

2. False Shepherds Will Give Way to the True Shepherd (34:1-31).

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 1 & 2:

VERSE ONE

“And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying...”

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר

(conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-m-s [waw consec] וַיְהִי/hayah "it came about" + noun-m-s const. דְבַר/dabar "word of..." + proper noun יְהוָה/yhwh "Yahweh" + prep. w/ suf-1st-c-s אֵל/el "to me" + prep. ל/L [untranslated] + verb-qal-inf. const. אֵמַר/amar "saying").

VERSE TWO

“Son of man, prophesy over the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to the shepherds, thus says Adonay Yahweh; 'Woe to the shepherds of Israel who are only feeding themselves, should not the shepherds feed the flock?'”

בֶּן־אָדָם הַנִּבֵּא עַל־רוּעֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנִּבֵּא וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵיהֶם
לְרֹעִים כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה הִנֵּה רוּעֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר הֵיוּ
רֹעִים אוֹתָם הִלּוּא הִצֵּאן יָרְעוּ הָרֹעִים:

(noun-m-s const. בֶּן/ben "son of..." + noun-m-s אָדָם/adam "man" + verb-niph-imper-m-s נִבֵּא/naba' "prophesy" + prep. עַל/al "over" + verb-qal-part-m-pl const. רוּעֵה/ra'ah "shepherds of..." + proper noun יִשְׂרָאֵל/yis'ra'el "Israel" + verb-niph-perf-m-s נִבֵּא/nabah "prophesy" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-perf-2nd-m-s [waw consec] אָמַר/amar "say" + prep. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl אֵל/el "to them" + prep. ל/L "to" + verb-qal-part-m-pl w/ d.a. רוּעֵה/ra'ah "the shepherds" + conj. כֹּה/koh "thus" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-m-s אָמַר/amar "says" + proper noun אֲדֹנָי/adonay יְהוָה/yhwh "Adonay Yahweh" + interj. הִנֵּה/hoy "woe!" + verb-qal-part-m-pl const. רוּעֵה/ra'ah "shepherds of..." + proper noun יִשְׂרָאֵל/yis'ra'el "Israel" + rel. pron. אֲשֶׁר/asher "who" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl וַיְהִי/hayah "coming about" + verb-qal-part-m-pl רוּעֵה/ra'ah "feeding/pasturing" + sign. d.o. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl אֵת/eth "themselves" + interog. part. הֲ/ha [untranslated] + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + noun-f-s w/ d.a. צֹאן/tso'n "the

flock" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-m-pl רָעָה/ra'ah **"they would feed"** verb-qal-part-m-pl w/ d.a. רָעָה/ra'ah **"the shepherds"**).

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 1 & 2:

1. Chapter thirty-four begins a new communication from Yahweh. Having derided the dispersed Israelites for their –V, Yahweh now turns to a specific group of people within the community.
2. Verse one presents the phrase that has become all too common to us. Ezekiel tells us that **"...the word of Yahweh came to me, saying..."**
3. We do not know what year or month this or any of the following communications take place.
4. As previously stated, 33:21 contains the last date stamp until Ezekiel begins to describe the Millennial Temple in the 25th year of Jehoiachin's imprisonment (Ezek. 40:1).
5. Hence a few days or a few years could have passed. Whatever the case, God opens up to Ezekiel and tells him to prophesy regarding the *shepherds* of Israel.
6. He states in verse two, **"Son of man, prophesy over the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to the shepherds, thus says Adonay Yahweh; 'Woe to the shepherds of Israel who are only feeding themselves, should not the shepherds feed the flock?'"**
7. Understand that this passage does not refer to shepherds of *literally* sheep.
8. While it is true that God wants us to take care of our animals, He is not concerned for them in the same way he cares for people (Prov. 12:10 cf. Matt. 6:26).
9. Rather, God is referring to the shepherds who have failed to feed and take care of the human flock allotted to their charge.
10. While the shepherding analogy is used extensively of spiritual leaders in the New Testament, it was used primarily of the king and princes in the Old Testament texts (II Sam. 5:2; Psa. 78:70-72).
11. Such does not mean that the priests, Levites and elders are off the hook per say. Rather the political leadership is *primarily* in view in this passage.
12. Moses prayed that God would appoint a leader over the people so that they would not be as sheep without a shepherd (Num. 27:16, 17).
13. The shepherding concept for kings and rulers was very common in the ancient Near East.
14. Block notes, "Hammurabi's Assyrian and neo-Babylonian successors defined their role with a series of pastoral titles and a Babylonian proverb had it that 'A people without a king (is like) sheep without a shepherd'. Indeed the verb *re'u*, 'to graze, so shepherd,' often functions as a technical term for 'to rule'" (p. 281).
15. He further notes, "The motif is known in Egyptian writings as well, where the typical formula claimed: 'the god has chosen the king to be the shepherd of Egypt and the defender of the people.' Reminiscent of the Babylonian proverb cited above is the observation on a papyrus text: in the absence of a ruler, the people are 'like a flock gone astray without a shepherd'" (ibid.).
16. What's more, we will see that at the end of this text, God will appoint a single shepherd, a king, to rule over the people in the end times, David (Ezek. 34:23, 24 - more on this later).
17. Like a shepherd, the king/princes were to look after the people, make rulings that protected them by upholding the Law, abstain from overburdening them with taxes,

ensure the land was safe and remain aloof from wars that were unwinnable (among other things).

18. However here they are seen as feeding themselves but not allowing the flock to graze.
19. Such speaks of them lining their own pockets with taxes, tithes and tribute, while neglecting to ensure that the people are protected and have access to be successful in their own occupations.
20. Hence this is an indictment against the leaders of the country, the kings and local rulers who bore blame for leading the people astray and making terrible choices that hurt the nation (Prov. 28:15; 29:2).
21. Such is not to state that people do not have free will and are able to overcome corrupt leadership. However when the leaders are corrupt the people suffer from bad policies and bad decisions.
22. Those in the establishment chain of command could have done things to curb the influence of evil at the time (cp. II Kings 22, 23 – *Josiah*).
23. Ezekiel has written about the downfall of leadership earlier in his book (Ezek. 22:25-27).
24. Recall that the earlier mention of kings notes that they were bad rulers who made bad decisions which harmed the people (Ezek. 17:1ff; 19:1-8).
25. We can observe how bad leadership has been harmful over the years in our own country (Defund the Police, No Cash Bail, Catch and Release, Trans Rights, etc.).
26. This passage reminds of what Jesus says about being a good shepherd verses one who is selfishly ambitious (John 10:1ff).
27. In the Tribulation, the Jews will place themselves under the rulership of yet another bad shepherd, the antichrist, who leads them astray and pays dearly for (Zech. 11:17).

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 3 & 4:

VERSE THREE

"You eat the fat portions and dress yourselves with the wool. You slaughter the fattened sheep but you do not feed the flock".

אֶת־הַחֵלֶב תֹּאכְלוּ וְאֶת־הַצֹּמֶר תִּלְבְּשׁוּ הַבְּרִיאָה תִּזְבַּחוּ
 הַצֹּאן לֹא תִרְעוּ:

(sign d.o. אֵת/eth [untranslated] + noun-m-s w/ d.a. חֵלֶב/cheleb "the fat" + verb-qal-imperf-2nd-m-pl אָכַל/akal "you eat" + conj. ו/w "and" + sign. d.o. אֵת/eth [untranslated] + noun-m-s w/ d.a. צֹמֶר/tsemer "the wool" + verb-qal-imperf-2nd-m-pl לָבַשׁ/labesh "you dress" + adj-f-s w/ d.a. בָּרָא/bara' "the fat" + verb-qal-imperf-2nd-m-pl זָבַח/zabach "you slaughter" + noun-f-s w/ d.a. צֹאן/tso'n "the sheep/flock" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-qal-imperf-2nd-m-pl רָעָה/ra'ah "you pasture/feed").

VERSE FOUR

"You have not strengthened those who are weak, you have not healed those who are sick, you have not brought back those who had been driven away, you have not sought out those who were lost but you have ruled over them with force and severity".

