



Ezekiel 34-35

Tape #7330
Ezekiel 34-35
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn now in our Bibles to Ezekiel, thirty four. Now Ezekiel prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem. He had a very unfortunate experience where his wife died suddenly. The Lord had told him that she would, and that he was not to mourn for her death, but he was to use it as an opportunity to let the people that, that city that they loved, the desire of their hearts, was going to fall. Even as he loved his wife, the desire of his heart, the Lord took her. The Lord said, "Don't weep for her, don't go through the rites of mourning, and you're to tell the people that the desire of their hearts is gonna be taken from them. Jerusalem will fall." Then, the Lord said that he would not be able to speak to the people of Israel again, until he received news of the fall of Jerusalem.

So in the previous chapter, chapter thirty three, there was a remnant who survived the destruction of Jerusalem, who had made their way to Babylon some eighteen months after the fall of Jerusalem. They informed the people there, and Ezekiel of the fact that the city indeed had fallen, a horrible siege, and the horrors of the fall of Jerusalem, the terrible, horrible battles, and the death of so many of the inhabitants. So it was at that point that the Lord opened up the mouth of Ezekiel, that he might speak again.

Now he had been prophesying these dark days that lay ahead for the people. He had told them of, of the deep, deep problems that they were going to experience, the dark days. But now that he is able to prophesy again, he is prophesying of the glorious days that lie in the future for the people. Having gone through the dark hours, the dark night, they are gonna come into a glorious new day, where God is going to work again with the nation in a very marvelous, and exciting way.

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. Well, let's just read it!

And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds [Or the leaders] of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto [The leadership] the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks (34:1-2)?

Now that was the primary duty of the shepherd, was to feed the flock. David said, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want; for He maketh me to lie down in green pastures". The first thing he mentions about the Lord being his Shepherd is the fact that He brought him into the green pastures, He fed him, nourished him. It was the duty of the shepherd to feed the flock of God. Jesus said to Peter, "Feed my sheep". Peter wrote to the elders, "Feed the flock of God which is among you". That is the primary duty of the shepherd to see that the people are taken care of, the people are fed. But the Lord said...

You do eat the [meat, or the] fat (34:3),

Now some translate that word "fat" and the Hebrew is very close to milk. They believe that it's a reference to the fact that they milked the goats, and they drank the milk of the goats.

and you clothe yourself with the wool of the sheep (34:3),

As a general rule, they would have their goats and their sheep together on the hillside. As they were leading them over the hills to the different pastures, the goats and the sheep were together. So they had the goats for the milk, and the sheep for the wool. So, "You were drinking the milk, you were clothing yourself with the wool"...

and you kill those that are fed: but you feed not the flock (34:3).

So they were eating the lambs, taking the wool. They were drinking the milk from the goats, but

they weren't really taking care of them. They were more interested in fleecing the flock, than they were feeding the flock.

In that, they are not unlike a lot of healing evangelists, and TV evangelists today, who are more interested in fleecing the flock of God, than they are feeding the flock of God. There are many who just think of schemes and methods whereby they might fleece the flock of God. All of the gimmicks that they use to fleece the flock of God, that they might live lavish, and expensive lives. God takes note of it. God is not blind concerning these things. God holds the shepherds responsible for their actions, and for their activities. So God is indicting the shepherds here. He said...

The diseased you have not strengthened (34:4),

They really weren't interested in those who could not help them, or support them. They were nobody's. They would play up to the wealthy and to the powerful. But justice was not forthcoming.

neither have you healed that which was sick, neither have you bound up that which was broken, you have not 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 (34:4).

So God is speaking against these rulers over the people. For they were ruling with force, and with cruelty. They were taking advantage of the people. They were not really ministering to the needs of the people. They weren't seeking to heal those that were sick, or to bind up those with broken legs. They, they were not seeking those that were lost.

Now you remember Jesus gave us the parable of the shepherd, who, when he brought in his flock, he counted them and there were ninety, and nine. He said, "Will not that shepherd leave the ninety and nine and go out on the hillsides and search, until he has found that one that is lost? When he finds him, he brings him again, and he says, Rejoice with me! For the one that was lost, is found!" That was the picture of a true shepherd who is interested in every little lamb that has been placed under his care. Who leaves the comfort of the shelter, to go out until he finds that which is lost, to restore it again. That is the heart of a shepherd. That is the kind of a heart that God wanted for those that were ruling the people.

