

*Jesus is the Gate*

*John 10:1-10*

*04/30/2023*

*Ghostbusters* first came out in 1984 and introduced our culture to the Ancient Sumerian false God, Gozer.

Gozer begins to be worshipped in about 2300 BC making him a contemporary of Noah's descendants, who were making proper sacrifices to Yaweh, whilst Gozer's presence may have been manifest among the people that left the family of God leading up to the Tower of Babel.

It's entirely possible that many of them built the tower in fear of Gozer, the Destructor, instead of Yahweh who truly baptized the entire world because of its corruption.

And we can infer this futility by the way they constructed the tower with waterproofing techniques, as if they could match the power and wit of our almighty God, who simply adjusted the way He judges them and scattered them abroad to save them from themselves.

That would be the last we hear of Gozer until *Ghostbusters*.

Now Gozer, as much attention as I gave to this pretend god, was not the interesting part of *Ghostbusters* to me. The interesting parts were portrayed by Rick Moranis and Sigourney Weaver, as the key master and the gatekeeper, respectively.

And I wasn't fascinated by all the hocus pocus and silly rendering of this ancient and albeit forgotten false god. I was particularly interested in the importance of the gate keeper and how that has affected our culture in time and even unto eternity.

Just think about it. The almighty God does nothing without the gatekeeper ushering it in.

In the ancient world the guard of the gates to the city were the most important and best trained soldiers.

After all they could keep an entire army at bay or let them in to destroy all the inhabitants.

In the account of David when he fornicated with Uriah the Hittites wife Bathsheba, David ordered Uriah home to wash his feet and presumably uncover them with Bathsheba to cover David's sin of getting her pregnant. But Uriah instead stays with the elite soldiers who guarded David's gate to his palace.

Now you can see this concept throughout the Middle Ages. Gate guards have the authority to raise the draw bridge and put it down to allow people to come and go. These guards are typically the final authority unless the king himself comes to the gate and orders them to raise the bridge.

Even into our modern era we take our gatekeeping seriously. In the military guard duty is sacrosanct for protecting the base or forward operating sites.

Luxury apartments have strong capable door men who are ready to do violence in an instance to anyone that may tried to intrude.

And schools are now carefully protected with sturdy gates and closed-circuit video cameras that keep a watch for any potential dangers always monitored by capably aware people.

No one in any of those instances comes or goes without them buzzing you in or letting you out!

Today, UTIOTHS John tells us, that Jesus is the OG Gate! And not just the gate, but the gate keeper, and the one who pushes people out and leads them to green pastures and then pushes them back and leads them into the sheepfold again.

And John warns us that there will be those who try to come from some other way, and pretend they are the one who can save while they do nothing but come to destroy, just like Gozer was purported to do for instance.

Now to understand what the sheepfold is, we do well to look at what happened in Chapter 9 right before John recorded what Jesus said in response to it.

In chapter 9, Jesus had just healed a blind man, who was cast out of the synagogue later by the Judean Pharisees, who didn't like Jesus, and didn't want Jesus to honored because He healed the blind man on the Sabbath.

Now not all of them agreed with the agitation towards our Lord, some allowed that Jesus could not heal like this were He not from God!

But the ones that seemed to have the power of the gate, as it were, seemed to hate Jesus more than they loved miracles, and cast the man out into the streets.

Then Jesus, having heard this, tells us about the false ones trying to pretend to be good and made sure everyone knew that He was the true gatekeeper and leader of their souls.

This would not be lost on the Pharisees who would know that the sheepfold is also synonymous with courtyard in the temple from the Old Testament and they would most certainly know they were the bad guys in this scenario!

And as if to drive that very point home; the Pharisee approved, buyers and sellers in that very same courtyard, would be driven out by Jesus with a whip cleansing His sheepfold of the “Den of Robbers” as our Lord described it.

So, what does this all mean? Why should we even care on this Sunday about our Good Shepherd?

Well, we need to know that there are bad actors in the church today and, in opposition to them, there is Christ.

There are those who won't follow the Word of God, let alone care what Jesus says or did, and there are those who can't take their eyes off their redeeming shepherd!

There are sheepfolds, courtyards of the Temple, churches; that have let the camel's nose of the false Gods into the tents of our Lord, and they are ready to massage its whole body when they can lead it all the way in, by then it will be nearly impossible to get it out! *And they* have kicked out the blind who can see Jesus clearly.

The stories are abounding, right now at Faith, of the people that could see their churches succumbing to false shepherds that care little for the Word of our Lord.

They wag their tongues to the delight of the masses who, like Gozer, seek only to destroy the church, destroy the families, and destroy every individual believer in Christ.

Years ago, when my youngest son was playing soccer, he was often the tiniest player on the field. We didn't know he had Crohn's disease at the time, which accounted for why he was so much smaller than all his peers.

For years, we watched this kid with the heart of a lion fight to the finish in sports where he was handicapped by the body of a mouse.

But that never stopped him from participating in every sport at Faith and playing as hard as he could every minute of every game. The only exception being the Basketball tournament in

Valparaiso when his body finally betrayed him to the point where he simply could not will it to play another minute.

But one soccer game in Montverde Florida, he was still in the fight.

Don't get me wrong, He was doing his best to use every trick in the book a little guy had at his disposal and frustrated our rival because a player of such diminutive stature was holding his own against them.

Finally, their frustration got the best of them, and they simply bodied him as hard as they could, crashing him to the ground.

Everyone in the stands caught their breath hoping he would get up amidst the two boys towering over him in triumph.

None of us did anything but scream at the injustice. But Jack, the biggest boy on our team, like a laser from across the field shot right in between the boys, knocking them out of the way, and helped pick my son up and make sure he never got touched again in that game.

Now, I tell you that, to tell you this.

We are the tiniest players in this world.

We can't match the media that degrades us, we can't match the money that undermines us, we can't match the numbers of people that opposes us and fights us anywhere we tell the truth of God. If ever there was a smaller kid on the soccer field of life, we Christians are it.

But don't think for even a second we are going to lose this war for the world.

Because...we have a champion that fights for us, a champion that fights with the courage of king of the Jungle the Lion of Judah. We have a warrior that defeats the Gargantuan Goliaths of Satan and fells them with the rock of Faith!

We have a gate that keeps us safe in the courts of the Lord and a shepherd that will lead us to the green pastures of the world where even the most bombastic of cultural bears tremble in His presence.

We have Christ crashing in-between the enemies that temporarily stand triumphant over us only to walk away whimpering at the game Jesus plays better than anyone.

He does not die on that cross forever; He walks in the way of life out of the tomb to show us the way to the Father, because He is the Gate that keeps us and shelters us until the eternal sheepfold becomes our everlasting home.

AMEN

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