opinions of these exegetes one sees that John not only wanted to put emphasis on the Christological image but he wanted also to make an indirect critique of some leaders of the Christian community who were not conforming themselves to the model of shepherd presented by Jesus himself.

3.8.3 Verse 14 ἐγὼ εἶμι ὁ ὁ καλὸς ποιμὴν καὶ γινώσκω τὰ ἐμὰ καὶ τὰ ἐμὰ γινώσκουσί με (I am the good shepherd and I know my own and my own know me) and **Verse 15** : καθὼς ὁ πατὴρ γινώσκει με καὶ γὼ γινώσκω τὸν πατέρα καὶ τίθημι μου τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων: (just as the Father knows me and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep.)

These verses complement and complete the presentation of Jesus as the Good Shepherd initiated in v.11. These two verses conclude with Jesus repeating literally what was seen in v.11. Thus, the newness of this verse can be summarized in the reciprocal knowledge there is between the Father and Jesus and between Jesus and his own. The knowledge which John uses here is not merely intellectual knowledge. It rather indicates “reciprocity of

¹⁰² J. Bernard, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to John*, 358.

¹⁰³ Rudolf Bultmann, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 371.

¹⁰⁴ Nicholas Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd*, 167.

¹⁰⁵ Julius Holtzmann, *The Gospel* (Johannine books: 1890), 201.

¹⁰⁶ Ernst Hirsch, *Studies and Materials on the Sociology of Law* (Germany: Westdeutsche Verlag, 1967), 84.

¹⁰⁷ J. Soucek, “The Good Shepherd and His Flock”, *The Ecumenical Review* (1957):149, accessed 1 March, 2021, www.wiley.com

knowledge which is a reciprocal sympathy, love, communion of nature”.¹⁰⁸ It involves love, devotion and engagement of the whole personality. In these verses, Jesus goes beyond the shepherd image and arrives at a more personal image between him and the sheep.

The mutual knowledge between Jesus and his own is based on that between Jesus himself and the Father. The theological consequence becomes that the “the reciprocal knowledge and love of the Father and the Son is now a model and the source of the reciprocal knowledge between Jesus and his own.”¹⁰⁹ These verses do not just give an interpretation of the allegory; they go further to present a deeper theological reason. Those who follow Jesus “enter into a communion of love with him; this communion knows its source in that same communion of knowledge and love featured in the relationship between the Father and the Son which makes them one.”¹¹⁰ This communion of life is thematically interwoven with the laying down of life of Jesus the Shepherd. For this reason, Jesus applies to himself what he said in verse 11 that he lays down his life for the sheep. Little wonder, B. Westcott comments that, “completeness of knowledge is consummated in completeness of sacrifice, perfect sympathy calls out the perfect remedy. Christ does actually what the Good Shepherd is prepared to do”.¹¹¹

3.8.4 Verse 16 καὶ ἔχω ἄλλα πρόβατα ἃ ἔστιν οὐκ ἐκ ταύτης τῆς αὐλῆς με δεῖ ἀγαγεῖν κάκεινα καὶ ἀκούσουσιν μου τῆς φωνῆς καὶ γενήσονται μία ποίμνη εἰς ποιμήν (And I have other sheep which are not from this fold. I must bring these also, and they will hear my voice, and they will become one flock one shepherd).

This verse stresses that the purpose of the knowledge that is mentioned in verses 14 and 15 is to bring these followers into union with one another. That there are other sheep that do not belong to the fold introduces the Gentile mission.¹¹² In this verse, a return is made to the parable of verses 1-5 where the fold to which the shepherd comes is that of Israel. In the context of Jesus as the Shepherd of God’s flock and in conjunction with his intention to lay down his life, one sees that he has sheep of other folds than Israel.¹¹³ The mission to the nations is that of Jesus continuing his mission to Israel’s fold. As he was sent by the Father on mission to Israel, so he will conduct his mission to the nations through his disciples (see also Matt 20:21). Thus, the sheep of the different folds are not to remain in their separateness

¹⁰⁸ Nicholas Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd*, 173.

¹⁰⁹ Nicholas Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd*, 174.

¹¹⁰ Nicholas Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd*, 175.

¹¹¹ B. Westcott, *The Gospel according to St John* (London: John Murray, 1908), 155.

¹¹² Raymond Brown, *The Gospel according to St John* (New York: Doubleday press, 1966), 397.