That is why David made such an excellent king. Because God called him from, as David said, "the sheep coat, and from following after the sheep", and made him the ruler over the people. But he had a shepherd's heart. He saw the people of Israel as the flock of God. Even as a boy growing up, tending sheep, so he tended over the people, was concerned with the people. God said that David was a man after His own heart, because he had the heart of a shepherd, and real concern for the people of God.

Ruling them with cruelty, and with force, lording over the flock of God. Jesus said that, "That's a characteristic of the heathen. They love to exercise lordship." But He said, "It shall not be so among you. Whoever would be the chief among you, let him be the servant of all." So those who are in leadership are intended to be the servants of the people.

You know, they used to even have on the license plates here in California, a "p.s." on the government cars, which stood for "public servant". I noticed they don't have that anymore. I think maybe it expresses the change of philosophy. Have you ever gone before a city council to get a permit of some kind? Or have you ever gone down just to get a building permit? You know, they act like you're the enemy, and like you're some little peon, coming, and bow, and scrape, and jump through the hoops, and it's terrible what's happened to the government! It used to be a government of the people, by the people, and for the people!

Now it's a government of the government, by the government, and for the government! And, you're to support it! I don't know how things got so twisted and turned around, but they ruled with force and with cruelty. Things weren't much different there than they are today.

You notice our unfinished offices? There is a willful, deliberate harassment by the building department! In fact, someone even told us, "There's someone down there that has it in for you!" Why? I don't know! Maybe they've listened to a Sunday night service or something, I don't know. No, what happens is that a lot of times, this guy will be living with a gal, she'll come here and get saved, and move out on him, and then he gets mad at us! I don't know what the case is downtown Santa Ana, but they, they have been just harassing! We should've been done, and would've been done with that a long time ago, but they

decided to harass, and so here we are.

I feel so sorry for Carl, he has to deal with them! Thank God, I, when they come, I leave, I don't trust myself! I'll need to grow a little bit in the Lord yet to be able to handle bureaucracy. It just riles me! It boils me!

So the government had become so corrupted that they were, rather than looking over the needs of the people, being concerned with the needs of the people, and feeling that, "We exist to help the people", they felt that they were there to just rule, and harass the people.

So as the result of it, the people were scattered, because there was no true shepherd: [There were just these people in power who ruled with force, and cruelty.] *the people [the sheep] became prey to all of the beasts of the field, when they were scattered (34:5).*

Now taking it, and it is a civil setting that God is establishing here, but it can come over also in a religious setting. When the ministers, the shepherds, or the pastors, and the word "pastor" is the word for shepherd, when the pastors are not really concerned with the people, when they begin to just fleece the flock of God, when they have no real heart for the people, and are not really feeding the people with the word of God, the sheep become sick. They become spiritually anemic. They become a prey to all of these cunning devices of men who are out to fleece the flock of God.

The wolves in sheep's clothing, who are out to make a profit off of the people of God, or off of the desire of the people to serve God. They make all kinds of blasphemous suggestions that, "If you want something from God, if you will just give, you know, maybe God will just save that unsaved loved one of yours", or, all of these blasphemous kind of suggestions, that you can actually buy the goodness and the grace of God, by your giving. That's, that's a horrible thing that the Bible speaks against!

When Simon the sorcerer came to Peter, and said, "How much would it cost me to have this kind of power?" Peter said, "Your money perish with you! That you would think that you would think that you could purchase the power, or the things of God with money! In your heart there's a real problem man! You better pray and ask God to forgive you for these things that are in your heart, lest God destroy you!" So the sheep were scattered, they became a prey to all of the beasts of the field. God says...

My sheep (34:6)

I love that! That God, you know, you, God looks on you, and He says concerning you, "My sheep". You're not my sheep, you're His sheep! I serve as sort of an underling, a under shepherd, to the great Shepherd. Now I am responsible to Him. He's gonna hold me responsible as to how I take care of you. Whether or not I feed you properly, and nourish you, and love you, and take care of you, and bind up your wounds, and, and seek to heal your sicknesses, and search after you when, He's gonna hold me responsible for that. But, you're His sheep. And God looks at you, and He says, "My sheep".

but they've wandered through all of the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them (34:6).

