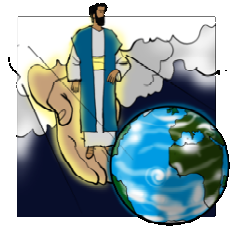


We Are His Sheep

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. My Father, Who hath given them unto Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand” (John 10:27-29).



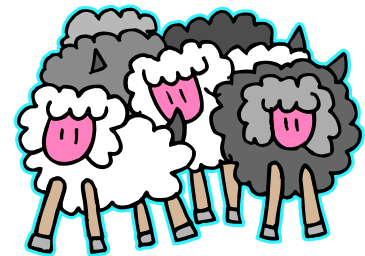
For the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, no passage in the Bible has more assurance in it than this one has. Here you find an unconditional statement by our Lord that those who are His are His for all eternity, because they are in His hand, under His care, and are in the Father’s hand, under His care. The _____ guarantees this condition of safety (in the Father’s hand).

Salvation - Conditional or Unconditional?

God makes two kinds of promises to His children: conditional and unconditional. But He always makes it clear whether or not they are conditional or unconditional. When conditional, He uses the word “if” or its equivalent; but when His statement is unconditional, He leaves out the “if.” This is therefore an unconditional statement.

Five separate statements are made concerning “My sheep”:

- (1) _____
- (2) _____
- (3) _____
- (4) _____
- (5) _____



These are five distinct things said about those who are His sheep. *Not one* is conditional upon any other.

What happens to the fourth and fifth statements if you add the word “if” to the third statement? _____

What do the words “follow Me” mean? _____

Perverting this scripture by adding “if” to “they follow me” denies salvation by grace through face and puts _____ in its stead.

Jumping Out of God’s Hand

Some might say that while no one can snatch one of Christ’s own out of His hand and out of the Father’s hand, it is possible for you to jump out of your own choice. What scriptural authority allows that statement?

Does the wording of the passage permit such an assertion? Only two conditions could make it possible for a sheep to jump out of his own accord: (1) that he is given the freedom to do so, or (2) that he has the power to do so against the purpose of God. Is either of these possible?

Do we have freedom to jump from his hand?

If we did, it would make the will of man stronger than the will of God.

1. The sheep belong to Christ; they are "My sheep." Ownership means lordship. Why do the sheep belong to Jesus? Do you think He would let a sheep jump from His hand?



2. God's hand is not an open hand. It is a hand that holds. When a father or a mother holds the hand of a small child to lead him safely through some place of real danger, that father or mother will not let that little hand go, even though the child might try to pull away.

3. It would disgrace a human shepherd of sheep to say that he allowed his sheep to stray away from him. How much more would it disgrace the Good Shepherd to say that He allows His sheep to go away from Him?

Do we have power to jump from his hand?

If we did, it would discount the keeping power of God.

1. To admit this would be to contradict Jesus' words: "My Father is greater than all." The "all" necessarily includes the sheep.

2. It also would contradict His words, "they shall never perish," for if they did jump out they must perish.

His Death Was Enough

Jesus made another statement concerning Himself and His sheep. He said, "The Good Shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (John 10:11). This statement and the one, "My sheep shall never perish," are interdependent upon each other. They are to each other as cause and effect. The one cannot be touched without touching the other. To deny the effect - the absolute safety of the sheep - is to question the efficacy of the cause - the death of the Good Shepherd.

When Jesus says, "My sheep shall never perish," it is unconditional and final. It is to be accepted in simple faith and made the subject of rejoicing and thanksgiving.