

**“THEN THEY SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD”**  
**STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL**  
**Ezekiel 33-34**  
**“NOT EVERY SHEPHERD IS A GOOD SHEPHERD”**

**BACKGROUND:** (Chapters 19-32) Ezekiel continued to deliver God’s Word to his fellow exiles from his house, making it clear that everything the Lord was doing was for the glory of His own Name. When the elders hypocritically asked for information from the Lord, they were denied because of their heart condition. Idolatry and Sabbath violations characterized their unfaithfulness, yet the Lord proved He had been faithful to them throughout their history. Israel had no one to “stand in the gap” between their sin and God’s judgment, so the Lord Himself provided the intercession. The Lord equated His people to Sodom and Gomorrah because of their spiritual adultery and lack of compassion.

As the Lord prepared his prophet to communicate the news of impending disaster of the city they loved dearly, Ezekiel himself suffered the unimaginable sudden loss of his wife, (Ezekiel 24) and he was told to not publicly mourn. He continued to minister out of his pain, and still spoke words of hope to others who were also mourning.

The ensuing chapters (25-32) contain detail about how the Lord would judge the nations that had been a thorn in the side of his people for many generations. Ammon, Moab, Eom Philistia, Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt are all singled out for judgment. The Lord had allowed some of these nations to be His instrument of chastening against His own covenant nation, but He had to punish them for their ungodliness also. Many scholars feel that as the Lord pointed out the pride that would lead to the downfall of the Tyre, that he also used the occasion to pronounce doom upon the spirit being behind the King of Tyre, which was Satan himself. (Ezekiel 28)

After many years of maintaining a false hope, the Jewish exiles finally received word that their beloved city and Temple had been destroyed. The harsh reality of the consequences of sin should have been evident to all. God opened the mouth of his prophet after seven years of limited speech (Ezekiel 33:22) to begin to give hope instead of messages of judgement.

**I. THE WATCHMAN IS RESPONSIBLE FOR WARNING THE PEOPLE WHEN DANGER IS APPROACHING, BUT THE WATCHMAN IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANYONE’S RESPONSE. (Ezekiel 33:1-9)**

- A. Ezekiel had known for many years that he was charged with being a watchman, but this time the Lord confirms it publicly. Do you carry out your assignments faithfully, even when others do not know what God has called you to do?
- B. The watchman sometimes warns a nation about dangers from other countries. At other times, the watchman has to warn individuals about their personal sins that are killing them. Are you more concerned about America’s problems that you are about your own sinful choices?

**II. GOD’S WAYS ARE BETTER THAN OUR WAYS, (Isaiah 55:8-9) AND HIS GRACE IS AVAILABLE FOR ANYONE WHO TURNS FROM SIN TO BELIEVE ON HIM. (Ezekiel 33: 10-30)**

- A. God’s grace is amazing. Lifelong sinners can be converted in an instant. Never trust your own righteousness because what you need is His righteousness.
- B. The Jews thought they could possess the land no matter what because of the Promise of God to Abraham. They often confused God’s unconditional gift of the land to Abraham and his

offspring through Isaac and Jacob, with the conditions placed upon them to obey God's law. Likewise, your salvation does not give you a blank check to live sinfully.

**III. SHEPHERDS SHOULD ALWAYS BE AWARE THAT MANY PEOPLE ENJOY LISTENING TO ENTERTAINING SERMONS, BUT HAVE NO INTENTION OF OBEYING THE WORD OF GOD. (Ezekiel 33: 30-33)**

A. The Word of God must be communicated faithfully, and we cannot yield to the pressure to entertain rather than edify. We are to feed the sheep, not entertain the goats and wolves!

**IV. GOD CARES ABOUT WHO LEADS HIS PEOPLE, HOW THEY LEAD THEM, AND WHY THEY LEAD THEM. NOT EVERY SHEPHERD IS A GOOD SHEPHERD, AND ONLY ONE IS PERFECTLY GOOD! (Ezekiel 34:1-19)**

*“The priests did not say, Where is the Lord? And those who handle the law did not know Me. The rulers also transgressed against Me; the prophets walked after Baal, and walked after things that do not profit. (Jeremiah 2:8)*

*“The Spirit of God spoke by me, and His Word was on my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spoke to me: He who rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. (2nd Samuel 23:2-3)*

- A. Godly shepherds feed the sheep.(John 21:15-19) (1st Peter 5) Ungodly shepherds feed themselves at the expense of the sheep. (Ezekiel 34:1-3)
- B. Poor shepherding results in lost sheep that get injured and attacked. God will judge and punish every shepherd that does not care enough to protect the sheep. (Ezekiel 34:4-10)
- C. The Lord Himself is Israel's shepherd and our shepherd. He declares that He will provide everything His sheep need. Jesus identified Himself as the Good Shepherd that was mentioned in Ezekiel 34 and Psalm 23. (Ezekiel 34:11-16) (John 10)
- D. Shepherding is designed to be a blessing to the sheep. Many want the benefits of leadership but not the burdens.
- E. The Lord will be Shepherd and Judge. The House of David will reign forever in Israel through Jesus Christ. Every curse will be reversed, and peace with showers of blessing will flow through the land. The sheep will one day receive everything they need from the Good and Perfect Shepherd. (Ezekiel 34:20-31)

**WE ARE IN THE FLOCK OF THE PERFECT SHEPHERD. HE WILL LEAD, GUIDE, PROTECT, AND PROVIDE FOR YOUR EVERY NEED IF YOU TRUST HIM. DO IT NOW!**

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1. How do you think you would respond if America were totally overrun by another country like Israel was? How would you speak words of comfort and faith in Christ?
2. Why do you think the church is slow to recognize false shepherds and “hirelings” such as Jesus described in John 10?
3. When you listen to sermons, are you listening with the intention of obeying or enjoying?