אֶת־הַנְּחָלוֹת לֹא תוֹקְתֶם וְאֶת־הַחֹלִים לֹא־רַפֵּאתֶם
 וְלֹנְשֵׁבֵרֶת לֹא תִבְשְׁתֶּם וְאֶת־הַנִּדְחֹת לֹא תִשְׁבֹּתֶם
 וְאֶת־הָאֲבֵדֹת לֹא בִקִּשְׁתֶּם וּבַחֲזָקָה רִדִיתֶם אֹתָם וּבִפְרוֹךְ

(sign d.o. אֵת/eth [untranslated] + verb-niph-part.f-pl w/ d.a. חָלָה/chalah "the ones who are sick/weak" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-piel-perf-2nd-m-pl חָזַק/chazaq "you have strengthened" + conj. ו/w "and" + sign. d.o. אֵת/eth [untranslated] + verb-qal-part-f-s w/ d.a. חָלָה/chalah "the ones who are sick" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + רָפָא/rapha' "you did not heal" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. ל/L "for" + verb-niph-part-f-s w/ d.a. שָׁבַר/shabar "the ones who are broken" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-qal-perf-2nd-m-pl חָבַשׁ/chabash "you have bound up/bandaged" + ו/w "and" + sign d.o. אֵת/eth [untranslated] + verb-niph-part-f-s נִדְּחָה "those driven away" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-hiph-2nd-m-pl שׁוּב/shub "you have brought back" + conj. ו/w "and" + sign. d.o. אֵת/eth [untranslated] + verb-qal-part.f-s w/ d.a. אָבַד/abad "the ones who are perishing" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-piel-perf-2nd-m-pl בָּקַשׁ/baqash "you have sought" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. ב/B "with" + noun-f-s

חֲזֵקָה/chazeqah "strength/might" + verb-qal-perf-2nd-m-pl רָדַח/radah "you have ruled/dominated" + sign d.o. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl הֵם/eth "them" conj. ו/w "and" + prep. ב/B "with" + noun-m-s פֶּרֶק/perek "severity/harshness").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 3 & 4:

1. Yahweh begins to cite specifics as to how the shepherds have failed the sheep of Israel.
2. He continues in verse three where He states, **"You eat the fat portions and dress yourselves with the wool. You slaughter the fattened sheep but you do not feed the flock"**.
3. The "fat portions" were the choice cuts of meat. From time to time, domestic animals are slaughtered for food. Such in and of itself is not a violation.
4. So too, a literally shepherd would shear the sheep from time to time and would slaughter the fatlings for food. There is nothing odd or abusive about such actions on the surface.
5. However note that they did not feed their sheep. Such is a glaring violation and is the type of activity that represents the antithesis of being a good shepherd.
6. This passage speaks of the fact that the shepherds of Israel had taken advantage of the people.
7. They had accepted taxes, tithes and tribute, but where not keeping up their end of the bargain. They were not leading the people in the Way of the Truth or sponsoring policies which would garner God's blessing instead of cursing (Deut. 26).
8. To the contrary, they were happy to tax them and build their livelihood on them but did not reciprocate and do the things that good rulers should do.
9. They got involved in multiple conflicts with Nebuchadnezzar, and Pharaoh Neco leaving the county as a desolation.
10. In other words, instead of being part of the cure, they were a big part of the problem (Isa. 56:11; Jer. 2:8; 3:15; 10:21; 12:10; 23:1-3).
11. Hence they are like shepherds who take and take from the sheep but the sheep do not benefit from their care (Matt. 9:6).
12. He continues in verse four where He states **"You have not strengthened those who are weak, you have not healed those who are sick, you have not brought back those who had been driven away, you have not sought out those who were lost but you have ruled over them with force and severity"**.
13. Whereas verse three demonstrated three sins of commission in the shepherds exploiting the sheep, here Yahweh provides three sins of omission whereby the shepherd's failed to act.
14. The first is that they "have not strengthened those who are weak". The shepherd was the protector of the sheep. He was to apply first aid and care to those who were sick or injured.
15. A shepherd, as well as anyone who has domestic animals is to care for them if they are sick or injured (Prov. 12:10).
16. Their second and third sins of omission are that they "have not brought back those who had been driven away", nor had they even attempted to as Yahweh notes that they "have not sought out those who were lost".
17. Seeking out lost sheep and restoring them to the flock is demonstrative of a good shepherd (Matt. 18:12, 13).
18. However these shepherds had little regard for those with whom their care was entrusted.

19. They allowed violence to run rampant, they supported a religious system that involved child sacrifice and they got the nation in various wars that were unwinnable and resulting in massive casualties, culminating in a siege on at least three separate occasions (Ezek. 5:2; 7:11, 23; 8:17; 12:19; 22:26; 24:2)
20. Instead of providing for the people, they ruled over them with harshness and severity (II Kings 21:16; Isa. 56:11, 12; Jer. 2:20; 22:17; Lam. 4:13; Ezek. 22:25-28; Zech 11:4-6, 16; Mic. 3:1-3; Zeph. 3:3).
21. God has admonished the Israelites in the Law to abstain from ruling harshly over one's fellow Jew (Lev. 25:43, 46).
22. Parallels can be seen in some of the actions our own leaders have taken in recent years.

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 5 & 6:

VERSE FIVE

"And they have been scattered from lack of a shepherd and have become food for every beast and have been scattered".

וְתִפּוּצִינָה מִבְּלִי רֹעֶה וְתִהְיֶינָה לְאֹכְלָה לְכָל־חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה
 וְתִפּוּצִינָה

(conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl [waw consec] פּוֹצֵץ/puts "they have been scattered" + prep. מִן/min "from" + adv. בְּלִי/biliy "without" + verb-qal-part-m-s רָעָה/ra'ah "a shepherd" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl [waw consec] הָיָה/hayah "they have become" + prep. ל/L "for" + noun-f-s אֹכְלָה/'akelah "food" + prep. ל/L "for" + noun-m-s const. כָּל/kol "all of..." + noun-f-s const. חַיַּת/chayyah "beasts of..." + noun-m-s w/ d.a. שָׂדֶה/sadeh "the field" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl [waw consec] פּוֹצֵץ/puts "they have been scattered").

VERSE SIX

"My flock wandered among all of the mountains and on every high hill and they have been scattered upon every surface of the earth and no one was seeking or searching for them".

בְּכָל־הַהָרִים וְעַל כָּל־גִּבְעָה רָמָה וְעַל כָּל־פְּנֵי הָאָרֶץ נִפְצָו
 צֹאֲנֵי וְאֵין דּוֹרֵשׁ וְאֵין מְבַקֵּשׁ:

(verb-qal-imperf-3rd-m-pl שָׁנָה/shanh "They wandered" + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאֵן/tso'n "my flock" + prep. ב/B "among" + noun-m-s const. כָּל/kol "all of..." + noun-m-pl w/ d.a. הָרִים/har "the mountains" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. עַל/al "upon" + noun-m-s const. כָּל/kol "every..." + noun-f-s גִּבְעָה/gib'ah "hill" + verb-qal-part-f-s רוּם/rum "high" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. עַל/al "upon" + noun-m-s const. כָּל/kol "every..." + noun-f-pl const. פְּנֵי/paneh "face of..." + noun-f-s w/ d.a. אֶרֶץ/erets "the earth" + verb-niph-perf-3rd-c-pl פּוֹצֵץ/puts "they have been scattered" + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאֵן/tso'n "my flock" + conj. ו/w "and" + neg. adv. אֵין/ayin "no one" + to be verb [supplied] "was" + verb-qal-part-m-s דָּרַשׁ/darash "seeking" + conj. ו/w "and" + neg. adv. אֵין/ayin "no one" + verb-piel-part-m-s בִּקֵּשׁ/baqash "searching").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 5 & 6:

