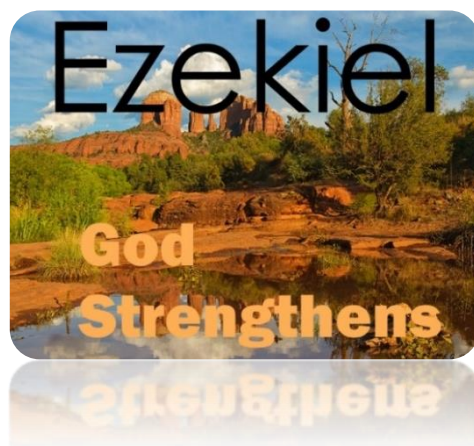


# EZEKIEL 34 vs 1

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An outline of Ezekiel: **Chapters 1 – 24**: The Lord's prophecies against **Israel** and **Judah**; **Chapter 25**: prophecies against 4 neighbors: Ammon, Moab, Edom – east of Jordan, Philistia – the western coastline; **Chapter 26 – 28**: judgment on Tyre in Lebanon, its overthrow; a funeral song; its leader's downfall, and a funeral song for its real king, lastly judgment on Sidon. **Chapter 29 – 32**: judgment on Egypt; description of judgment; comparison to Assyria; a funeral song over Egypt. **Chapter 33**: appointing watchmen on the wall; **Chapter 34**: firing all the shepherds / the hired pastors; the LORD will do the job. **Chapter 35 - 36**: judgment begins at the household of God; but extends to the irksome neighbors; God always looks for love freely given. Much of this record – but not all was local history 2500 years ago.



This chapter defines leadership: and some may ask: civil or spiritual? In God's economy, it doesn't matter. Anybody who aspires to the job better get it right, since it involves overseeing His people -- no matter how many or few. Written around 1,000 BC, we read: *Know that the LORD God... He made us; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture -- Psalm 100:3*; after 750BC... *He will feed His flock like a Shepherd: He will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young -- Isaiah 40:11*. Around 620BC... *Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the isles afar off [starting there], and say, He that scattered Israel [in those isles] will gather him, and keep him as a Shepherd does his flock -- Jeremiah 31:10*.

Now Ezekiel a prophet of Judah in exile in Babylon, yet a contemporary of Jeremiah writes:

<sup>1</sup> And **the word of the LORD** came to me, saying,

<sup>2</sup> Son of man, prophesy against the **shepherds** / **pastors**... same word, in Hebrew: *ra'a*... translated both: *shepherd, pastor...* and *feed*. More than any other Old Testament writer, Ezekiel uses this word 31 times in this chapter alone, and 2 other times in his book;

prophesy against the **pastors** / *ra-a*,

of **Israel** / remember: the house of **Judah** – the Jewish people, the 2 tribes are only a small part of the greater house of Israel; so, the Lord is not merely talking to the Jewish people,

prophesy against the **pastors** of **Israel**... and say to them,

**Thus says the Lord GOD** to the **pastors** / *ra-a*;

Woe / cursed; how terrible it will be,

to the **pastors** / *ra-a*... of **Israel**

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that do **feed** / *ra-a*; shepherd or feed -- same word,

that do **feed** themselves!

should not the **pastors feed** / *ra-a, ra-a*; **shepherd or feed** -- same word,

the **flock** / in Hebrew: *tso'n*... used 20 times in this chapter!?

<sup>3</sup> You [1] **eat the fat** / the best parts... which means some killing has happened, right?

and you [2] **clothe yourselves with the wool**,

you [3] **kill them that are fed**:

but... you **feed** / *ra-a*; shepherd or feed... **not** the flock.

<sup>4</sup> You have **not** [1] **strengthened** the diseased,

You have **not** [2] **healed** what was sick,

You have **not** [3] **bound up** what was broken,

You have **not** [4] **brought again** what was driven away,

You have **not** [5] **sought** what was lost / WOW! a whole handful of things the negligent hirelings have not done;

but with force and with cruelty you have ruled them / the only truthful thing that can be said... about the continuing history of those who claim to be leaders over God's people.

<sup>5</sup> And they were scattered, because there is no **pastor** / *ra-a*:

and they became meat to all the beasts of the field,

when they were scattered [*because there is no shepherd*].