I think that it is a rather tragic and sad thing, that when a person falls, we are so willing and ready to condemn them. That we don't seek after them to restore them. Paul the apostle said, "If a brother be overtaken in a fault, you that are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted". But we're so ready to shake our finger in judgment, and say, "You know, you got what's coming to you!" We're so ready to just cut them off, instead of going in meekness to restore them.

Several years ago, many years ago, I was pastoring in Huntington Beach, and we developed many close friendships through the five years that we ministered there. One fellow in particular became a very close friend. The guy had a heart of gold, he, he knew I had a love for tools. He knew I didn't have any money to buy tools, so he gave me a table saw, and a planer, and he was just that kind of a guy!

We took another church out in the Pomona valley area, Los Serranos community church. But we remained close to this fellow, and his family. He was married, had two lovely daughters. Just sort of an ideal home. He was a manager for one of the large dairies that used to be here in the area at the time.

His wife called and said that he had gotten involved with the wife of one of his stores, where he was delivering the product. That he had moved out, and moved in with this gal. Wanted us to pray.

Now the pastor that had taken the church that we had been pastoring in Huntington Beach, went over

to the fellow, and said, “You know, God’s gonna just destroy you!” He said, “I had a vision of you, and you were in this black hearse, and God’s judgment’s gonna fall on you, because of what you’ve done!”, and all. Laid this heavy trip on the guy.

So the wife called and said, “Chuck, you’re so close to him. I hate to ask you to do this, but would you mind going over and visiting him?” She gave me the address on South Van Ness street in Santa Ana, where he was living with this gal. So we went over and it was a number with a “B”, so I figured that was behind the main house. When we went back there, there was a little garage apartment. So I knocked on the door, and he answered. I could see the shame, the shock, as he, as he saw me. The guilt it was registered, I mean, it was just registered all over his face. But he, because of our past love and friendship was gracious enough to invite me in the house.

The gal that he was living with came out from the other room, and he introduced her to me. I was reminded of the scripture, “A whorish woman can bring a man to a crust of bread”. That’s exactly what had happened. Here was this man who had been a man of God, we had gone into the house of God together to worship. We had shared in glorious fellowship with the Lord. I had eaten in his home with his family. I admired his wife, and his two daughters. They’re just lovely, lovely people, and here he is living no longer in his lovely home in Westminster, but in this junky little garage apartment. The stuffing was coming out of the furniture. I mean, it was just a little dump.

I sat there, and I started to talk, but then I choked up. I couldn’t talk. I just started crying. I felt so sorry for him. So sorry to see what sin had reduced him to, robbed him of. I was thinking of those two lovely daughters, I was thinking of his wonderful wife, and this gal that was there, and this junky little garage that they were living in. I just started weeping for my love for this fellow, and to see him in this condition. Several times I tried to talk to him, but every time I’d try and say something, I’d just choke up! I, I got so embarrassed that I finally just said, “I’m gonna have to leave”. I got up, and he went to the door with me, and I just hugged him, and I said, “I love you. I love you.”

I went on home feeling like a fool. Oh Satan was riding me all the way home, saying, “What a dumb thing to do! You must have really looked stupid just sitting there crying! How dumb!” I thought, “How dumb!” Go to talk to the guy, and you just sit there, and I’m not a crier!

The next morning, got a call from his wife, and she said, “Chuck, he came home last night”. The Spirit of God touched him. I didn’t go there you know waving the wrath of God over his head, but just weeping over what sin had reduced him to. But it touched his heart! He was restored! I didn’t go there as some spiritual, holy, you know, “How could you!” But just in love, restoring, and God did that beautiful work of restoration.

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. How thankful we are for that work of God in our lives! When we start to go astray, how God brings us back! We’re His sheep, and He’s not willing that any of us should perish, but that we would all come to repentance! So God said...

Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; [“This is my judgment now upon you.”] As I live, saith the Lord God, surely because my flock became a prey, my flock became meat to every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, neither did my shepherds search for my flock, but the shepherds fed themselves, and did not feed my flock; [Notice “my flock, my flock, my flock”.] Therefore, O ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against the shepherds; [God holds them responsible for the condition of the sheep.] and I will require my flock at their hands, [God holds them personally responsible.] and cause them to cease from feeding the flock. [“I will remove them from that privileged position.”] neither shall the shepherds feed themselves any more; for I will deliver my flock from their mouth, that they may not be meat for them. [So the word of God to the shepherds. His sentence of judgment.] For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out (34:7-11).