1. Yahweh continues with His indictment of the shepherds of Israel in verse five. Not only have they not cared for the flock, they have caused them to be scattered as well.
2. He states in verse five, **"And they have been scattered from lack of a shepherd and have become food for every beast and have been scattered"**.
3. Realize that the Shepherd was not only to care for the sheep and lead them to pasture and fresh water, but also to ensure that the flock stayed together as one cohesive unit.
4. When sheep wandered from the flock, they were vulnerable to predators.
5. If they were all kept together, they were kept safe with the shepherd to fend off such predators (I Sam. 17:34; Psa. 23:4; John 10:10-12).
6. However the shepherds of Israel did not keep the flock together in safety. They made terrible choices which resulted in two dispersions of the children of Israel.
7. The first dispersion took place in 722 BC where the ten tribes of northern Israel were scattered.
8. The second involved the southern kingdom of Judah which took place in three phases between 606 and 587 BC (Jer. 23:2; 50:6, 17).
9. A considerable amount of Jews returned to the land of Israel to rebuild the temple in 537 BC. This was followed by another group who returned 19 years later to rebuild the city in 518 BC.
10. However the great amount of Jews in the world remained outside of Israel till modern times when a home land was yet established for the Jews again beginning in 1948 AD and culminating in 1967 AD.
11. This was all due to the people being scattered throughout the entire world.
12. Such is due to a great degree to a lack of good shepherds. Their failed leadership is directly tied to the fact that the people were scattered so.
13. Such does not indicate that the people were innocent victims by any means. They were evil and ripe for the 5th cycle of discipline.
14. What is evident is that the leadership played a huge part in furthering the evil and bringing the people harm rather than good.
15. It is amazing what the establishment chain of command can accomplish when it is dedicated to combating the evil in a country (II Kings 22:1ff).
16. Yahweh notes that they have "become food for every beast". No, the Jews in exile were not eaten by cannibals. Rather the statement reflects the abuse that the Jews have suffered while in the nations to which they have been scattered.
17. Finally He notes a second time, "...and they have been scattered". Why mention this a second time?
18. God tells Ezekiel that they were dispersed for lack of a shepherd (initial dispersions) and then states that they suffered abuse in the gentile nations and were dispersed additionally.
19. In other words they continued to move abroad additionally due to various persecutions they suffered.
20. This would continue all through the ages culminating in many ending up in the western hemisphere due to abuse in Europe from pogroms in Russia to the rise of Nazi Germany.
21. He continues in verse six where He states, **"My flock wandered among all of the mountains and on every high hill and they have been scattered upon every surface of the earth and no one was seeking or searching for them"**.

22. Note that God returns to using the first person pronominal suffix with masculine, singular noun, **נִי**/tso'n, "My flock".
23. Here we see that Yahweh is the ultimate shepherd of the sheep (Gen. 48:15; Psa. 23:1ff).
24. Herein lies the most crucial part of the errors committed by the leaders of Israel/Judah.
25. They were not charged with leading any old people. They were charged with taking care of *God's people*.
26. Instead of keeping God's people intact and together under the Law in Israel, they scattered them far and wide.
27. The mention of the mountains hills and surface of the earth are not references to the land of Israel. It had all but been all but emptied of people and more destruction was still on its way (Ezek. 33:28).
28. Rather this section is a reference to how far and wide they have been scattered throughout the Gentile nations.
29. Never did there rise up a leader who would look of them and try to get them together as a cohesive unit again, until God Himself intervenes.
30. No one ever tried to look for the lost sheep of the 10 northern tribes and bring them to Judah, with the exception of one invite by Hezekiah (II Chron. 30:1ff).
31. No one had made an effort to bring the people Nebuchadnezzar had dispersed either. To the contrary the leaders continued to make stupid decisions resulting in more deportations (Ezek. 17:13ff).
32. When the time is right, God will orchestrate a great worldwide movement to bring the Jews back to their new homeland in Israel (cp. Ezek. 36:22).
33. Eventually Jesus will return to Shepherd His Sheep directly.

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 7 & 8:

VERSE SEVEN

“Therefore you shepherds, hear the word of Yahweh”.

לְכֵן רְעִים שְׁמַעוּ אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה:

(prep. ל/L "unto" + adv. כֵּן/ken "thus" + verb-qal-part-m-pl רָעָה/ra'ah "shepherds" + verb-qal-imper.m-pl שְׁמַע/shama' "hear" + sign d.o. אֶת/eth [untranslated] + noun-m-s const. דְּבַר/dabar "word of..." + proper noun יְהוָה/yhwh "Yahweh").

VERSE EIGHT

“As I live declares Adonay Yahweh, is it not because My flock has become spoil? For they have become food for all the beasts of the field because of a lack of a shepherd and the shepherds did not search for My flock and the shepherds fed themselves and have not fed My flock”.

חַי־אֲנִי נֹאמַם אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה אִם־לֹא יֵעַן הָיֹתָ־צֹאֲנִי לְבָז
וְתִהְיֶינָה צֹאֲנִי לְאֶכְלָה לְכָל־חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה מֵאִין רֹעֶה
וְלֹא־דָרְשׁוּ רְעִי אֶת־צֹאֲנִי וַיִּרְעֻ הָרְעִים אוֹתָם וְאֶת־צֹאֲנִי
לֹא רָעוּ: ס

(adj-m-s חַי/chay "living" + to be verb [supplied] "am" + pron-1st-c-s אֲנִי/aniy "I" + noun-m-s const. נֹאמַם/ne'um "a declaration of..." + proper noun אֲדֹנָי/adonay יְהוָה/yhwh "Adonay Yahweh" + conj. אִם/im "if" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + adv. יֵעַן/ya'in "because/on account of" + verb-qal-inf. const. הָיָה/hayah "coming about" + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאֲנִי/tso'n "my flock" + neg. adv. ל/L "for" + noun-m-s בָּז/baz "spoil" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl [waw consec] הָיָה/hayah "they became" + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאֲנִי/tso'n "my flock" + prep. prep. ל/L "for" + noun-f-s אֶכְלָה/akelah "food" + prep. ל/L "for" + noun-m-s const. כָּל/kol "all of..." noun-f-s const. חַיָּה/chayah "beasts of...." + שָׂדֶה/sareh "the field" + prep. מִן/min "from" + neg. adv. אֵין/ayin "not" + verb-qal-part-m-s רָעָה/ra'ah "a shepherd" + conj. ו/w "and" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl דָּרַשׁ/darash "they searched" + verb-qal-part-m-pl רָעָה/ra'ah "shepherds" + sign d.o. אֶת/eth [untranslated] + noun-f-s const suf-1st-c-s צֹאֲנִי/tso'n "my flock" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-m-pl רָעָה/ra'ah "they pastured/feed" + verb-qal-part-m-pl w/ d.a. רָעָה/ra'ah "the shepherds" + sign. d.o. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl אֶת/eth "themselves" + conj. ו/w "and" + sign. d.o. אֶת/eth

[untranslated] + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s ׁנִסִּי/tso'n "my flock" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-c-pl רָעָה/ra'ah "they have pastured/fed").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 7 & 8:

1. Yahweh addresses the shepherds directly in verse seven where He states, **“Therefore you shepherds, hear the word of Yahweh”**.
2. Realize that most of said shepherds are dead or elsewhere in captivity by now (II Kings 25:6ff).
3. However any and all who are still present among the refugees of Israel are about to get an earful.
4. As previously was the case, God speaks to certain groups of people, some in foreign nations, while the children of Israel amongst Ezekiel are really the primary audience.
5. He states in verse eight, **“As I live declares Adonay Yahweh, is it not because My flock has become spoil? For they have become food for all the beasts of the field because of a lack of a shepherd and the shepherds did not search for My flock and the shepherds fed themselves and have not fed My flock”**.
6. Note that Yahweh again refers to them as “My flock” indicating that whatever problems they had, they were still God’s flock and He had serious concerns for them (Ezek. 9:4).
7. While the shepherds of Israel were under shepherds, God is here viewed as the “Chief Shepherd” (cp. I Pet. 5:4).
8. Here Yahweh echoes the previous charges which He has leveraged against the shepherds earlier.
9. The first of which is that they have allowed the flock to become “spoil”.
10. Our word translated as “spoil” is the masculine, singular noun, בָּז/baz, “spoil, plunder, booty, robbery”.
11. The term conjures up visions of the victorious army taking all that the people have as “spoil”.
12. Indeed, they have physically taken the people of Israel as spoil, back to the land of Babylon and that is where Ezekiel and his fellow citizens currently reside.
13. Yahweh blames the leadership for these occurrences.
14. They did not function as shepherds and as a result the flock was given as spoil and for food.
15. Again the fact that they were “food” for the beasts is not to be taken in a literally sense. Suffice it to say that they suffered greatly at the hands of their conquerors.
16. What’s more, after the flock was scattered, the shepherds did not search for the sheep to bring them home.
17. Such accusations confirm that the leaders of the Israel have failed the people miserably.
18. Their motivation for such actions or lack thereof is their greed.
19. Note that Yahweh repeats the charge that they fed themselves and not the flock, indicating that they lined their pockets with taxes, tithes and levies, yet did not provide for the people (cp. Psalms 82:1ff; Jeremiah 22:2ff).
20. They have thus exploited their offices for the purposes of personal gain. The parallels between the rulers of Israel and some of the current leaders of our nation cannot be ignored.