¹¹³ George Beasley-Murray, *John* (Texas: World Books Publisher, 1987), 171.

but they shall become one flock under the care of one shepherd. Their unity is “the fruit of his solitary sacrifice and his unique relation to God and man (Eph 2:11-18)”.¹¹⁴

Thus, the passage as a whole (verses 11-16) goes from the idea of self-giving in death, to mutual knowledge and then to unity. These three factors, as Thomas Brodie points out, are closely connected. In his words: “it is the total self-giving which by saving the sheep and warding off disruptive wolf, opens the way for mutual knowledge. And the purpose of this knowledge is to bring these followers into union”.¹¹⁵

3.8.5 SYNTHESIS

In presenting Jesus as the Good Shepherd, John has drawn from the richness of the image as crystallized not only in the writings of the Old Testament but also in the living memory, oral and witness of the words of Jesus himself and in the reflection of the early ecclesial communities. John blends this tradition in a creative manner emphasizing that which is in line with his Christology. The unifying criterion of the shepherd image as shown here is the pastoral love or charity of the shepherd. He is presented as the shepherd for others. All the actions he does have a relation to the sheep that is entrusted to him. His life is projected towards the safety, well being and the growth of the sheep notwithstanding the consequences this might have on him. All these spring from his love; a love he receives from the Father and which he transmits to all those who were given to him.

Jesus the Good Shepherd comes in order to liberate the sheep from the hands of the wicked shepherds and to lead them to freedom and to good pastures. In Jesus, “the new spiritual exodus finds its consummation so that he who believes in him may not remain in darkness”.¹¹⁶ His love for those whom the Father gave him does not stop at the boundaries of his fold but goes beyond it in order to bring together other sheep. Thus, he forms one flock under one shepherd. The love of Jesus for the sheep is also manifested in a particular way in his personal, intimate knowledge of the sheep. He knows each one by name and calls each one to follow

¹¹⁴ George Beasley-Murray, *John*, 171.

¹¹⁵ Thomas Brodie, *The Gospel according to John* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 361.

¹¹⁶ Nicholas Cachia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd*, 178.

him. The sheep hear his voice; they recognize it and follow him. There is then a communion that exists between Jesus and the sheep, a communion that is the fruit of the reciprocal communion between the Father and the Son. This communion urges the Good Shepherd to give himself completely for the sheep by laying down his life.

John intends this chapter to serve as an icon depicting under the images of door and the shepherd several essential traits of his Christology.¹¹⁷ However as an icon, it is not immediately understandable. It can be better interpreted through reflection and meditation. This will aid the individual believer and the believing community as whole not only to encounter Jesus more intimately, but also to discern better what he is asking of them in the historical and ecclesial circumstances in which they live. Thus, Jesus as the Good Shepherd becomes the model and measure of comparison for those who in an intimate association with him are called to be shepherds of the Church. As R. Schnackenburg rightly says, “for a correct understanding of the place of the early Christian Presbyters as shepherds in the New Testament communities, one must ask about their relation to the same Messianic Shepherd, to Christ”.¹¹⁸

3.9 HISTORICAL RELEVANCE OF THE TEXT FOR THE JOHANNINE TIME AND ENVIRONMENT

The issue of the nature of people that existed in the Johannine time and environment is something that is usually a cause of debate amongst scholars. However, some scholars like Raymond Brown are able to use the gospel to rediscover what he calls the community of the beloved disciple. He is of the view that after the admission of the Samaritans and other anti-temple groups, a conflict with the Jews begins. This leads to a higher Christology eventually leading to the use of the absolute *Ego Eimi* and the idea of the

¹¹⁷ Nicholas Cuchia, *The Image of the Good Shepherd*, 179.

¹¹⁸ Rudolf Schnackenburg, “Bishop and Pastoral Office”, *Journal of Theological Studies* (1977): 75, accessed 10th March, 2021.

preexistence of Jesus. As the Gospel is written, the community takes an increasingly determined stance against those they regard as non believers that is the world, the Jews and the adherents of John the Baptist. Raymond goes further to say that also included in the list of these non-believers are “crypto Christians. These crypto Christians are the Jews who believed and remained in the synagogue and Jewish Christians who would not confess the high Johannine Christology”.¹¹⁹ The locale of composition of the Johannine Gospel is also debated but Ephesus still remains the primary contender. It is supported by the unanimous voice of the ancient witnesses.¹²⁰ However, at times the witnesses are supposing that the evangelist (whom they do not distinguish from a redactor) was John the son of Zebedee whom they also assume was John of Rev 1:1. Be that as it may, those who project Ephesus support their claim by citing John’s anti-synagogue motif in the Gospel which makes sense in the Ephesus region where there were major colonies of Jews in the major cities of Asia Minor.