“I’ll do what the shepherds weren’t doing, I will search for my sheep. I will seek them out.” You know, though man may fail, God will not fail, and the purposes of God will not fail. If we fail the Lord, He

remains faithful, and He loves His sheep. He will not forsake His sheep, but He will search them out, and seek them.

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 deliver them out of all of the places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day (34:12).

Even as the Jews were scattered. God again holds the shepherds responsible. Even as the Jews were scattered, God said He will search them out from wherever they have been scattered, and He will bring them back, the restoration of the nation. At the time of the writing, the Jews were scattered. The remnant were, were at that very time fleeing down to Egypt, they were fleeing to Syria, they were fleeing to Babylon. They were being scattered throughout the world, and people were taking advantage of them wherever they went. Things looked very desolate and hopeless as far as the future was concerned, for them. But God said, "I will search them out".

And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and I will bring them to their own land (34:13),

God had declared that they would be captives for seventy years, but after the seventy years, He would bring them back to their own land. At the fall of the Babylonian empire, when the Medo-Persian empire took over, one of the first decrees of the Medo-Persian empire, the, Cyrus, the king of Persia was to sign the decree that allowed the Jews that wished to go back to Jerusalem, to go back. He even gave them the treasures out of the, that had been looted from the temple to take back to Jerusalem, and commissioned them to go back and to rebuild the temple. Several thousand returned with Ezra back to Jerusalem, through this decree. So God said He would bring them back.

and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. And I will feed them in a good pasture, [God will watch over them, He will do what the shepherds weren't doing, He would feed them in a good pasture.] And upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: and they shall lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture, and they shall feed upon the mountains of Israel. [God is watching over His flock!] And I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, ["He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."] saith the Lord God (34:13- 15).

God's love for you is, is unending. You're, if you're His sheep, He's just not gonna let you go. If you start straying, if you get out there and get bruised, and bloodied, He's gonna seek you out. With love, He'll draw you back, and He will restore you, and restore that which you have lost, because of your little incursion into the far country.

But I will seek that which was lost, I will bring them again that which was driven away, and I will bind up that which was broken, I will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; [That is, the leaders] and I will feed them with judgment (34:16).

Those that took advantage of the people, and those that caused their demise.

Now you see, the rulers had introduced the worship of Ashtoreth, which was actually the worship of pornography. Ashtoreth was the female goddess of sex. They had all kinds of little pornographic idols of Ashtoreth, with exaggerated female organs. They were designed specifically just to arouse and stimulate a person sexually. Then Ashtoreth was worshiped with all kinds of licentious sexual kind of activities. They had introduced the worship of Ashtoreth, as well as Baal, and Molech. The people were going after pleasure, and living for pleasure, and living for sex. That had become the predominant issue of the people.

Then, because of the heightened sexual stimulation, there were a lot of unwanted babies. So in the worship of Molech, they would throw their babies into the bonfires to get rid of them. It doesn't differ that much from our Supreme Court opening the doors to pornography, by their inability to rule about, or to define what is "obscene"! Pornography began to flood our nation. With all of the pornography, the x-rated movies, the, the magazines with all of the pornography, there was that heightened sexual stimulation, which has led to an increase of rape. The increase of rape is dramatic! Sexual assault, sexual harassment, the molestation even of little children, incest. Of course, as a result of these activities, unwanted pregnancies. Then, the destroying of the child.

We haven't really moved that far from the conditions that brought the destruction of the nation! All

of this because the government and the legislatures have opened the doors to these things! The Supreme Court with their rulings, and the legislatures with their laws have opened the doors, and continue to open the doors wider to these things! But these are the things that destroy a nation! Even as they brought the destruction of Israel, they will bring the destruction of our nation!

That is why, at this time, as you're getting ready to vote, you should make sure that, that person you're voting for, represents your moral values! To that end, we have these voter guides, and you can see where they stand on important moral issues, that should be important to you as a Christian. I'd suggest you get one before you go tonight so that you can have a guide, at least you'll know what you're voting for! Now I'm not telling you how to vote, and I have no intention of telling you how to vote. You're gonna vote according to your own conscience, and that's the way it should be. But I trust that you have a conscience that is sensitive to the things of God, and the things of the Spirit. Now God said...