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 9 & 10:

VERSE NINE

“Therefore, hear o shepherds the word of Yahweh”

לְכֵן הָרְעִים שְׁמָעוּ דְּבַר־יְהוָה:

(prep. ל/L "unto" + adv. כֵּן/ken "thus" + verb-qal-part-m-pl w/ d.a. רָעָה/ra'ah "the shepherds" + verb-qal-imperf-m-pl שָׁמַע/shama' "hear" + noun-m-s const. דְּבַר/dabar "word of..." + proper noun יְהוָה/yhwh "Yahweh").

VERSE TEN

“Thus says Adonay Yahweh, 'behold I am against the shepherds and I will require My flock from their hand and I will make them cease from feeding my flock and the shepherds will not feed themselves any longer and I will deliver My flock from their mouth that they will not be food for them’”.

כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה הִנְנִי אֶל־הָרְעִים וְדָרַשְׁתִּי אֶת־צֹאֲנִי
מִיָּדָם וְהִשְׁבַּתִּים מִרְעוֹת צֹאן וְלֹא־יִרְעוּ עוֹד הָרְעִים אוֹתָם
וְהִצַּלְתִּי צֹאֲנִי מִפִּיהֶם וְלֹא־תִהְיֶינָם לָהֶם לֶאֱכֹלָה: ס

(adv. כֹּה/koh "thus" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-m-s אָמַר/'amar "says" + proper noun אֲדֹנָי/adonay
יְהוָה/yhwh "Adonay Yahweh" + interj.w/ suf-1st-c-s הִנְנֶה/hinneh "behold I" + prep. אֶל/el
"unto" + verb-qal-part-m-pl w/ d.a. רָעָה/ra'ah "the shepherds" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-
perf-1st-c-s [waw consec] דָּרַשׁ/darash "I will require" + sign. d.o. אֶת/eth [untranslated] +
noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאן/tso'n ""my flock" + prep. מִן/min "from" + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-m-
pl יָד/yad "their hand" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-hiph-perf-1st-c-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl [waw
consec] שָׁבַת/shabath "I will cause to them to cease" + prep. מִן/min "from" + verb-qal-inf.
const. רָעָה/ra'ah "feeding" + noun-f-s צֹאן/tso'n "the flock" + conj. ו/w "and" + neg. adv.
לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-qal-imperf-m-pl רָעָה/ra'ah "they will feed" + adv. עוֹד/od "again" +
verb-qal-part-m-pl w/ d.a. רָעָה/ra'ah "the shepherds" + sign. d.o. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl אֶת/eth
"themselves" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-hiph-perf-1st-c-s [waw consec] נִצַּל/natsal "I will
deliver" + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאן/tso'n "my flock" + prep. מִן/min "from" + noun-m-s w/
suf-3rd-m-pl פֶּה/peh "their mouth" + conj. ו/w "and" + neg. adv. לֹא/lo' "not" + verb-qal-

imperf-3rd-f-pl יהי/hayah "they will be" + prep. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl לו/L "for them" + prep. לו/L "for" + noun-f-s לחם/achalah "food").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 9 & 10:

1. God again implores Ezekiel to direct his speech directly to the shepherds in verse nine where He states, **“Therefore, hear o shepherds the word of Yahweh”**.
2. It should again be repeated that while the governors and other political leaders are in view, the religious leadership is by no means off of the hook.
3. Whatever governors, princes, elders, priests or Levites he has before him will get an earful.
4. However it is doubtful how many of the leaders he has before them, how many are actually left?
5. We know that the elders of Israel have approached Ezekiel on at least three occasions prior to this (Ezek. 8:1; 14:1; 20:1).
6. Yahweh states in verse ten, **“Thus says Adonay Yahweh, 'behold I am against the shepherds and I will require My flock from their hand and I will make them cease from feeding my flock...’”**
7. Those who had been in authority over the sheep up until that point would no longer be in charge of the flock.
8. Yahweh states here that they will lose custody and authority over the sheep of Israel.
9. Part of this prophecy has already been fulfilled (Jer. 52:9-37).
10. However, its ultimate fulfillment extends into the future even from our time as the faulty shepherds will be replaced by Jesus, the Son of David (Ezek. 34:22).
11. This will not occur before one more bad Shepherd will rise to the helm of the nation of Israel to do them much harm, the antichrist (Zech. 11:17).
12. God will eventually act so as to deliver the Jews from all of the bad shepherds, past present and future and deliver them via the Good Shepherd (John 10).
13. Hence this is as much, if not more, of a message for the last days.
14. Note that God’s actions are said to take place in the future whereby He uses the imperfect tense in the Hebrew verbs throughout this section.
15. He again repeats the charges against the faulty shepherds in the final two clauses of verse ten where He notes, **“...and the shepherds will not feed themselves any longer and I will deliver My flock from their mouth that they will not be food for them”**.
16. Again the charge is levied that the shepherds looked after themselves only to the harm and disenfranchisement of the sheep.
17. Such activity is the exact opposite of what a good shepherd should do.
18. However that is exactly what they did. As a result they will lose their offices and their custodianship over the nation of Israel.
19. While this is a message of judgment against the shepherds, it is a message of hope to the sheep!

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 11 & 12:

VERSE ELEVEN

“For thus says Adonay Yahweh, ‘Behold I, Myself, even I will search for My sheep and seek them out’”.

וּבְקִרְתִּים: כִּי כֹה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוֹה הִנְנִי-אֲנִי וְדֹרַשְׁתִּי אֶת-צֹאֲנִי

(conj. כִּי/kiy "for" + adv. כֹּה/koh "thus" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-m-s אָמַר/'amar "says" + proper noun אֲדֹנָי/'adonay יהוה/yhww "Adonay Yahweh" + interj w/ suf-1st-c-s הִנְנֶה/hinne "behold I" + pron-1st-c-s אֲנִי/aniy "myself" + conj. ו/w "even" + verb-qal-perf-1st-c-s [waw consec] דֹּרַשׁ/darash "I will search for" + sign.d.o. אֶת/'eth [untranslated] + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאן/tso'n "my sheep/flock" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-piel-perf-1st-c-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl בָּקַר/baqar "I will seek them").

VERSE TWELVE

“Like a shepherd cares for his flock in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will seek out My sheep and rescue them from all of the places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness”.

