


Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

I Am the Good Shepherd

¹ “I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber.

Q1. What is a “sheep pen”? (Note: some versions translate the original Greek to ‘sheep pen’ or ‘sheepfold’)

Q2. Were sheep valuable?

Q3. If someone climbs over the wall into the sheep pen, why would that person be considered “a thief and a robber”?



 Photo of a typical “sheepfold”:



Image courtesy of www.HolyLandPhotos.org

 Shepherds often times made use of small natural caves or overhangs in order to protect their sheep from the rain, wind, snow, and predators.

Notice the shaded sheltered area under the overhang and also the wall that the shepherd has constructed out of rock, soil, and brush to keep his sheep confined and to protect from preying animals. Note the entrance “gate” in the lower left quadrant of the photo. The “gate” has no door, but sometimes the shepherds would use brush, timber, or his own body (sleeping in the gate) to block the opening.

As recounted in John 10, Jesus uses the metaphor that “I am the good shepherd” and “I am the gate for the sheep.”

[Source: <http://www.holylandphotos.org/browse.asp?s=136,163,164&img=DLSSSD01>]

Lesson 15: John 10:1-42


² The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep.


Q4. If in this analogy the “sheep” are Believers, Who is the “shepherd” to the sheep?


^{3a} The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice.

^{3b} He [the shepherd] calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

Q5. If in this analogy the “sheep” are Believers, Who is the “watchman” (or gatekeeper or porter, depending upon the translation)?

 The simplest explanations are usually the best when interpreting Scripture. In this case I interpret the “shepherd” as Christ Jesus because He knows us Believers by name, He agapé-loves us, and as the Shepherd will sleep in the doorway, and the “watchman” as God.

 Some published commentaries are quite interesting. I included the following (↓) explanation written by Alfred Plummer (b. 1841; d. 1926); this quote is an excerpt from the compilation of commentaries published by the Cambridge University Press.


 “The ‘watchman’ is the door-keeper or gate-keeper, who fastens and opens the one door into the [sheep] fold. In the allegory the fold is the Church, the Door is Christ, the sheep are the elect [Believers, and] the shepherds are God’s ministers. What does the [watchman] represent? Possibly nothing definite. Much harm is sometimes done by trying to make every detail of an allegory or parable significant. There must be back ground in every picture. But if it be insisted that the [watchman] here is too prominent to be meaningless, it is perhaps best to understand the Holy Spirit as signified under this figure; He who grants opportunities of coming, or of bringing others, through Christ into the Kingdom of God.” [©1882 and later, *The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges* by Cambridge University Press. Text Courtesy of BibleSupport.com. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/john/10-3.htm>]

⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.”

Q6. Why did Jesus use this analogy?

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⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

 Definition: parable: par·a·ble Noun A simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as told by Jesus in the Gospels.

Q7. As you read these verses 1-6, what was the lesson Jesus wanted to convey?

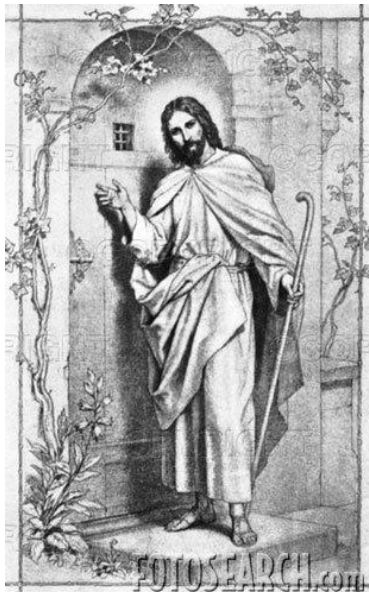
Q8. Is there relevance to Believers, today, in these verses 1-6, especially verse 3b?

⁷ Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep.

Q9. What is the significance of Jesus' claim to be the "gate" (or door)?

Revelation 3:20

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.




Source: [free-christian-wallpapers.blogspot.com](https://2.bp.blogspot.com/-d9meMksx3XM/TnhI8rhduPI/AAAAAAAAADbA/MNEACwZI7P4/s1600/Jesus-Knocking-on-Door-Coloring-Page.jpg)
<https://2.bp.blogspot.com/-d9meMksx3XM/TnhI8rhduPI/AAAAAAAAADbA/MNEACwZI7P4/s1600/Jesus-Knocking-on-Door-Coloring-Page.jpg>

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⁸ All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.