As for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats. [“I'll make a, I'll make a distinction in my judgments”, and talking to these rulers again, He says,] Does it seem a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? you have drunk of the deep waters, but must you foul the residue with your feet? And as for my flock, they eat that which you've trodden with your feet; and they drink that which you have fouled with your feet (34:17-19).

They were living off of the fat of the land, and allowing the people just to eat the residue, or to get the residue. They were the ones that lived high. One of the great problems with the communistic was that, the leadership were actually the bourgeois, and, and the people were more or less servants, slaves. To maintain the leadership it, with their high palatial places. You know they, they lived in glorious palaces and they had chauffeur driven cars and escorts and so forth, and the common people were hurting. Yet communism the whole idea, was to get rid of the bourgeois and to put everybody on an equal plane. But it just didn't work out that way, because of the hearts of the leadership.

We stayed this past summer in a very beautiful hotel there in Hungary on a lake front hotel. It was just as lavish and, and marvelous as any place you'd want to see. It was built by the communists for the communist rulers. Now it's probably one of the most lavish resort hotels in Europe. We were able of course to enjoy the, the luxurious amenities of that hotel there on the lake!

But, when the leadership is so corrupted that they rob from the people to feather their own nests, then they are actually going against the will of God, concerning leadership.

Therefore thus saith the Lord God unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. [The fat cats, and the lean cats!] Because you have thrust with the side, and with the shoulder, and you've pushed all of the diseased with your horns, [“You've, you've pushed the people around, exercising your, your authority, and power over them.”] I'll judge between the cattle and cattle. [Then the Lord said, and this goes out to the future.] I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd (34:20-23).

God promised David that of his seed, God would raise up One who would sit upon the throne forever. So the Messiah was referred to as, “The seed of David”. Because He was to be a descendant of David. God's Shepherd, the descendant of David, whom God will set upon the throne.

And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them (34:24);

“And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Prince of Peace.” He shall be their Shepherd. Jesus said, “I am the Good Shepherd, and the Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.” No doubt that Jesus was talking about this prophecy of Ezekiel when He said, “I have other sheep which are not of this fold, and them also I must gather. There shall be one flock, and one Shepherd”. So the Lord said here that there would be one shepherd over them, even of course, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now Jesus did come, and He was despised and rejected, and crucified. This also was predicted. As the result of the rejection of Jesus Christ, the people were scattered again. Less than forty years after the crucifixion of Jesus, the Roman troops came again to Jerusalem, and they besieged the city. Josephus describes it in the wars of the Jews, the horrible siege, and the horrible atrocities that was going on within the city, as people were killing each other, as gangs began to rule. Powerful gangs began to rule the streets,

and they began to kill the innocent, just to take their food. The, according to Josephus, the atrocities of the Jews against the Jews was even worse than what happened to them at the hands of the Romans. But when the Romans did then take the city, they destroyed the city, destroyed the temple, not leaving one stone upon another. The Jews were scattered throughout the world once again. His sheep were scattered and became the prey of all people.

But God promised that He would again seek them out, and He would bring them back. He has done it, that's the exciting thing! The Jews are being brought back into the land. They again have established the nation of Israel. It is a modern day miracle, unparalleled in history! The only thing that could be likened to it would be if suddenly you heard all of the Edomites were returning to Edom, and the nation of Edom was being reestablished. But how many of you even have met an Edomite? They haven't had a home-land, and because there was no home land, they cease to exist as a national identity! Thus with every ethnic group, without a homeland, they cease to exist as an ethnic identity. Yet, the Jews remained as an ethnic identity, even after almost two thousand years of being scattered. God has brought them back, and has placed them in the land.

So the next event in the prophetic scene, is God setting up the One Shepherd. We're right there! We're, we're on the border of God establishing His Shepherd, Jesus Christ, the seed of David. He said, "If I go away, I will come again". He will come again to establish God's kingdom upon the earth! God said...

I will make with them a covenant of peace, and I will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. [This is yet future.] And I will make them and the places around about my hill [The holy hill of Zion] a blessing; [And I love this!] I will cause the shower to come down in his season; and there shall be showers of blessing (34:25-27).