מִכֹּל-הַמְּקוֹמֹת אֲשֶׁר נִפְצְוּ כִּבְקֶרֶת רְעָה עֲדָרוֹ בְּיוֹם-הַיּוֹתוֹ בְּתוֹךְ-צֹאֲנוֹ נִפְרָשׁוֹת בֵּן שָׁם בְּיוֹם עָנָן וְעֶרְפָּל: אֶבְקֶר אֶת-צֹאֲנִי וְהַצַּלְתִּי אֹתָהֶם

(prep. כ/K "like" + noun-f-s const. בָּקָרָה/baqarah "care/compassion of..." + verb-qal-part-m-s רְעָה/ra'ah "a shepherd" + noun-m-s w/ suf-3rd-m-s עֲדָר 'eder "his flock" + prep. ב/B "in" + noun-m-s const. יוֹם/yom "day of..." + verb-qal-inf. const. הָיָה/hayah "being" + prep. ב/B "among" + noun-m-s const. תְּוֶכֶת/tawek "midst of..." + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-m-s צֹאן/tso'n "his sheep" + verb-niphal-part-f-pl פִּרְשׁ/parash "those scattered" + adv. כֵּן/ken "thus" + verb-piel-imperf-1st-c-s בָּקַר/baqar "I will seek out" + sign d.o. אֶת/'eth [untranslated] + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאן/tso'n "my sheep" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-hiph-perf-1st-c-s [waw consec] נִצַּל/natsal "I will rescue" + sign. d.o. w/ suf-3rd-m-pl אֹת/'eth "them" + prep. מִן/min "from" + noun-m-s const. כֹּל/kol "all of..." + noun-m-pl w/ d.a. מְקוֹמָן/maqom "the places" + rel. pron. אֲשֶׁר/asher "where" + verb-niph-perf-3rd-c-pl פִּיץ/puts "they have been scattered" + adv. שָׁם/sham "there" + prep. ב/B "on" + noun-m-s const. יוֹם/yom "day of..." + noun-m-s עָנָן/anan "cloud" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-s עֶרְפָּל/araphel "thick darkness").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 11 & 12:

1. Yahweh continues His description of the situation at hand, whereby the sheep have been scattered by the false shepherds rather than gathered.
2. Having established that Israel's shepherds have indeed failed the people miserably, He notes that He, Himself will have to intervene *directly* to save His sheep.
3. He states in verse eleven, **"For thus says Adonay Yahweh, 'Behold I, Myself, even I will search for My sheep and seek them out'"**.
4. Note the emphatic use of first person pronouns, **"I, Myself, even I** will search for My sheep..."
5. This is yet another warp speed prophecy which first addresses the failure of the shepherds of Israel up to 587 BC but then warps forward in time to the End Times where God functions as a Shepherd to get His sheep back to the homeland.
6. He continues in verse twelve where He states, **"Like a shepherd cares for his flock in the day when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will seek out My sheep and rescue them from all of the places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness"**.
7. Note that Yahweh is going to "seek out" the sheep of Israel. Our word translated as "seek out" is the piel, imperfect of בָּקַר/baqar, "to seek, study, seek out, secure".
8. This is not a casual looking about but a concentrated effort to seek and find each and every sheep that is to be returned to the nation of Israel in the last days.
9. What's more, said "seeking out" is said to be successful as God will "rescue" His sheep.
10. Our word for rescue is the hiphil, imperfect of נָצַל/natsal. In the hiphil stem the verb has the idea of delivering or rescuing another person.
11. Yahweh here presents Himself as the antithesis of the shepherds of Israel who will seek out His sheep and rescue them from the various lands from which they have been scattered.
12. This is not the gathering that took place at the end of the 70 when a contingency of Jews went back into the land to rebuild the Temple and then the City of Jerusalem under Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah.
13. Those gatherings were a partial fulfillment of what is spoken of here, whereby some people returned from the Persian Empire (cp. Ezra 2:1, 2; 3:2; 7:12; Neh. 2:1ff).
14. This prophesy envisions all the sheep being returned from "all of the places where they have been scattered".
15. Hence, Ezekiel is *primarily* writing about the gathering of the Jews and their return to Israel in the end times. At such time, Jesus Christ, the seed of David will sit on the throne of Israel (Ezek. 34:23, 24).
16. David was promised an Eternal Descendant who would rule the throne of Israel forever (II Sam. 7:12-16).
17. The prophecy of the Jews returning and living in the Millennial Kingdom of Israel was made reference to earlier in the book (Ezek. 20:34-38).
18. Jesus will also judge the Gentile nations and only believers will be permitted to enter the Millennium (cp. Matt. 25:31ff).
19. Note that God is said to do this "on a day of clouds and thick darkness". Such speaks of the Day of the Lord (Joel 2:1, 2; Zeph. 1:14, 15).

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 13 & 14:

VERSE THIRTEEN

“And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the lands and bring them in their own land and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel by the streams and in all of the inhabited places of the land”.

וְהוֹצֵאתִים מִן־הָעַמִּים וְקִבַּצְתִּים מִן־הָאֲרָצוֹת וְהִבֵּאתִים
אֶל־אֲדֹמָתָם וְרִעֵיתֵיהֶם אֶל־הָרִי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּאֶפְיָקִים וּבְכָל
מוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ:

(conj. ו/w "and" + verb-hiph-perf-1st-c-s [waw consec] w/ suf-3rd-m-pl יֵצֵא/yatsa' "I will bring them out" + prep. מִן/min "from" + noun-m-pl w/ d.a. עַם/‘am "the peoples" + conj. ו/w verb-piel-perf-1st-c-s [waw consec] w/ suf-3rd-m-pl קִבַּץ/qabats "I will gather them" + prep. מִן/min "from" + noun-f-pl w/ d.a. אֲרָץ/‘erets "the lands" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-hiph-perf-1s-c-s [waw consec] w/ suf-3rd-m-pl בִּיא/bo' "I will bring them" + prep. אֶל/‘el "to" + noun-f-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl אֲדֹמָה/adamah "their land" + conj. ו/w "and" + verb-qal-perf-1st-c-s [waw conse] w/ suf-3rd-m-pl רָעָה/ra’ah "I will pasture/feed" + prep. אֶל/‘el "unto" + noun-m-pl const. הָרִי/har "mountains of..." + proper noun יִשְׂרָאֵל/yisera’el "Israel" + prep. ב/B "by" + noun-m-pl אֶפְיָקִים/‘aphiyq "the streams" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. ב/B "in" + noun-m-s const. כָּל/kol "all of..." + noun-m-pl const. מוֹשָׁב/moshab "dwellings of..." + noun-f-s w/ d.a. אֲרָץ/‘erets "the land").

VERSE FOURTEEN

“I will feed them in good pasture on the mountains of Israel, and on the high mountains of Israel will be their grazing land. They will lie down there in good pasture land and they will graze in rich pasture upon the mountains of Israel”.

בְּמִרְעֵה־טוֹב אֶרְעֶה אֹתָם וּבְהָרֵי מְרוֹם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִהְיֶה נֹוֹהָם
שָׁם תִּרְבְּצֶנָה בְּנוֹה טוֹב וּמִרְעֵה שָׁמֶן תִּרְעִינָה אֶל־הָרִי
יִשְׂרָאֵל:

(prep. ב/B "in" + noun-m-s מִרְעֵה/mire'eh "pasture" + adj-m-s טוֹב/tob "good" + verb-qal-imperf-1st-c-s רָעָה/ra’ah "I will pasture/tend" + sign. d.o.w/ suf-3rd-m-pl אֵת/‘eth "them" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. ב/B "on" + noun-m-pl const. הָרִי/har "mountains of..." + noun-m-s

const. מָרוֹם/marom "height" + proper noun יִשְׂרָאֵל/yis'ra'el "Israel" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-m-s הָיָה/hayah "it will come about" + noun-m-s w/ suf-3rd-m-pl נָוֶה/naweh "their grazing land" + adv. שָׁם/sham "there" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl יָרְבּוּ/rabats "they will lie down" + prep. ב/B "in" + noun-m-s נָוֶה/naweh "pasture land" + adj-m-s טוֹב/tob "good" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-s מִרְעָה/mire'eh "pasture" + adj-m-s שָׁמֵן/shamen "fat" + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl רָעָה/ra'ah "they will pasture/graze" + prep. אֶל/el "unto" + noun-m-pl const. הָרֵה/har "mountains of..." + proper noun יִשְׂרָאֵל/yis'ra'el "Israel").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 13 & 14:

1. Having spied out and rescued His flock, God next states that He will “...bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the lands and bring them in their own land and I will feed them on the mountains of Israel by the streams and in all of the inhabited places of the land”.
2. Note that He gathers them “from the peoples” (plural). It should be noted that God has spent an extended amount of time and energy bringing the Jewish people back to the land of Israel, beginning in 1948.
3. Over the years, He has orchestrated various events to bring dispersed Jews back to the land. However many Jews still reside outside of Israel.
4. During the Tribulation, Jewish believers are told to leave the land when they see the abomination of desolation (Isa. 25:6; Ezek. 36:24; 37:21-28; Dan. 11:31; 12:11; Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14).
5. At the end of the Tribulation, there is a restoration of the earth and Jesus, at His return, will again gather the Jewish believers who reside in various places on the earth, back to Israel.
6. Like a Shepherd who gives the sheep good pasture lands, fresh drinking water and a safe place to lay down, the Lord will care for the people of Israel and reestablish them as a nation (Isa. 11:11-16; Jer. 30:2-11; Joel 2:28; Zech. 8:4-8).
7. He continues in verse fourteen, “**I will feed them in good pasture on the mountains of Israel, and on the high mountains of Israel will be their grazing land. They will lie down there in good pasture land and they will graze in rich pasture upon the mountains of Israel**”.
8. Again, the imagery of a good shepherd, the antithesis of the shepherds mentioned earlier, will lead them throughout the mountains of and plains of Israel where they will find “good pasture”.
9. Such speaks of the security and prosperity that God gives to his people who can, for the first time in the history of the nation, have a true and everlasting peace.
10. It is not the false “peace and safety” promised by the antichrist in the previous dispensation, where they people of the world ended up with death, destruction and suffering (I Thess. 5:3 cp. Zech. 11:7).
11. While this is a promise to the Jewish believers of the End Times, realize that this is God’s desire toward all believers in every dispensation.
12. For those who will trust God and His promises, He will guide, support and care for the believer, supplying all of our needs (Psa. 23; Jer. 23:3, 4; John 10).