Q10. What did Jesus mean about “All who ever came before”?

 This is an interesting verse, but difficult to understand. Charles Ellicott’s commentary sheds light on this verse: “The Old Testament teachers [e.g., Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and the prophets] cannot be meant, because they witnessed to the true door. But there had been [increasingly,] since the return from the Captivity [as depicted in Exodus], and the close of the Old Testament canon, a priestly caste in the place of the prophetic schools, and these men had been in practice, if not in word, claiming for themselves the position of door to the kingdom of God. There were Hillels and Shammais, heads of parties and of factions, whose word was to their followers as the word of God; there were Pharisees then standing round Him who had solemnly decreed that anyone who should confess Him to be the Messiah should be shut out from Temple and from synagogue, and that they themselves would in God’s name pronounce a curse upon his head (John 9:22). As “thieves” were they, and as “robbers;” wolves in sheep’s clothing, stealing into the flock of Christ and rending those who were the true sheep. (Compare the analogous language of Luke 11:52 (↓).) The lawyers closed the door and plundered and oppressed those whom they kept outside. [©about 1880, *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers*, edited by Charles J Ellicott. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/john/10-8.htm>]

John 9:22-23 [J.B. Phillips New Testament (Phillips)]


His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews who had already agreed that anybody who admitted that Christ had done this thing should be excommunicated. It was this fear which made his parents say, “Ask him, he is a grown-up man.”

Luke 11:52 [J.B. Phillips New Testament (Phillips)]

“Alas for you experts in the Law, for you have taken away the key of knowledge. You have never gone in yourselves and you have hindered everyone else who was at the door!”

Lesson 15: John 10:1-42

Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.


⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture.

Q11. What words did Jesus repeat? When Jesus repeats something, are we to take notice of His emphasis?

Words?

Emphasis? Why?

Q12. Can you explain what Jesus meant by, "If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture"?

 "Many who hear the word of Christ, do not understand it, because they will not. But we shall find one scripture expounding another, and the blessed Spirit making known the blessed Jesus. Christ is the Door. And what greater security has the church of God than that the Lord Jesus is between it and all its enemies? He is a door open for passage and communication. Here are plain directions how to come into the fold: we must come in by Jesus Christ as the Door. By faith in him as the great Mediator between God and man. Also, we have precious promises to those that observe this direction. Christ has all that care of his church, and every believer, which a good shepherd has of his flock; and he expects the church, and every believer, to wait on him, and to [stay] in his pasture." [©1706, *Concise Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Matthew Henry; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/john/10-9.htm>]

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Q13. When Jesus uses the term "thief", who else might Jesus be referring?

Q14. In the second sentence of verse 10, Jesus refers to "they"; who/what is "they"?

Q15. Jesus said, "that they may have life and have it abundantly"; does this refer to monetary wealth?

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

Q16. What is the significance of this statement?

¹² The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it.

¹³ The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep.


Q17. Why does the hired hand “run away”?

Q18. Who/what might the “hired hand” represent?

Q19. Who/what might the “wolf” represent?

Lesson 15: John 10:1-42

Day 3

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me --
¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father -- and I lay down my life for the sheep.

Q20. "I know my sheep and my sheep know me": do you know Jesus? How do you know?

Yes? How?
No?

Q21. "I know my sheep and my sheep know me": why is it important for human beings to know Jesus?

Matthew 10:32-33

³² So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, ³³ but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

Q22. "I lay down my life for the sheep": is Jesus foretelling His crucifixion?

¹⁶ I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

Q23. If you think of "this fold" as representing Jewish converts; of whom might this phrase refer "other sheep that are not of this sheep pen"?

Q24. Is the phrase "one flock" important? And to what/whom might the word "flock" refer?

Importance?

Refer?


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Q25. What does “unity” mean to you?

Q26. What unifies Believers? Read Romans 10:17 (↓)

Acts 17:11

Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word [as taught by Paul] with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

 Note: a recurring theme throughout the Book of John is “unity”. The Holy Bible is the foundation of our faith. All revelation, all teaching, all action must be in harmony and agreement with Scripture. (Please read John 17, which is a profound prayer of our Lord’s, in which He glorifies God, prays for His disciples, and then prays for all Believers including you and me. The overall principle emphasized throughout His prayer is unity, oneness!)

Romans 10:17


Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Galatians 1:8-9

⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

Lesson 15: John 10:1-42

Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

¹⁷ The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life -- only to take it up again.