This text of John’s gospel will always be a reminder of the people of Johannine times of the constant care and compassion of Jesus that is evidenced in his laying down of his life for the sheep (10:11-13). This text presents them with a unique teaching that is backed up with praxis different from what they had been experiencing before now. Also, this text inserts them into the unity and mutual knowledge that exists between the Shepherd and his Father. There is a feeling of incorporation and acceptance from the teaching of Jesus that extends even to those who are not Jews. Discipleship is also very apt here as this passage is a summons to discipleship especially towards hearing, knowing and seeing who Jesus really is. There exists also an element of trust in those who see Jesus as the shepherd and depend totally on his message for their salvation.

¹¹⁹ Raymond Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 74.

¹²⁰ Raymond Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John*, 204.

The passage provides a deep knowledge for the audience that Jesus is the Shepherd King and the incarnate Logos. The relationship of ownership between Jesus as Shepherd and the spiritual Israel is grounded in the incarnation. The use of ἴδια both as an adjective and noun emphasizes the personal relationship between the sheep and the shepherd. This word is also found in the prologue of John and helps to sharpen the relationship of ownership between Jesus as shepherd and the spiritual Israel as grounded in the incarnation.

Furthermore, to know the voice of the shepherd in John 10 is to know where or who Jesus is. That is, he is from the Father. The rejection of this means that, “one knows neither Jesus nor the Father even if they claim to be descendants of Abraham or belong to the covenant people”.¹²¹ This text enables the first audience to understand that Jesus remains the shepherd who fulfils the promise God made to Abraham. The Good Shepherd is the realization of the covenant promises God made to Abraham.

3.9.1 HERMENEUTIC IMPORT OF THE TEXT TODAY

A) The Love of Jesus for us: The Good Shepherd discourse presents us with the compassionate love of God for all human beings, Jews and Gentiles alike. Jesus remains the Good Shepherd par excellence and all those who occupy offices either in the religious or political sphere are good to the extent that they imitate the love and care of Jesus in their relationship with the flock entrusted to them. The love of Jesus is also seen in the fact that he knows us, our needs, weaknesses, thoughts and endeavors. He leads us into his fold and nourishes us by his grace.

B) This passage also points to the great sacrifice and death of our Lord Jesus. Our Lord distinctly foretells his sacrifice and death in the words: “I lay down my life for my sheep”.

C) The passage also presents Jesus as the Lord and the Chief shepherd of the redeemed. The sheep belong to him because he has bought them with his precious blood.

¹²¹ George Modley “The Shepherd Discourse of John 10”, 168.

D) By laying down his life for us, Jesus goes ahead to interpret what happens at the Eucharist. As Pope Benedict points out; “At the Eucharist, Christ transforms the outward violence of the act of crucifixion into an act of freely giving his life for others. Jesus does not give something, rather he gives himself”.¹²²

E) The one United Church- Jesus implied in the Johannine discourse that the Gentiles would also believe in him and that all, both Jews and Gentiles, would be united in one fold under one shepherd. This could be interpreted to mean that Jesus had one Church in mind and not a multiplicity of churches. The Church foretold by Jesus was to be a universal or catholic church that will signify one flock, one shepherd.

3.9.2 AN EVALUATION OF THE CONTEMPORARY SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ENTIRE DISCOURSE

The Old Testament texts as well as John 10 function in a context of the shepherdlessness of the covenant community of God. As part of the pastoral Christology of John, John 10 presents us with the ultimate figure of the good shepherd who answers to the need of the shepherdless covenant community. I think therefore that the shepherd discourse has a contemporary significance where the Church of God lacks credible shepherds and where the believing community is scattered. These include the experience of non-unity among believers; the possibility that churches, church organizations or ministers do not serve but rather turn themselves into agents of exploitation and division; the experience of the lack of shepherds by believers whose material, social and spiritual needs are ignored.

The shepherdless nature of the covenant communities seen in the Old Testament and in John was described in terms of the experience of being scattered, of being the object on which the kings and the leaders fed socially and economically without any serious pastoral

¹²²Pope Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth Vol 1*, trans. Adrian Walker (New Delhi: Bloomsbury 2007), 280.

care. Sadly today, these concerns are still experienced in our local churches and serious efforts are yet to be made to go back to the footsteps of the Master.