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 15 & 16:

VERSE FIFTEEN

“I Myself will feed my flock and I Myself will give them rest declares Adonay Yahweh”.

אֲנִי אֶרְעֶה צֹאֲנִי וְאֲנִי אֶרְבִּיצֵם נָאִם אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה:

(pron-1st-c-s אֲנִי/'aniy "myself" + verb-qal-imperf-1st-c-s רָעָה/ra'ah "I will pasture/feed" + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאֲן/tso'n "my flock" + conj. ו/w "and" + pron-1st-c-s אֲנִי/'aniy "myself" + verb-hiph-1st-c-s רָבַץ/rabats "I will cause to lie down" + noun-m-s const. נָאִם/ne'um "a declaration of..." + proper noun אֲדֹנָי/adonay יְהוָה/yhwh "Adonay Yahweh").

VERSE SIXTEEN

“I will seek the lost and I will bring back those scattered and I will bind up the broken and I will strengthen the sick, but I will destroy the fat and the strong and I will feed them with judgment”.

אֶת־הָאֲבֵדֹת אֶבְקֹשׁ וְאֶת־הַנִּדְחֹת אָשִׁיב וְלִנְשָׁבֶרֶת אֶחַבֵּשׁ
 וְאֶת־הַחֹלָה אֶחַזֵּק וְאֶת־הַשְּׁמֵנָה וְאֶת־הַחֲזָקָה אֶשְׁמִיד
 אֶרְעֶנָּה בַּמִּשְׁפָּט:

(sign d.o. אֶת/'eth [untranslated] + verb-qal-part-f-s w/ d.a. אֲבֵד/'abad "the lost" + verb-piel-imperf-1st-c-s בָּקַשׁ/baqash "I will seek" + conj. ו/w "and" + sign. d.o. אֶת/'eth [untranslated] + verb-niph-part-f-s w/ d.a. נִדְחָה/nadach "the scattered" + verb-hiph-1st-c-s שׁוּב/shub "I will return/bring back" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. ל/L "unto" + verb-niph-part-f-s w/ d.a. שָׁבַר/shabar "the broken" + verb-qal-imperf-1st-c-s חָבַשׁ/chabash "I will bandage/bind up" + conj. ו/w "and" + sign. d.o. אֶת/'eth [untranslated] + verb-qal-part-f-s חָלָה/chalah "the sick" + verb-piel-imperf-1s-c-s חָזַק/chazaq "I will strengthen" + conj. – advers. ו/w "but" + sign. d.o. אֶת/'eth [untranslated] + adj-f-s w/ d.a. שָׁמֵן/shamen "the fat" + conj. ו/w "and" + sign. d.o. אֶת/'eth [untranslated] + adj-f-s w/ d.a. חָזָק/chazaq "the strong" + verb-hiph-imperf-1st-c-s שָׁמַד/shamad "I will destroy" + verb-qal-imperf-1st-c-s w/ suf-3rd-f-s רָעָה/ra'ah "I will feed them" + prep. ב/B "with" + noun-m-s מִשְׁפָּט/mishpat "judgment").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 15 & 16:

1. Yahweh continues to explain how He will intervene as a Shepherd and deliver His sheep.
2. He states in verse fifteen, “I Myself will feed my flock and I Myself will give them rest declares Adonay Yahweh”.

3. Note the use of the emphatic pronoun, **אֲנִי**/'aniy "myself" in each of these clauses. Yahweh states that "I Myself will feed..." and "I Myself will give..."
4. Note that He is not utilizing any human agency. He is the one who is *directly intervening* on behalf of the abused, scattered sheep.
5. Whereas before the sheep were taken advantage of. Here they are fed and given rest which speaks of the reestablishment of the people of Israel once there is +V that Yahweh will seek out.
6. Had the people remained –V and hard-hearted, no such search and inquiry would begin in the first place.
7. Again, these passages are not dealing with the return after the 70 years to rebuild the temple and city. These are references to Yahweh personally going out and gathering His sheep in the person of Jesus Christ at the end of the Tribulation (Jer. 33:15; Ezek. 34:23, 24; 37:24, 25 cp. Matt. 9:27; 12:23).
8. He continues in verse sixteen where He states **"I will seek the lost and I will bring back those scattered and I will bind up the broken and I will strengthen the sick, but I will destroy the fat and the strong and I will feed them with judgment"**.
9. Again, God does this because he is seeking out +V. That is not to state that He does not act toward the End of the Church Age to bring Israel in the land. He obviously has been very busy working behind the scenes to establish Israel over the last 100 years.
10. However the nation, for the most part, is in unbelief. He takes particular stock in the +V that rises up during the Tribulation Week and seeks out those abused sheep at the end of the Tribulation that they may enter into the Millennial Kingdom.
11. At that time Jesus Christ, the "Son of David" will gather them and rule over them.
12. However He is not merely concerned about the bad shepherds who have been removed from rulership positions. Note that He also plans to "...destroy the fat and the strong".
13. Such ones have taken advantage of the other sheep and secured resources for themselves to gain an advantage which the other sheep have been denied.
14. "Fat and strong" run in stark contrast to the "broken" and "sick".
15. Therefore, Jesus says "I will feed them with judgment". Our word for judgment is the masculine, singular noun, **מִשְׁפָּט**/mish⁶pat, "justice, judgment, ordinance, custom".
16. Such sheep have mistreated and taken advantage of the poor and lame sheep. They have taken the choice food and drink while treading down the fields and fouling the waters for the other sheep (vv. 18, 19).
17. Those in view are those who have sought the riches and comforts of the world rather than the things of God (unbelievers). They will meet their end (Deut. 32:15 cp. Luke 12:16-20).
18. While there are a great many Jews who make the SAJG in the Tribulation, there are also many who do not.
19. Consider some of the unbelievers who benefit as a result of making a deal with the antichrist and allowing him to put his image in the temple and the harm this does to believing (Matt. 24:15; Rev. 12:6).
20. Hence the "judgment" in view is a reference to the judgment in the "wilderness of the peoples" which will take place at the end of the Tribulation whereby any and all –V will be destroyed and thus denied entry into the Millennial Kingdom (Ezek. 20:33-38; Matt. 24:15ff).

21. Having viewed the great love and concern that God has for His sheep that He Himself will personally intervene to deliver and establish them, should give us a great amount of appreciation and hope as Church Age Saints.
22. The same way the Lord is coming for the dispersed believers at the end of the Tribulation, He will come to deliver us prior to the beginning of the Tribulation.
23. Because we possess +V and are acting on it through the intake and application of BD, we hold great value in His eyes and He is ready willing and able to deliver us through any and trials and difficulties we face in our ph2 niche.

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 17 & 18

VERSE SEVENTEEN

“As for you My flock, thus says Adonay Yahweh, I am judging between one sheep and another and between the rams and the male goats”.