"I'll just shower my blessing!" Do you know God loves you so much? You're His, and He just wants to shower His blessings upon you! God just wants to pour out His blessings on your life! The thing is, you must keep yourself in that place where God can do what He desires to do, because of His love. Jude said, "Just keep yourself in the love of God". Just like that old Stamps-Baxter song they used to sing in the south, "I'm under the spout where the glory comes out!" God wants you to just be right under the spout where the glory comes out, cause He wants to bless you! He loves you, and when you love someone you want to just shower them with blessings!

My wife took my granddaughter shopping this week. She said, "Honey we found the cutest skirt, and dress, and blouse, and sweater, and all of this you know! A hundred and eighty four dollars". I said, "Great! I love that granddaughter! I'm just glad that I have the money to spend on her!" It's just, it's just because I love her, I want to lavish on her, because, because of my love! God He, He sort of like unto a heavenly Father, I think He's more like a Heavenly Grandfather! Fathers don't always have the wherewithal to lavish, where grandpas often do. Just to lavish these wonderful gifts, love upon them is just, just a total blessing! "I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; there will be showers of blessings."

And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit (34:27),

That's happening now. It's become a, a nation of agricultural development that is really exciting to see. Though it is no larger than the state of New Jersey, it is the fourth largest exporter of fruit, of the nations of the world.

the earth shall yield her increase, and 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 out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. ["When I have set them free from the corrupted leadership."] And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they will dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, [Of course that again is the Branch out of the root of Jesse, that plant of renown is none other than Jesus Christ.] and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, and neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. For thus shall they know that I am the Lord their God and I am with them, and they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord God. [He claims them, and in that day, they will claim Him.] And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord God (34:27-31).

We are the sheep of His pasture. What a glorious, glorious privilege! As Jesus said, “Other flocks I have which are not of this fold”, that is, He was talking about you. He claims you as His flock. His intent is that He might just shower you with the blessings of His love, the richness of His grace!

Chapter 35

Now chapter thirty five is very short. It is a prophesy against the Edomites.

Now in contrast to the people of God, we have these Edomites. What happened, when Jerusalem fell to the Babylonian army, and the people were fleeing, the Edomites stood at the entrances to Edom. Those refugees that were trying to flee for safety to Edom, they killed them. Rather than allowing them to come in and find refuge, and to be protected from Babylon, they were out to, to, to spoil them. They would kill them and take the goods that they had brought, and thus they were, they were taking advantage. They actually began to attack the southern portions of Judah, because they knew that they were now defenseless. They, they fell upon the, the prey to, to take the spoil. They rejoiced in the fact that Jerusalem had fallen, and they took advantage of it.

So the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Son of man, set your face against mount Seir (35:1),

That is the area south of the Dead sea, and east of the valley, that mountain area there in which the rock city of Petra, and a vast powerful civilization, known as the Edomites once inhabited that area. When they inhabited it, it was a powerful nation, great cities known for it's architecture, known for the sciences, and known for the luxury of the area. So God prophesies against this area, mount Seir. This will be in contrast to next week, when God prophesies to the mountains of Israel. “Son of man, set your face against mount Seir”...

and prophesy against it. And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O mount Seir, I am against you, and I will stretch out my hand against you, and I will make you most desolate (35:1-3).

Now if you go to the area of mount Seir today, you find that it is most desolate. There are only about three miserable little villages in that whole area, where there were once luxurious, great cities of renowned architectural glory, and beauty. Most desolate.

and you shall know that I am the Lord (35:4).

Now if you don't know it, just go down to mount Seir today, see how desolate it is, and you'll know that He is the Lord. It's still an area that could be inhabited, but it remains desolate.

Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred (35:5),

Now it goes way back. You remember when Jacob disguised himself as his brother, and went into the father, and received the blessing? When Esau came in with the venison to give it to his dad, his dad said, “You know, I've already blessed you”. He said, “No dad!” He realized that his brother Jacob had gone in and received the blessing that the father wanted to bestow upon him. So he began to weep. He said, “Isn't there anything left?” He said, “No I've given him everything. I've made you his servant and the whole thing!” And it says, “And Esau hated his brother Jacob”. That hatred was so deep rooted, that it lasted for centuries. The Edomites were perpetual enemies of Israel. It was a deep-rooted ethnic hatred.