The disunity among churches, who profess the same faith in Jesus, breaks up the covenant community of God resulting in confusion and misunderstanding concerning the Gospel message. The words of Jesus, to make all of us one flock under one shepherd must be a guiding and guarding principle for the ministers of the Word. Today also, as mentioned earlier, it is also the case that there are shepherds who exploit, marginalize and intimidate the flock that is placed under their charge. They seek to be served and not to serve. It is necessary for such ministers to go back to their drawing board and take a cue from the Master who laid down his life for the sheep. Some are very much relaxed when wolves in form of strange doctrines and ideologies sweep away the souls of the flock; some ministers simply sit on the fence and watch as the tides of secularism and progressivism erode sound doctrines and moral principles. This is akin to the behavior of the hired labourer who simply runs away at the sight of fierce wolves. Like Jesus, there is need for the shepherds to be more vigilant and attentive to the spiritual needs of the flock. They can do this by constant closeness to the flock which they are placed in charge of.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 EVALUATION

Having come to the last part of this Memoir, this section on evaluation will dwell on the summary of findings in this Memoir and how the results were attained. During the course of the research engaged in this Memoir, one sees that the textual tradition of John 10:11-16 has slight differences as it appears in the different manuscripts of the Byzantine and the Textus Secundum. This was discovered through textual criticism. However in keeping to the rules in textual criticism that the shorter of two possible readings is more likely to be correct, this Memoir adopted the manuscript of the Textus Secundum which has fewer additions. In order to arrive at a holistic context of the passage, this Memoir examined the historical and Johannine context of the passage. The historical context is limited to the Ancient Sumerian world especially the Old Testament while the Johannine context began with the examination of Chapter 9 of John's Gospel since it was discovered during the course

of this Memoir that John 10 can only make sense when it stands with John 9 both internally and relationally. It was also seen that the text of this Memoir is structured into two strands. The first is John 10:11-13 and the second is John 10:14-16 where verses 14 and 15 are seen as parallels.

Through literary criticism, this Memoir came to examine closely the problem of the loose insertion of John 10:1-8 and it accepted the growth model or rearrangement hypothesis as the closest solution to the problem. By viewing various scholarly opinions, especially that of George Modley, it identified a high concentration of metaphorical and figurative language in John 10. This Memoir also identified briefly the connection John 10 has with some Old Testament texts especially Ezekiel 34 and Jeremiah 3:1-8. With the aid of this criticism, I also discovered that John's Gospel could be an attempt to harmonize the synoptic gospels and it should not be seen as only a Gnostic text. Although there are differences between John and the Synoptic Gospels, the basic kerygmatic content about Jesus still remains. Using tradition criticism, one sees that the purpose of the good shepherd discourse is to present the image of Jesus as the true shepherd as against the false shepherds. It was also shown through this criticism that for the people of biblical times, the shepherd was an autocrat over his flock. Thus, at the time of the development of this passage, the concept of the good shepherd was almost like a revolution of what was obtainable in the New Testament, since the Good Shepherd here goes the extra mile of shedding his blood for the sheep. Using form criticism, this Memoir agrees with the views of George Murray in his 1987 Biblical Commentary that as regards the original situation John was addressing in his Christian community, the Christological issue is at the fore and dominates the shepherd discourse. John uses the shepherd imagery to set forth for his audience the significance of Jesus, since it was well known to the Jews and Gentiles as a picture of leadership and salvation for humanity. In the Christian setting, it has the deeper dimension of mediation of the rule

and redemption of the Lord of the universe. This was to draw the attention of the Christians away from the pantheon of savior gods, divinized men and powers of the Gnostic pleroma.

Redaction criticism exposes the fact that it is more likely that the shepherd discourse in John 10 is not an entirely new composition in the biblical corpus. This is true because of the striking parallels seen between John 10 and Ezekiel 34 as shown in the redaction criticism. Relying more on the works of scholars like J. Turner, this Memoir proceeded to examine the historical-cultural background of the text. In this section, it showed the existence of shepherd and sheep in Asia Minor and in the Ancient Near East together with the origins of the shepherd metaphor that is seen as far back as in the figure of Enkidu in the Akkadian Gilgamesh Epic.

