

## EZEKIEL 34:1-31 – “IRRESPONSIBLE SHEPHERDS; GOD, THE TRUE SHEPHERD”

### OBSERVATION

Monday 7:30pm, H 106 (1st floor, High School--foot of stairs, behind the gym, by doughnut/vending machine area), Tuesday 7:00am, Family, Room, CCCM – Phil Twente, cell # 714 425 9221; email – [ptwente@gmail.com](mailto:ptwente@gmail.com) For past studies, audio plus notes, go to: <http://www.missioncalvary.com/> Click on “Bible Studies” on the left column.

#### THE SIN OF THE LEADERS : (VS. 1-31)

*Eze 34:1 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying,*

*Eze 34:2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: 'Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks?'*

*Eze 34:3 You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock.*

*Eze 34:4 The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them.*

*Eze 34:5 So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered.*

*Eze 34:6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them."*

*Eze 34:7 'Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD:*

*Eze 34:8 "As I live," says the Lord GOD, "surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock"—*

### INTERPRETATION

#### THE SIN OF THE LEADERS : (VS. 1-31)

##### EXPLOITING AND ABUSING THE SHEEP (VS. 1-10)

**Eze 34:1** Message to the faithless shepherds of Israel. Promise of restoration of Israel, and setting up of the kingdom. Our English word “pastor” comes from the Latin and means shepherd!

**Eze 34:2** Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD to the shepherds: Woe be to the shepherds (by the shepherds he means the king, the magistrates, priests and prophets) of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

**Eze 34:3** You eat the fat, and you clothe yourselves with the wool, you kill them that are fed: but you feed not the flock. You seek to enrich yourselves by their conveniences and to spoil their riches and substance. The selfishness and self-indulgence of the shepherds kept them from their responsibilities. (Acts. 20:28-30)  
-to provide food (whole counsel of God) and to protect the flock!

**Eze 34:4** The diseased you have not strengthened, neither have you healed that which was sick, neither have you bound up that which was broken, neither have you brought again that which was driven away, neither have you sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty you have ruled them. He describes the office and duty of a good pastor who ought to love and comfort his flock and not be cruel toward them.  
The shepherds were not sensitive to the needs of the flock!

**Eze 34:5** And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became food to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. For lack of good government and doctrine they perished. Because of their ignoring the flock, the sheep were scattered!

**Eze 34:6 every high hill** — the scene of their idolatries sanctioned by the rulers, searching ... seeking — rather, “seek ... search.” The former is the part of the superior rulers *to inquire after*; *to search out* is the duty of the subordinate rulers.

**Eze 34:7 Therefore you shepherds, (you bad and wicked shepherds), hear the word of the Lord** - In the preceding character of the good shepherd the reader will find, by reversing the particulars, the character of a bad shepherd.

**Eze 34:8** God holds these false shepherds responsible. He says, I am against them, and I am as much opposed to them as I am to any sinner or any sin. I'm going to hold them responsible.

### APPLICATION

As we have finished the judgment section against Judah/Jerusalem and against the enemies of Israel. We come to the fourth section – Chapters 33-48 We now are going to look at the return of God's flock! “You will return-God will bring you back”!  
Chapter 34 – Irresponsible shepherds – God the True Shepherd!

So in chapter thirty-four, it begins with God's indictment against the rulership of Israel that actually perpetrated the fall of the nations. It was because of the corrupted rulership, the corrupted government. Through the corrupted government, the corrupted morals of the people, and hence the fall, and the destruction of Jerusalem. God lays the blame upon the leadership for failing to provide a, for the common welfare, to provide for the people.  
The leadership had become corrupted.  
How do you see the sins of Israel's leaders and shepherds in Ezekiel's day applying to today? In Israel? In the USA? In our lives? Are our leaders exploiting the “sheep” or sacrificing for them?

The present word, “pastor”, should be that of the word “Shepherd” used in our text today. (*Ps. 23; John 10:1-30; Heb. 13:20-21*)

“My flock” is used 8 of the 12 times; “My sheep” is used 3 of 9 times in chapter 34. God Almighty is going to restore Israel! (1 Kings 22:17; Ps. 77, 78, 80:1-19; 100; Jer. 13:17; Zec.10:3; Mt. 9:36; 10:6; 15:24)

Notice what the Lord is saying about His flock and His sheep, fits us as individuals so totally well!!!

Here we see what a true Shepherd and a true pastor should be like

Three reasons for the removal of the shepherds!!The shepherds did not protect or pursue the flock, neither did they feed them!