Q27. What does the phrase "I lay down my life" mean to you?

Q28. How would you explain the phrase "only to take it up again"?

Q29. What is the significance to us if Jesus had not laid down His life and then taken it up again? [See the Apostle Paul's argument to the Corinthians recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:12-19 (↓)]

1 Corinthians 15:12-19 [J.B. Phillips New Testament (Phillips)]

If the resurrection is the heart of the gospel how can any Christian deny life after death?

Now if the rising of Christ from the dead is the very heart of our message, how can some of you deny that there is any resurrection? For if there is no such thing as the resurrection of the dead, then Christ was never raised. And if Christ was not raised then neither our preaching nor your faith has any meaning at all. Further it would mean that we are lying in our witness for God, for we have given our solemn testimony that he did raise up Christ — and that is utterly false if it should be true that the dead do not, in fact, rise again! For if the dead do not rise neither did Christ rise, and if Christ did not rise your faith is futile and your sins have never been forgiven. Moreover, those who have died believing in Christ are utterly dead and gone. Truly, if our hope in Christ were limited to this life only we should, of all mankind be the most to be pitied!

¹⁸ No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father."

Q30. How would you describe the "authority" that Jesus commanded?

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¹⁹ At these words the Jews were again divided.

²⁰ Many of them said, "He is demon-possessed and raving mad. Why listen to him?"


²¹ But others said, "These are not the sayings of a man possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?"

Q31. Verse 20 & 21: Why were they arguing?