Now we find that, that does exist around the world today. You see it there in Serbia, and Croatia. There's an ethnic kind of a hatred that exists among so many of the Serbians against the Croatians, and vice-a-versa. So it was with Esau, and Jacob, and the descendants of Esau, the Edomites, and Israel. “And you've had this perpetual hatred”...

and you've shed the blood of the children of Israel by force with the sword in the time of their calamity, [They came in and took advantage and killed them.] and in the time that their iniquity had an end: Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will prepare you unto blood, and blood will pursue you. [“You, they that live by the sword will die by the sword, and thus, you love blood, you love to shed blood, so I'll let blood pursue you.”] Thus will I make mount Seir most desolate, I will cut off from it him that passes out and him that returns. And I will fill his mountains with his slain men: in the hills, and in your valleys, and in all your rivers, they will fall that are slain with the sword. [This area will be covered with the bodies of the Edomites.] And I will make you a perpetual desolations, and cities shall not return (35:5-9):

Now in contrast, He's gonna rebuild Jerusalem, the waste places are gonna be built, but not Edom.

Now if you had great metropolises in Edom today, in the area of mount Seir, if there were you know these great cities and all, then you'd say, "Well, God didn't say it. You know God's word isn't true. Or it isn't God's word." Because if it was God's word, it would be true, so you'd have to say, "Well the Bible isn't God's word."

The amazing thing is that though this is a place that could be a beautiful place to live, there are waters, rivers, and so forth that could sustain people. Yet, the place is still desolate, as I said, just only three miserable little villages. You can't even drive to them. You've got to go by horseback! The place is still a perpetual desolation. So if anybody wants to just really prove the Bible isn't the word of God, they can go down there and spend a lot of money and build a huge metropolis, and you know, they get people to come and live in it, they can say, "Well the Bible's not true".

Because you have said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, ["We're gonna move in, we're gonna take over."] we'll possess the land; whereas the Lord was there: [It was the place where God had dwelt among His people.] Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will even do according to your anger, according to your envy which you have and the hatred against them; and I will make myself known among them, when I have judged you. And you shall know that I am the Lord, and that I have heard all of the blasphemies which you have spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, [They were rejoicing over it.] and are given to us to consume. ["We're gonna go in and take over."] Thus with your mouth you have boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me: and I have heard them (35:10-13).

Watch out! When you start boasting against the Lord, or speaking against the Lord, He hears you! Someday He'll play it back to you, when you stand before Him to be judged. "I didn't say that!" "Oh you didn't? Well, let's listen." "I have heard them."

Thus saith the Lord God; When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make you desolate (35:14).

When, when that day comes that Jesus returns, and the whole earth will be rejoicing in the glorious kingdom of God, rejoicing in, in all of the abundance of blessings that God will bestow upon the earth at that time! "When the whole earth is rejoicing, you will be there! Edom will be gone!" As I said earlier, how many of you have met an Edomite lately? They're gone!

As you did rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto you: and you shall be desolate, O mount Seir, and all of [Edom] Idumaea, [Is the Greek word.] even all of it: and they shall know that I am the Lord (35:15).

All the way through, "thus saith the Lord, and you will know that I am the Lord". When it's fulfilled, you will know that it was God that has spoken. So as you want to take a trip to Edom today, it ought to be proof to you that this was indeed God who prophesied against Edom. It is fulfilled to the present day, as God's word always comes to pass.

Now if you're a child of God, that should cause your heart to just rejoice and leap for joy! God keeps His word! You're not a child of God, it ought to cause you to tremble, to be fearful, to shake. Cause God keeps His word, and that's a fearful thing to those who have set themselves against God. Shall we pray?

Father, we thank you for Your Word. We pray that we will walk in the light of Your truth that you have revealed unto us. Thank you Lord for seeking us, searching us out. Thank you Lord for calling us that we might be the sheep of Your pasture. Lord, we pray that You will soon establish upon the throne of the world, Your servant David, our Lord Jesus Christ, that He might reign in righteousness and in truth. For this, our hearts long. May Your kingdom come, and Your will be done in this earth, even as it is in heaven. In Jesus' name, Amen.