

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Ezekiel: Effective Ministry To The Spiritually Rebellious
Part LIII: God's Own Future Shepherding Of His People
(Ezekiel 34:11-31)

I. Introduction

- A. God's people in Scripture have consistently been likened to a flock of sheep, Psalm 95:7; John 10:27-29. Accordingly, the spiritual leaders He has set up over His people are consistently likened to shepherds, Ezekiel 34:1-2; 1 Peter 5:1-2. As such, God's human shepherds of His people are accountable to God, 1 Peter 5:4.
- B. However, the human shepherds God set over His people greatly failed in their work, so after God condemned them in Ezekiel 34:1-10, He told of His own future shepherding of Israel in Ezekiel 34:11-31.
- C. We view this passage for our insight and application (as follows):

II. God's Own Future Shepherding Of His People, Ezekiel 34:11-31 ESV.

- A. Unlike the false shepherds, God will care for His flock, Ezekiel 34:11-16; Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1294:
 - 1. Where Israel's false, sinful shepherds had caused the flock of God to become wayward from the Lord so that they ended up scattered among the nations in captivity, God will seek out His people from where they had been scattered and bring them back to their own Promised Land, Ezekiel 34:11-13a.
 - 2. Back in the land of Israel, God will feed, tend, search, bring back, strengthen and shepherd His flock with justice in contrast to the selfish injustice administered by former false shepherds, Ezekiel 11:13b-16.
 - 3. "This prophecy was not fulfilled when Israel returned to her land after the Babylonian Captivity," for Mark 6:34 KJV reports that Jesus viewed Israel's people in His earthly ministry "with compassion" since "they were as sheep not having a shepherd." Accordingly, the fulfillment of this prophecy in Ezekiel will occur in the yet future Messianic Kingdom, the Millennium that is predicted in Revelation 20:4-6; *Ibid.*, p. 1295.
- B. Unlike the false shepherds, God will judge between His sheep, Ezekiel 34:17-24; *Ibid.*, p. 1294:
 - 1. Just like their false shepherds, sinful people in Israel had treated the vulnerable among them abusively for their own personal gain. They were like ungodly goats that afflicted the rest of the sheep.
 - 2. Accordingly, God as Israel's future Good Shepherd will judge **between** the *sheep*, Ezekiel 34:17.
 - 3. Godless people in Israel were likened to bad sheep that had trampled the pasturelands and muddied the streams so other sheep were left with hardships, butting the weak and thrusting them aside from rich pastures so that the abused became lean and their abusers fat sheep, Ezekiel 34:18-21; *Ibid.*, p. 1295. God would thus judge between good and bad sheep, saving the vulnerable from their abusers, Ezekiel 34:22. God's judging between the good and the evil people in Israel was also predicted by Christ in Matthew 25:31-46 to occur at His Second Coming in preparation for His Millennial Kingdom.
 - 4. The Lord promised to set up His servant "David" to shepherd the people of Israel, Ezekiel 34:23-24. [Bible scholars differ as to whether this "David" is the resurrected king David of the Old Testament or whether God is using the name "David" figuratively to refer to the Ultimate Son of David, Jesus Christ (*Ibid.*, p. 1295). Since passages elsewhere predict the resurrected literal king David will be a prince of the restored people (Jer. 30:9; Ezek. 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5), and this prince will offer sin offerings for himself during the Millennium that would not be appropriate for the sinless Christ (Ezekiel 45:22; 46:4 with 2 Corinthians 5:21), this "David" is the actual resurrected king David of the Old Testament. (*Ibid.*)]
- C. Unlike the false shepherds, God would make a covenant of peace with His flock, Ez. 34:25-31; *Ibid.*, p. 1294:
 - 1. God will make a covenant of peace with His people so that they will enjoy peace and prosperity, living in security opposite the oppression Israel's people had suffered for so long in ages past, Ezekiel 34:25-28.
 - 2. The flock of God would no more suffer material shortages or reproach from surrounding Gentile nations, but they would acknowledge that the Lord was their God and that they were His people, Ezekiel 34:29-31.

Lesson: *In His future Messianic Kingdom at His Second Coming, Christ will shepherd His truly saved people in Israel, caring for them opposite the sinful shepherds who had abused them for personal gain. He will judge between good and bad sheep, separating them and providing balm to the afflicted and He will make a covenant of peace for truly saved Israel, providing the nation safety, nurture, blessing and protection. God's flock will then realize that He is their Lord and Creator God and that they are His people.*

Application: *May we believers view Jesus Christ as our Good Shepherd (John 10:14), as our Great Shepherd (Hebrews 13:20) and as our Chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4), looking to Him for comprehensive oversight and care.*