## EZEKIEL 34:1-31 – “IRRESPONSIBLE SHEPHERDS; GOD, THE TRUE SHEPHERD”

### OBSERVATION

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*Eze 34:9 therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the LORD!*

*Eze 34:10 Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them."*

*Eze 34:11 'For thus says the Lord GOD: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out.*

*Eze 34:12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day.*

*Eze 34:13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country.*

*Eze 34:14 I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel.*

*Eze 34:15 I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord GOD.*

*Eze 34:16 "I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment."*

### INTERPRETATION

*Eze 34:9 Therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord. This is repeated, that it might be observed, and for the confirmation of it; it might be depended upon that what follows would be accomplished, unless they changed their conduct and behavior; and, to leave them inexcusable, they are again called upon to hear what the Lord should say unto them.*

*Eze 34:10 Thus says the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the shepherds feed themselves anymore; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be food for them. By destroying the covetous hirelings and restoring true shepherds of which we have a sign so often as God sends true preachers, who both by doctrine and life labor to feed his sheep in the pleasant pastures of his word.*

#### RESCUEING THE FLOCK (VS. 11-22)

*Eze 34:11 Yahweh is the shepherd of His people. He will do all which the shepherds should have done and did not. These promises - partially fulfilled in the return from Babylon, and in the subsequent prosperity under the Maccabees - point to the ingathering of all nations in the Church of Christ the Good Shepherd.*

*Eze 34:12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. In the day of their affliction and misery: and this promise is to comfort the Church in all dangers.*

*Eze 34:13 I will - feed them on the mountains of Israel - When I bring back the people from their captivity, I will raise up to them a holy and diligent priesthood, who shall in all places give them sound instruction. But this, and some of the following promises, belong to the Christian Church, as we shall find below. Back from “countries” – much larger context than simply Babylon.*

*Eze 34:14 good pasture — (Psa 23:2). high mountains of Israel — In Eze 17:23; Eze 20:40, the phrase is “the mountain of the height of Israel” in the singular number. The reason for the difference is: there Ezekiel spoke of the central seat of the kingdom, Mount Zion, where the people met for the worship of Jehovah; here he speaks of the kingdom of Israel at large, all the parts of which are regarded as possessing a moral elevation.*

*Eze 34:15 He will feed them in a good pasture, and when they lie down they will be safe. Obviously this is for a future time. The land of Israel does not lie in safety at all today.*

*Eze 34:16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up [that which was] broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; Meaning such as lift up themselves above their brethren and think they have no need to be governed by me. I will feed them with judgment. That is, by putting difference between the good and the bad, and so give to either as they deserve.*

### APPLICATION

*The real shepherd will seek them.*

*That is God's desire, God's purpose, is that you seek those that are lost, that you search them out. That you bring them back into the safety and the security of the fold. God's work is always that of restoration.*

*The real shepherd will put them in their own land.*

*The real shepherd will satisfy them.*

*The real shepherd will strengthen them.*

## EZEKIEL 34:1-31 – “IRRESPONSIBLE SHEPHERDS; GOD, THE TRUE SHEPHERD”

### OBSERVATION

*Eze 34:17 'And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats.*

*Eze 34:18 Is it too little for you to have eaten up the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture—and to have drunk of the clear waters, that you must foul the residue with your feet?*

*Eze 34:19 And as for My flock, they eat what you have trampled with your feet, and they drink what you have fouled with your feet."*

*Eze 34:20 'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD to them: "Behold, I Myself will judge between the fat and the lean sheep.*

*Eze 34:21 Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad,*

*Eze 34:22 therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep.*

*Eze 34:23 I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd.*

### INTERPRETATION

**Eze 34:17 And as for you, O my flock** - After having spoken to the shepherds, he now addresses the flock. **I judge between sheep and sheep** - Between false and true professors; between them that have only the form and them that have the power of godliness; between the backslider in heart and the upright man.

**Eze 34:18** Is it too little for you to have eaten up the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the rest of your pastures? and to have drank of the deep waters, but you must foul the rest with your feet? By good pasture and deep waters is meant the pure word of God and the administration of justice which they did not distribute to the poor till they had corrupted it.

**Eze 34:19** And as for my flock, they eat that which you have trampled with your feet,.... They are forced to do it, not being able to come at anything else; being as sheep without a shepherd, or worse: and they drink that which you have fouled with your feet; which, as it cannot be agreeable and relishing, so neither wholesome; as the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees; the traditions of the elders; the false doctrines of false teachers.

**Eze 34:20 I will judge between sheep and sheep** - Between the rich and the poor; those who fare sumptuously every day and those who have not the necessities of life.

**Eze 34:21 Because you have pushed with side and with shoulder**,.... As the stronger cattle do the lesser: **and butted all the diseased with your horns**; as horned cattle do those they dislike, and bear an antipathy to; which to do to the diseased is great cruelty: sheep, it is said, will take some care of those that are diseased among them, and bring them to places of sunshine and shelter; but here the horned part of the flock, and in health, are represented as acting a barbarous part to the weak and diseased: this may denote such as are in power and authority, using it to the hurt and detriment of those that are under them, and whom they should relieve and protect. **And scattered them abroad**; or "without"; that is, without the land.

**Eze 34:22 Therefore will I save my flock**,.... Or redeem my people. **and they shall no longer be a prey**: to Satan the roaring lion; nor to such horned cattle, their persecutors; nor to false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive; nor shall they ever perish, being the sheep of Christ, hand, and under the care of him the shepherd, spoken of in the next verse: **and I will judge between sheep and sheep**; between man and man, that is, between good and bad men, the persecutors and the persecuted.