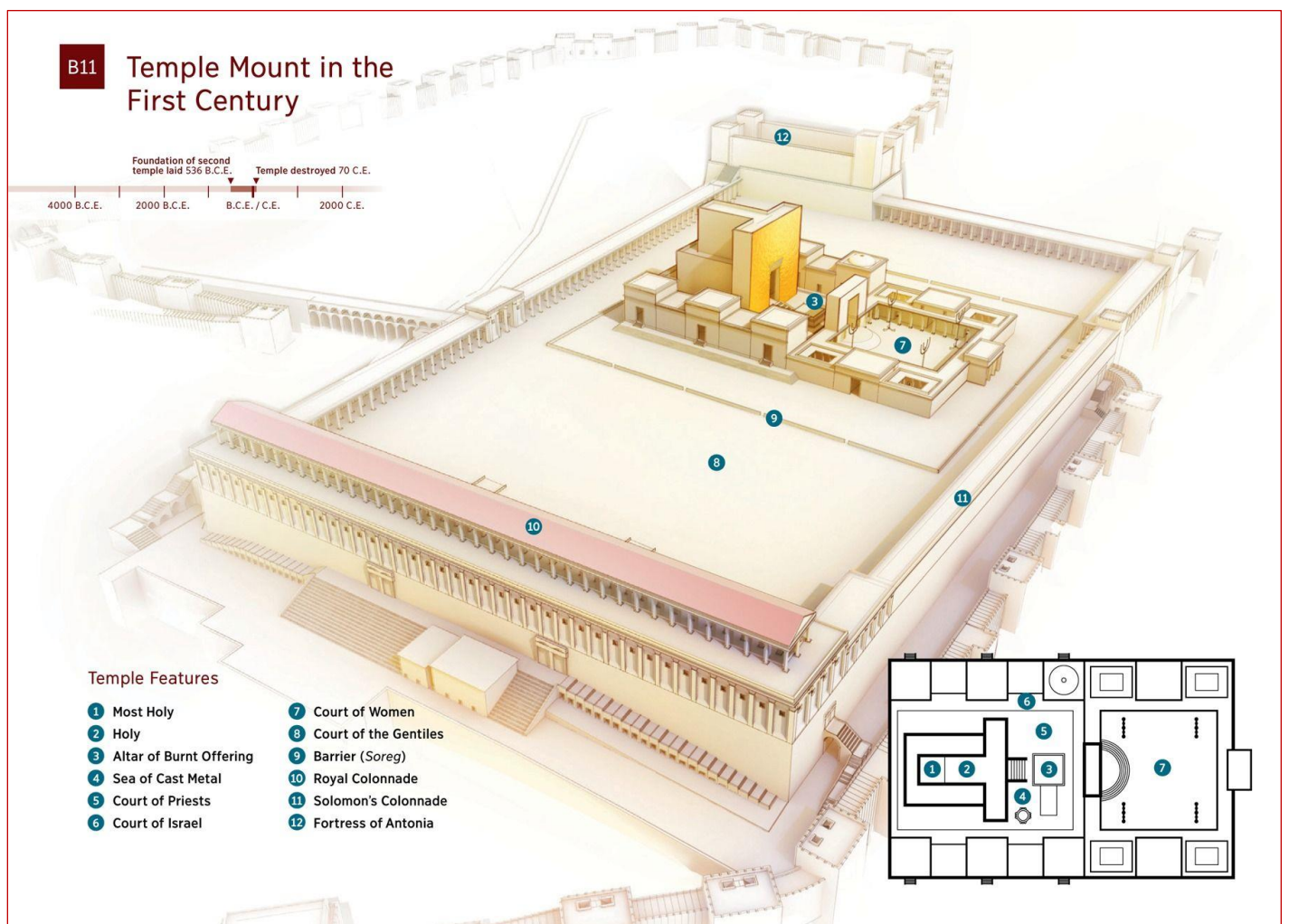
Lesson 15: John 10:1-42

I and the Father Are One

22a Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem.

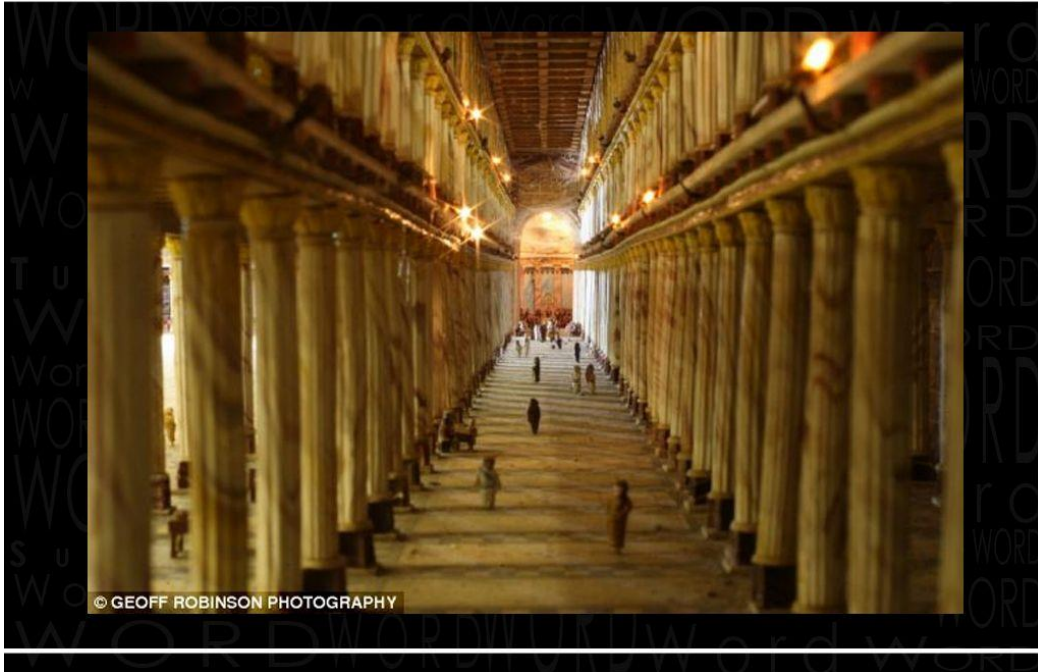
 Note: Feast of the Dedication: “The commemoration of the dedication of the temple by Judas Maccabeus in December, 165 B.C., after it had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes. This was the last great deliverance the Jews had experienced.” [New American Standard Bible, ©1995 by the Lockman Foundation, La Habra, CA; page 1538]

22b It was winter, ²³ and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade [also known as 'Solomon's Porch'].



Source: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/db/ed/da/dbeddaa7c1317823f645d942aeb6c5c6.jpg>

SOLOMON'S COLONNADE



A depiction of Solomon's Colonnade

Source: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/a8/a0/42/a8a0425b53d4d29dfc58f7fd1e73fecb.jpg>

²⁴ The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly."

Q32. As you think back over the past verses in John, had Jesus "plainly" told them His divinity?

John 8:52-58

⁵² The Jews said to him, "Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, 'If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.'" ⁵³ Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?"

⁵⁴ Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, 'He is our God.'" ⁵⁵ But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word. ⁵⁶ Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad."