לְאֵילִים וְלִעֲתוּדִים: וְאַתָּנָה צֹאנִי כֹה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוֹה הִנְנִי שֹׁפֵט בֵּין־שֶׁה לְשֶׁה

(conj. ו/w "and" + pron-2nd-f-pl אַתָּנָה/’attenah "you" + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאן/tso’n "my flock" + adv. כֹּה/koh "thus" + verb-qal-perf-3rd-m-s אָמַר/’amar "says" + proper noun אֲדֹנָי/’adonay יְהוֹה/yhwh "Adonay Yahweh" + interj. w/ suf-1st-c-s הִנֵּה/hinne "behold I" + to be verb [supplied] "am" + verb-qal-part-m-s שֹׁפֵט/shaphat "judging" + prep. בֵּין/bayin "between" + noun-m-s שֶׁה/seh "sheep" + prep. ל/L "unto" + noun-m-s שֶׁה/seh "sheep" + prep. ל/L "unto" + noun-m-pl w/ d.a. אֵיל/’ayil "the rams" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. ל/L "unto" + noun-m-pl w/ d.a. עֲתוּד/’attud "the goats").

VERSE EIGHTEEN

“Is is too little for you to feed on the good pasture and trample the rest of the pasture with your feet and that you would drink from the clear waters and foul up the remainder with your feet?”

הַמְעַט מִכֶּם הַמְרֻעָה הַטּוֹב תִּרְעוּ וְיֵתֶר מִרְעֵיכֶם תִּרְמְסוּ
בְּרִגְלֵיכֶם וּמִשְׁקַע־מַיִם תִּשְׁתּוּ וְאֵת הַנּוֹתָרִים בְּרִגְלֵיכֶם
תִּרְפְּשׁוּן:

(inter. part. הֵ/ha [untranslated] + adj-m-s מְעַט/me’at "small" + prep. w/ suf-2nd-m-pl מִן/min "from you" + noun-m-s w/ d.a. מְרֻעָה/mir^eeh "the pasture" + adj-m-s w/ d.a. טוֹב/tob "the good" + verb-qal-imperf-2nd-m-pl תִּרְעוּ/ra’ah "you will feed" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-s const. יֵתֶר/yether "the rest of..." + noun-m-pl w/ suf-2nd-m-pl מְרֻעָה/mir^eeh "your pasture" + verb-qal-imperf-2nd-m-pl תִּרְמְסוּ/ramas "your trample" prep. ב/B "with" + noun-f-pl w/ suf-2nd-m-pl רִגְלֵךְ/regel "your feet" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-s const. מִשְׁקַע/miseqa "clear" + noun-m-pl מַיִם/mayim "waters" + verb-qal-imperf-2nd-m-pl תִּשְׁתּוּ/shatah "you will drink" + conj. ו/w "and" + sign. d.o. אֵת/’eth [sign d.o.] + verb-niph-part-m-pl יֵתֶר/yathar "the remainder" + prep. ב/B "with" + noun-f-pl w/ suf-2nd-m-pl רִגְלֵךְ/regel "your feet" + verb-qal-imperf-2nd-m-pl תִּרְפְּסוּ/raphas "you stamp/foul by stamping").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 17 & 18:

1. Here Yahweh expands upon what He stated earlier regarding His judging the fat and strong sheep.
2. He states in verse seventeen, **“As for you My flock, thus says Adonay Yahweh, I am judging between one sheep and another...”**
3. Note that all of those being judged in the first clause are all sheep. Such is a reference to His judging each member of the House of Israel according to his behavior..
4. Our word for “judging” is the qal participle of שָׁפַט/shaphat, “to judge, govern, dispense justice”.
5. While the NASB translates it as “I will judge”, there is no imperfect verb present. Rather, the participle indicates continuous ongoing action. This is something God is in the process of doing right then and there.
6. In other words, He is in the process of judging the sheep who have been dispersed to the land of Babylon.
7. Hence this passage moves back and forth from the current context, to the end times and back again.
8. However note that up until this time, all of the mentioning of animals have been of “sheep”. However in our final clause we read that God is going to judge **“...between the rams and the male goats”**.
9. Goats are sometimes representative of unbelievers (Matt. 25:32). However no such distinction is made here.
10. Goats and sheep often grazed together (Lev. 22:19).
11. Hence the distinction between believers and unbelievers is not in view in our passage. Rather God is speaking to the wealthy and powerful in society that have lorded it over the other sheep.
12. Note specifically that “rams” and “he goats” are in view. Such ones were dominant among the herd. Such speaks of those who have “risen up” in Jewish society and enjoy a greater lifestyle.
13. However they not only enjoy a greater lifestyle, their way of life is destructive to those less fortunate than themselves (Ezekiel 22:27-29; Zech. 10:3).
14. He continues in verse eighteen where He notes **“Is is too little for you to feed on the good pasture and trample the rest of the pasture with your feet and that you would drink from the clear waters and foul up the remainder with your feet?”**
15. Note that God asks this in the form of a question and asks if these actions are too small for them to consider. They obviously were in their eyes as they kept on doing them (cp. Ezek. 16:20, 47).
16. He is addressing the fat sheep, rams and goats in this passage, those who have looked out for themselves causing the rest of the lost sheep of Israel to suffer.
17. Not only do they take all of the finest pasture and clean waters, they trample down what remains and foul up the waters so that the other sheep can’t take advantage of such niceties. They receive spoiled trash.
18. Speaking directly to them he asks if this behavior is too small or too insignificant to consider. Such is a technique Yahweh has used in various instances to address horrible behavior (Ezek. 16:20, 47; Gen. 30:15 Num. 16:9, 13 II Sam. 7:19; Isa. 7:13).
19. In the eyes of the fat sheep, rams and male goats, it was a small thing. However in the eyes of God it is a serious issue and will carry serious consequences.

20. Do not think that God is unaware or not taking notice of the fat sheep, rams and male goats who have taken action to damage Church Age believers. God is looking out for us too.
21. However He often allows evil to prevail for a time so as to accomplish His goals, allow OSN activity to reach a breaking point and to test believers.
22. Make no bones about it. Every one of these people's actions will be judged. Don't lose heart!!!

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 19 & 20:

VERSE NINETEEN

“As for My flock, they must eat that which is trampled down with your feet and drink that which is fouled by the stomping of your feet”.

וְצֹאֲנִי מִרְמָס רְגְלֵיכֶם תִּרְעִינָה וּמִרְפָּשׁ רְגְלֵיכֶם תִּשְׁתִּינָה:

(conj. ו/w "and" + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאן/tso'n "my flock" + noun-m-s const.

מִרְמָס/miremas "trampling place of..." + noun-f-pl w/ suf-2nd-m-pl רְגְלֵי/regel "your feet" +

verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl רָעָה/ra'ah "they will eat" + conj. ו/w "and" + noun-m-s const.

מִרְפָּשׁ/mir'pas "that which is fouled by..." + noun-f-pl w/ suf-2nd-m-pl רְגְלֵי/regel "your feet"

+ verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl שָׁתָה/shatah "they drink").

VERSE TWENTY

“Therefore thus says Adonay Yahweh unto them, ‘I, Myself, even I will judge between the fat and the lean sheep’”.

בֵּין־שֶׁה בִּרְיָהּ וּבֵין שֶׁה רָזָה:לֵכֶן כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם הִנְנִי־אֲנִי וְשַׁפְטִתִּי

(prep. ל/L "unto" + adv. כֵּן/ken "thus" i.e. "therefore" + adv. כֹּה/koh "thus" + verb-qal-perf-

3rd-m-s אָמַר/'amar "says" + proper noun אֲדֹנָי/'adonay יְהוִה/yhwh "Adonay Yahweh" + prep

w/ suf-3rd-m-pl. אֵל/'el "to them" + interj. w/ suf-1st-c-s אֲנִי/'aniy "behold I" + pron-1st-c-s

אֲנִי/'aniy "myself" + conj. ו/w "even" + verb-qal-perf-1st-c-s [waw consec] שַׁפַּט/shaphat "I

will judge" + prep. בֵּין/bayin "between" + noun-m-s שֶׁה/seh "sheep" + adj-f-s בִּרְיָהּ/bariy'

"fat" + conj. ו/w "and" + prep. בֵּין/bayin "between" + noun-m-s שֶׁה/seh "sheep" + adj-f-s

רָזָה/razeh "lean").