#### PROTECTING THE FLOCK (VS. 23-31)

**Eze 34:23** And I will establish up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. Meaning Christ, of whom David was a figure, *See Jer. 30:9.*

### APPLICATION

**The real shepherd will separate them from their abusers**

**The real Shepherd will save them!**

**The real Shepherd will shepherd them!**

## EZEKIEL 34:1-31 – “IRRESPONSIBLE SHEPHERDS; GOD, THE TRUE SHEPHERD”

### OBSERVATION

*Eze 34:24 And I, the LORD, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken*

*Eze 34:25 "I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.*

*Eze 34:26 I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing.*

*Eze 34:27 Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them.*

*Eze 34:28 And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid.*

*Eze 34:29 I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore.*

*Eze 34:30 Thus they shall know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and they, the house of Israel, are My people," says the Lord GOD.' "*

*Eze 34:31 "You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God," says the Lord GOD.*

#### Questions:

1. Who are included in the term “shepherds” in today’s study? (Leaders, kings and officers in government)
2. What position in the church leadership today means the same thing as that described as “shepherds” in chapter 34?
3. Who is the LORD referring to as My flock in chapter 34?
4. Who is referred to as “My servant David, a prince among them”?
5. What is the duration of God’s “covenant of peace” regarding Israel? (Ez. 37:26)
6. Is Ezekiel figuratively or literally speaking of a future re-gathering of Israel? Is this re-gathering a part of God’s everlasting covenant with them?

### INTERPRETATION

**Eze 34:24 God, and my Servant David a Prince** - Here we find God and his Christ are all in all in his Church, and Jesus is still Prince among them; and to him the call and qualifications of all genuine pastors belong, and from him they must be derived. And he has blotted out what is called uninterrupted succession, that every Christian minister may seek and receive credentials from himself. Here is the grand reason why the uninterrupted succession cannot be made out. And here is the proof also that the Church that pretends to it, and builds upon it, must be a false Church; for it is founded on a falsity; an uninterrupted succession which does not exist either in history or in fact.

**.Eze 34:25** And I will make a covenant of peace with them, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. This declares that under Christ the flock would be truly delivered from sin and hell, and so be safely preserved in the Church where they would never perish.

**Eze 34:26 The shower to come down** - The Holy Spirit’s influence. **There shall be showers of blessing** - Light, life, joy, peace, and power shall be manifest in all the assemblies of Christ’s people.

**Eze 34:27** And the trees of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bars of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that subjected them to service. The fruit of God’s grace will appear in great abundance in his Church.

**Eze 34:28** The day will come when Israel will "no more be a prey for the the nations." They are still that today, but God says, "I will," and when He says that, He *is* going to do it, my friend.

**Eze 34:29** And I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the nations any more. That is, the rod that will come out of the root of Jesse, (Isa 11:1).

**Eze 34:30 Thus shall they know that I the Lord their God am with them**,.... Granting them his gracious and powerful presence, by all the above instances of his goodness and favor to them: **and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, says the Lord God**: and not utterly cast off, as they seemed to be; the divine Shechinah now being returned to them, which had departed from them; the "loammi" that was written on them being now wiped off from them

**Eze 34:31. You are my flock ... are men** — not merely an explanation of the image, as Jerome represents. But as God had promised many things which mere “men” could not expect to realize, He shows that it is not from *man*’s might their realization is to be looked for, but from God, who would perform them for His covenant-people, When we realize most our weakness and God’s power and faithfulness to His covenant, we are in the fittest state for receiving His blessings.

### APPLICATION

**“My servant David a Prince” - (Ez. 37:24-25; 45:22; 46:1-4; Mt. 1:1; 9:27; 15:22; 20:30, 31; 22:41)**

**“a covenant of peace” – Num. 25:12; Is. 54:10; Ez. 37:25-28 – New Covenant, Jer. 31:31-37**

**God’s plan of the re-gathering of Israel: “safe in their land” – Dt. 30:1-10; Is. 11:11-12; Jer. 23:3-8; Micah 2:12;4:6-7)**

**The real Shepherd will provide safety for them!**

**The real Shepherd will shower blessings on them!**

**1 Savior, like a shepherd lead us, much we need thy tender care;**  
**in thy pleasant pastures feed us, for our use thy folds prepare.**  
**Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Thou hast bought us, thine we are.**  
**Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Thou hast bought us, thine we are.**

**2 We are thine, thou dost befriend us, be the guardian of our way;**  
**keep thy flock, from sin defend us, seek us when we go astray.**  
**Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Hear, O hear us when we pray.**  
**Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! Hear, O hear us when we pray.**

**3 Thou hast promised to receive us, poor and sinful though we be;**  
**thou hast mercy to relieve us, grace to cleanse and power to free.**  
**Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! We will early turn to thee.**  
**Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus! We will early turn to thee.**