Relying on the biblical dictionaries, this Memoir engaged in a syntactic analysis of the passage in order to go beyond just the individual meaning of words while bringing out the metaphoric, figurative and symbolic expressions that are evidenced in the text. Using semantic analysis, this Memoir also went ahead to give the linguistic and grammatical meaning of words. It gives an insight on how the Greek words were used in other texts. This was achieved with the aid of the Concise Greek English Lexicon of the New Testament written by Fredrick Danker. Coming down to the analysis under the hermeneutical aspect, this Memoir engaged in a verse to verse analysis employing the commentaries of modern scholars and exegetes. Under this section, one sees how John draws from the richness of the Old Testament and the words of Christ himself to present his audience with a Christology of the good shepherd. During the course of the analytical studies, there was an effort to show that the unifying criterion of the shepherd image is the pastoral love or charity of the shepherd. This love which is a fruit of the love between him and the Father moves him not only to lay down his life for the sheep but also to go the extra mile of bringing other sheep that are not currently in the fold. This text as has been examined is historically relevant for the Johannine

audience. A major part of its relevance is its constant reminder of the care and compassion of Jesus for them and who loved them to the point of self-sacrifice. For those who read this text today, this Memoir is of the view that the passage will also be a memorial of the historic sacrifice of Jesus that Catholics commemorate in the celebration of the Eucharist where Christ gives himself. The shepherd discourse also becomes a model for contemporary leaders (religious and secular alike) to see their positions as simply that of service and sacrifice rather than one of exploitation and benefits.

4.1.1. RECOMMENDATIONS/ ATTITUDINAL CHANGE

BISHOPS- Bishops resemble Jesus more closely in his ministry as shepherd. They oversee the local church in their dioceses and their primary responsibility is to their local flock. The bishops need to follow the paradigm of Jesus who laid down his life for the people; they should always show special concern for the local churches which they are placed in charge of. It is very much recommended that they have close familiarity with the flock and not some long-distance relationship. When misunderstanding and abuses creep into the life of the people of God, they have the obligation to present the right teaching of the church. Following the footsteps of the Master, they should govern the local church in such a way that it expresses faithfully its unity with the Universal Church. This can be achieved by maintaining a healthy collaborative ministry between themselves, their priests and the entire Christ's faithful. They also have the onus of raising future responsible shepherds. In that vein, they should pay close and proper attention in fostering vocations and ensuring proper training of seminarians and ongoing formation of priests.

PRIESTS- As shepherds, priests ought to realize the need for them to acquire holiness by performing their pastoral duties sincerely and tirelessly in the spirit of love and service. Jesus

the Good Shepherd who has mandated them to continue his mission in the world will accompany them until the end of time. Priests also should not belong to themselves, to their families or to a selected group of people; they belong to all people; they should be visible and living signs of the Good Shepherd. It is also necessary that they have the “smell of the sheep”, as Pope Francis recommended in his *Evangelii Gaudium*. This can be done by being very close to the people they are living with, especially the poor and marginalized among them. Acting as shepherds, the priests should also act prudently and justly in the administration of temporal goods.

CONTEMPORARY SECULAR LEADERS- This ranges from secular leaders in governments and other sectors down to lay leaders in the Church. They should learn from Jesus the Good Shepherd to be more dedicated and involved in the various areas and sectors where they are placed in charge. There should be efforts to shun corruption, nepotism, discrimination and sectionalism of all forms that breed discord. They should also be willing to sacrifice their time and talents for the sake of those that they govern in keeping to the manner of the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. Also, a very close relationship should be established between the leaders and the led in such a manner that the leaders have sufficient and firsthand knowledge of what is happening to their subjects. This applies more to those who hold government positions. This will enable them to strategize on ways to offer concrete solutions to problems facing the people they govern. In all, contemporary secular leaders should develop the mentality of seeing their positions as privileged moments to serve and not to be served. Having such an outlook will certainly lead to the development of the society.

4.2 CONCLUSION

*“Every work remains a construction, an expression, an action on its audience, an embodiment of beliefs and a moment in history....”*¹²³

The marvelous effects of the good shepherd passage are seen in its ability to bring out again one of the majestic “I am” statements of Jesus and to show his all-encompassing providential care for us. By employing the imageries of shepherd, sheep, wolves and hirelings, it was able to address the concrete human pastoral situations. Thus, Jesus in his ministry on earth was in touch with human feelings and situations; he is the Shepherd with the smell of the sheep. His extravagant love for the sheep can be described as a love-unto-death. This love breaks barriers so that all may eventually become one. Through his death for the sheep, one sees that the loving unity of the Father and Son already seen during the time of Jesus becomes fully manifest. His death becomes the high point of the creative and ever-present love of God and a light for the entire human scene. Those who are able to come to terms with this great sacrificial act of God’s love see in Jesus’ death their own unique experience and ultimate fate. Above all, it becomes for them a profound bond of unity with the Trinity.

¹²³ Wayne Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 10.

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