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 19 & 20:

1. Yahweh addresses the fat sheep who have taken advantage of their fellow Jews in verse nineteen by stating “As for My flock, they must eat that which is trampled down with your feet and drink that which is fouled by the stomping of your feet”.
2. Recall that in our previous passage, this was one of the charges laid against the “fat sheep”, namely that they ate up all the food and drank up the water and then trampled and fouled what remained for the rest of the flock (Ezek. 34:18).
3. Hence this is the second time Yahweh has addressed this group of Israelites who have selfishly gobbled up all of the resources, leaving trampled, fouled remains for the rest of the sheep.

4. Why does He repeat Himself? The reason can be found in the shift in verb tense in verse nineteen.
5. Verse eighteen featured the participle of the verb, which demonstrated ongoing repetitive action in present time. Hence there God is viewed as “judging” abusive sheep right then and there.
6. However in our current passage we see all of the verbs in the imperfect tense signaling incomplete action which will be completed in a future time.
7. This points us to the End Times when God will again judge those Jews who are misbehaving in the Tribulation.
8. Yahweh again promises to *personally* intervene to right the situation in verse twenty where He states **“Therefore thus says Adonay Yahweh unto them, ‘I, Myself, even I will judge between the fat and the lean sheep’”**.
9. Note the emphatic use of the pronouns here. Yahweh uses three personal pronouns in reference to Himself as He states, “I Myself, even I will judge...”.
10. Hence Yahweh, Himself is going to intervene directly and judge the between the fat and lean sheep.
11. This is something that God is yet to do. He will do so at the Second Advent when Jesus Christ returns to dispense Justice.
12. Our word translated as “judge” is the qal, imperfect of שָׁפַט/shaphat, , “to judge, govern, dispense justice”.
13. Note that it is in the *imperfect tense* noting that He is going to judge between the fat and lean sheep in the future.
14. Hence our narrative again shifts to future times regarding the re-gathering of Israel at the end of the Tribulation.
15. Note that Yahweh again mentions that He is going to judge between the fat and lean sheep.
16. It should be noted that being wealthy, in and of itself, is not sinful. Father Abraham was rich (Gen 13:2).
17. However note that these sheep have gotten fat in a way that left their fellow sheep lacking and disadvantaged.
18. In view are those Jews in the end times who do harm to their fellow Jews to include those who make a deal with the antichrist and receive favorable treatment for a time.
19. In the end they will be judged as unworthy (due to their unbelief) and not allowed to enter the kingdom (Ezek. 20:37, 38).

EXEGESIS OF VERSES 21 & 22:

VERSE TWENTY-ONE

“Because you thrust with side and shoulder, and you push those who are sick with your horns until you have dispersed them abroad”.

יֵעַן בְּצַד וּבִכְתֵּף תִּהְדָּפוּ וּבִקְרָנֵיכֶם תִּנְגַּחוּ כָּל־הַנַּחֲלֹת
עַד אֲשֶׁר הִפְצִיתֶם אוֹתָנָה אֶל־הַחוּצָה

(adv. יֵעַן/ya'an “because” + prep. ב/B “with” + noun-m-s צֶד/tsad “side” + conj. ו/w “and” + prep. ב/B “with” + noun-f-s כֵּתֵף/kateph “shoulder” + verb-qal-imperf-2nd-m-pl הִדָּפּוּ/hadaph “you thrust away” + conj. ו/w “and” + prep. ב/B “with” + noun-f-pl w/ d.a. קֶרֶן/qeren “your horns” + verb-piel-imperf-2nd-m-pl נִגַּח/naggach “you thrust” + noun-m-s const. כֹּל/kol “all of.” + verb-niph-part-f-pl w/ d.a. חַלָּה/26hallah “the sick/weak ones” + prep. עַד/“ad “as far as” + rel. pron. אֲשֶׁר/’asher “when” + verb-hiph-perf-2nd-m-pl פָּצַע/puts “you dispersed” + sign. D.o. w/ suf-3rd-f-pl אֹת/’eth “them” + prep. אֶל/’el “unto” + noun-m-s const. w/ d.a. חוּצוֹת/chuts “the outer parts”).

VERSE TWENTY-TWO

“But, I will save My flock, and they will no longer be prey, and I will judge between one sheep and another”.

וְהוֹשַׁעְתִּי לְצֹאֲנִי וְלֹא־תִהְיֶינָה עוֹד לְבַז וְשִׁפְטֹתַי בֵּין שֶׁה
לְשֶׁה

(conj. - advsers ו/w “and” + verb-hiph-perf-1st-c-s [waw consec] יִשָּׁע/yasha' “I will bring deliverance” + prep. ל/L “for” + noun-f-s w/ suf-1st-c-s צֹאן/tso'n “my flock” + conj. ו/w “and” + neg. adv. לֹא/lo’ “not” + verb-qal-imperf-3rd-f-pl יִהְיֶה/hayah “they will be” + adv. עוֹד/od “continually” + prep. ל/L “for” + noun-m-s בַּז/baz “spoil/plunder/prey” + conj. ו/w “and” + verb-qal-perf-1st-c-s [waw consec] שִׁפְטִי/shaphat “I will judge” + prep. בֵּין/bayin “between” + noun-m-s שֶׁה/heh “sheep” + prep. ל/L “unto” + noun-m-s שֶׁה/seh “sheep”).

ANALYSIS OF VERSES 21 & 22:

1. Yahweh continues with His denouncement of the “fat sheep” in verses 21 and 22.
2. He states in verse twenty-one, **“Because you thrust with side and shoulder, and you push those who are sick with your horns until you have dispersed them abroad”.**
3. He begins this section with the adverb, יֵעַן/ya'an, “because”. Such harkens back to what was said in verse twenty regarding Yahweh judging between the fat and lean sheep.
4. Hence the reason is for said judgment is due to the mistreatment taking place.
5. Earlier the indictment against the fat sheep was that they took all of the choice food and water and trampled the remainder with their feet.

6. Here the indictment is that they directly mistreat the other sheep and have been an active force in driving them away.
7. Not only do they do this to their fellow Jews but they are specifically said to take advantage of the “sick”.
8. Our word translated as “sick” is the niphil, participle of חָלַל/challah, “to become sick, weak, diseased, grieved”. In other words, they are the down-trodden whether from physical or emotional malady.
9. The niphil stem is a passive stem which indicates that they have been made weak, sick or grieved by people or some outward force acting upon them.
10. Such ones are particularly vulnerable, but that has not stopped the fat sheep from taking advantage of them anyways.
11. In view are those who are not able to take care of themselves and are the worst off of the “sheep without a shepherd”.
12. This will result in judgment for the bad actors who have treated Yahweh’s sheep so poorly.
13. He states in verse twenty-two, **“But, I will save My flock, and they will no longer be prey, and I will judge between one sheep and another”**.
14. Note again that Yahweh Himself is going to step in and be a shepherd to the sheep. And provide deliverance”
15. Our word translated as “save” is the hiphil, imperfect of יָשַׁע/yasha’, “to save, deliver give victory, help, avenge”
16. The hiphil stem is a causative stem, indicating that God is the one that is causing or bringing these things about.
17. Again, He is going to intervene, at a future time, on His own and deliver His sheep.
18. All of our verbs are in the imperfect tense and therefore portray imperfect or future action.
19. He furthermore states that He will act in a way so that His sheep are no longer “prey”.
20. Our word for “prey” is the masculine, singular noun, בָּז/baz, “prey, spoil, plunder”. It is a reference to people being victimized either by an invading army or their own people.
21. In envisions the lot of the people whereby they have had everything taken away from them and been dispersed to a foreign land.
22. Yahweh will right past wrongs and bring His people back to the land. However Ezekiel is not presenting the re-gathering of Israel at the end of the seventy years as Daniel and other prophets do.
23. Rather, he is giving us a view of God Himself intervening for His people at the end of the age to gather them into the Millennial Kingdom.
24. When the Lord returns, those Jews who have mistreated their fellow Jews, many of whom are unbelievers, will receive their discipline.
25. Those believers who have been treated poorly will receive temporal deliverance and enter into the Millennial Kingdom (Ezek. 20:37; Zech. 13:8; Matt. 13:41, 47; Rom. 11:25-27).