<sup>6</sup> **My** sheep wandered through all the mountains,

and upon every high hill:

yes, **my** flock was scattered upon all the face of the **earth**,



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and none did search

or seek after them / because nobody cared.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore, **pastors** / ra-a, hear the word of the LORD / because man does not really live by bread alone, but every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord -- Deut.8;

<sup>8</sup> As I live, **says the Lord GOD**,

surely because my flock became a prey,

and my flock became meat to every beast of the field,

because there was no **shepherd** / no pastor... ra-a,

nor did my **pastors** / ra-a... search for my flock,

but the **pastors fed** / ra-a, ra-a; shepherd or fed... **themselves**,

and **fed** / ra-a; shepherd or fed... **not my flock**;

<sup>9</sup> Therefore, O **pastors** / ra-a,

**hear the word of the LORD** / something rarely done... in our genius 21<sup>st</sup> century society, even though we're not supposed to live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord;

<sup>10</sup> **Thus says the Lord GOD**;

Behold / pay attention,



I am against the **pastors** / ra-a;

and I will require my flock at their hand,

and cause them to cease from **feeding the flock** / ra-a; shepherd or feeding;

nor will the **pastors feed** / ra-a, ra-a; **themselves anymore** / I think some employee just got terminated;

for **I will deliver my flock from their mouth** / in Hebrew: *natsal*; used 3 times in this chapter. The Lord our Pastor... is also our deliverer; He will rescue His people,



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that they may not be meat for them.

<sup>11</sup> For **thus says the Lord GOD**;

**Behold** / pay attention because for NOW... the LORD God says: things are going to be very different... the LORD God himself will take on the responsibilities; after all He is the Good Pastor,

**I, even I,**

**will both search my sheep,**

**and seek them out.**

<sup>12</sup> **As a SHEPHERD** /

**As a PASTOR**, in other words: what anyone in the world knows is the duty of a pastor



**As a pastor... seeks out his flock... in the day He is among his sheep... who are scattered...** / we are learning about this time... our time... until the time of the gentiles comes to an end;

so **I will** [1] **seek out my sheep,**

**and will** [2] **deliver them out of all places** / the Lord our Good Pastor... is also our deliverer;

**where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day** / wherever they have wandered on the day when the Light of His Word is no longer shining; oh, like today! Isn't that interesting? You'd think any good shepherd would know and do that. Here, the Lord says; He will no longer be relying on anyone else to get the job done. I guess that is why John clearly told us what Jesus said: *I Am the good Pastor. My sheep hear My voice; and they follow Me; and another... they will not follow* -- John 10.

Obviously, they do not need to follow another... because there is NO other Good Shepherd to follow.

Perhaps, that is why Jesus said to Peter, 3 times: *Feed My sheep*. The sheep belong to Jesus... and not to anybody else! Oh, how easy it is to make void... the clear and certain Word of God!

The Lord GOD our Good Pastor says...

<sup>13</sup> And **I will** [3] **bring them out from the people,**

and [4] **gather them from the countries,**

and [5] **will bring them to their own land,**

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and [6] **feed** / ra-a; shepherd or feed... **them** upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.

<sup>14</sup> **I will** [6b] **feed** / ra-a; shepherd or feed... **them** in a good pasture, and on the high mountains of Israel their fold will be: there they will lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture they will **feed** / ra-a; shepherd or feed... **on the mountains of Israel.**

<sup>15</sup> **I will** [6c] **feed** / ra-a; shepherd or feed... **my flock**, and **I will cause them to lie down**, says the Lord GOD / wow! He is the good Pastor, isn't He?

And the LORD continues...

<sup>16</sup> **I will** [7] **seek those who were lost**,

**and** [8] **bring again** those who were driven away,

**and will** [9] **bind up** those who were broken,

**and will** [10] **strengthen** those who were sick / and did you notice? The good Pastor will do His work with both hands; He is going to be very busy... even doing the handful of things... those negligent hirelings did not do!

**but I will destroy the fat and the strong** / those portly hirelings who prove not to be pastors... who got fat from God's people... they will be done away with by the LORD himself;

**I will feed** / ra-a; shepherd or feed... **them... the fat and the strong**

**with judgment.**

...enough said; so, do not worry about all the very confident thieves, deviants, criminals and serial liars now days in leadership; do not be deceived by them... the Lord GOD does not provide any further details about what He intends to do to them, other than He will use His righteous judgment; not theirs... and His judgment will be adequate to take care of business.