⁵⁷ So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am."

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²⁵ Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me,

Q33. How do "The miracles I do in my Father's name" testify to whom Jesus says He is?

²⁶ but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. ²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸ I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.

Q34. Jesus said that He gives them "eternal life". Who is "them"? Who is included; does He include everyone in this statement?

Who is "them"?

Who is included?

Q35. What does it mean that "they shall never perish"?

Q36. Who might want to snatch a person from Jesus' hand? And why?

Who?

Why?

Q37. Why does Jesus promise that "no one can snatch them out of my hand" give you reassurance?

²⁹ My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one."

Q38. What does this quote mean for us who believe?

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Q39. How did the religious leaders react to Jesus' statement?

³¹ Again the Jews picked up stones to stone him, ³² but Jesus said to them, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?"

Q40. What is Jesus' purpose in saying, "I have shown you many great miracles from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?"


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Day 5

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³³ "We are not stoning you for any of these," replied the Jews, "but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God."

Q41. What is blasphemy?

 blas·phe·my n.
1. a. Contemptuous or profane speech or action concerning God or a sacred entity.
2. a. Irreverent or impious action or expression in regard to something considered inviolable or sacrosanct.

Q42. Throughout Jewish history is blasphemy a bad thing?

Leviticus 24:16


Whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall surely be put to death. All the congregation shall stone him. The sojourner as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.


³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'?"

Q43. As you read Psalm 82, verses 1 & 6, how do you interpret Jesus' curious phrasing, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods' "?

Psalm 82:1, 6


¹ God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment . . . ⁶ I said, "You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you;

 "You are gods": "[refers to] the official representatives and commissioned agents of God." [©1882, *A Commentary, Critical, Practical, and Explanatory on the Old and New Testaments* by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/john/10-34.htm>]

 "You are gods": "This was said of magistrates on account of the dignity and honor of their office, and it shows that the Hebrew word translated 'god', אֱלֹהִים elohiyim, in that place might be applied to man. Such a use of the word is, however, rare. See instances in Exodus 7:1; Exodus 4:16. [©1834, *Notes on the Bible* by Albert Barnes. <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/john/10-34.htm>]

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Q44. Can you think of other examples or times when Jesus responded with a quote from [Old Testament] Scripture?

 This list (↓) is not all inclusive.

Luke 4:3-4, 6-8, 9-12 [English Standard Version (ESV)] [After fasting for forty days, Jesus persevered through the three temptations:]

³ The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” ⁴ And Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone.’”

⁶ [Satan] said to him, “To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. ⁷ If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” ⁸ And Jesus answered him, “It is written, “‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’”

⁹ [Satan] said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰ for it is written, “‘He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you,’ ¹¹ and “‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’”

¹² And Jesus answered him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Matthew 15:7-9 [Jesus quoted Isaiah]

⁷ You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: ⁸ "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. ⁹ They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.' "

Isaiah 29:13

Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is made up only of rules taught by men.

Matthew 21:13 [Jesus quoted both Isaiah and Jeremiah]

"It is written," he said to them, " 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers.' "

Isaiah 56:7

“. . . these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

Jeremiah 7:11

‘Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching!’ declares the Lord.

Luke 22:37 [Jesus quoted Isaiah]

It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors' ; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment."


Isaiah 53:12

Therefore, I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong,

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because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Day 6

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

³⁵ If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came -- and the Scripture cannot be broken --

Q45. To whom is Jesus' referring in the phrase "to whom the word of God came"?

Q46. What is Jesus affirming (or testifying to) in the statement "Scripture cannot be broken"?

Q47. Do you believe the statement "Scripture cannot be broken"?

Yes? Why?
No?

John 1:1, 14, 17

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

¹⁴ The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

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³⁶ what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'?

Q48. To whom does “the one whom the Father set apart” refer?

Q49. Could Jesus have said it more clearly? Would the religious leaders have accepted a statement from Jesus in which He said, “I am the Messiah”?

³⁷ Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. ³⁸ But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.”

Q50. What is Jesus saying the “miracles” represent?

³⁹ Again they tried to seize him, but he escaped their grasp.

⁴⁰ Then Jesus went back across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing in the early days. Here he stayed ⁴¹ and many people came to him. They said, "Though John never performed a miraculous sign, all that John said about this man was true."

⁴² And in that place many believed in Jesus.

Q51. Why did Jesus leave Jerusalem?

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