

August 28, 2022

“God Promised a Righteous Lord”
Lesson 4 of Unit

Ezekiel 34:23-31

Intro

Ezekiel was a prophet to Judah during a very rough time in their history. During the first seven years, his ministry was preaching the judgment to come against Jerusalem. After Jerusalem fell and was destroyed, Ezekiel presents multiple judgments against the nations beyond Judah.

The study passage today comes from the next phase of Ezekiel’s ministry. For the last 15 years of his preaching, he brought messages of hope, of restoration and being revitalized. At the heart of this hope and restoration is God’s promise to be present in this restored kingdom. That hope is at the heart of today’s lesson.

Read Ezekiel 34:23-31

1. vs. 23: God here promises to restore David’s kingdom, gone over 400 years by the this time
 God says He “will place over them one shepherd...and he will tend them”
 David is dead, so this is a promise of a shepherd like David, who will care for the people
 The “one shepherd” ideal seems to suggest the reuniting of Israel and Judah
 It also suggests this new David will reign forever—no other “shepherd” will replace him

2. vs. 24: God makes two significant pronouncements here
 First, He says that He will be their God
 He will rule over them and care for them
 He cements this with the statement, “I the LORD have spoken”.
 There is nothing else to say to this final word
 Second, God says that this David “will be a prince to them”
 A prince is the son of the king, to be treated with the royal deference of the king
 This David won’t be the historical David brought back to life
 This one will sit on David’s throne forever
 This David-prince will be “a servant” of God, not of himself

3. vs. 25: God promises to do two things for His people
 The first is a covenant of peace He makes with them
 There will be peace between God and His people
 There is a pattern for the blessings as shown in the following verses:
 First peace, then fruitfulness, then deliverance

 The second half of vs. 25 shows the peace part
 Removing wild beasts so they can sleep in peace anywhere in the land.

4. vs. 26-27a: This part shows the fruitfulness piece of the pattern
God promises to bless by sending rain, a blessing for their crops
Their trees and crops will produce abundantly
Another aspect of God giving them fruitfulness is their security
He takes away their fear of enemies raiding their crops
God is always concerned with our spiritual lives as well as our physical ones
The ‘showers of blessings’ are God’s spiritual blessings as well
These are necessary to our spiritual peace
5. vs. 27b-28: The final part of the pattern is deliverance
Here God promises to “break the bars of their yoke” and “rescue them”
This is referring to delivering the people from the Babylonian captivity
The phrases remind us of God’s deliverance from Egypt as well
- The people are given a shepherd like David to lead and protect them
Then they are given a covenant of peace with God
All the elements necessary for a peaceful life have been put into place
- The last part of vs. 28 shows the end result of God’s care for His people
“They will live in safety”
“No one will make them afraid”
God’s care for His people allows for a peaceful, safe life.
This part of vs. 28 begins another cycle of peace, fruitfulness, and deliverance
6. vs. 29: The fruitfulness of the land is noted in this verse
Notice the land isn’t just barely allowed them to scrape out an existence
“I will provide for them a land renowned for its crops”
First, God is the one who provides this land
Second, God says it will be well-known for its crops, meaning its abundance
Because of this promise, the people need not fear a famine again (“no longer”)
- In addition, the people will no longer have other nations look down on them
Previously, the nation of Israel has been conquered and enslaved
Now, the promise is for the people to know this will never happen again
7. vs. 30: The pattern seen in vs. 25-29 was peace, then fruitfulness, then deliverance
Here is the conclusion, the end result
God will be present with His people—nothing gives us greater comfort or assurance
Also note the phrases “their God” and “My people”
This is a restatement/reminder that a covenant relationship exists between them
It is because of this covenant relationship that God will be with His people
8. vs. 31: This verse reminds us of vs. 23 which began today’s study
In vs. 23, God says He will give Israel a shepherd to watch out for them
Here He reminds Israel that they are sheep, His sheep

All of this passage has immediate and future fulfillments

God will restore Israel in the land after captivity in Babylon

The Shepherd is Jesus, who will feed and care for the sheep spiritually

His presence is with those who follow God

Jesus said he was sent "to the lost sheep of Israel" (Matt. 15:24)

He explains Himself as the Good Shepherd in John 10:1-30

Jesus had compassion of the people as "sheep without a shepherd" (Matt. 9:36)

He used examples of lost sheep (Matt. 18:12-14, Luke 15:3-7)

Application: God's promise to Israel at the time of the Babylonian exile is still His promise to us today.

He will restore to those who come to Him the peace and safety that only He can provide. He will continue His promised covenant relationship with His people. He will continue to be present with us. All these things He promised, to Israel and to us. God cannot lie; He always does what He says He will do.

Prayer: Father God, thank You for the blessings of your covenant of peace with us, that removes our fear of Your anger at our sin. We ask that Your peace and presence be reflected in our lives, so that those who don't know You yet will see You in us. In Jesus' name, Amen.