

God Promised to Be With Us

Key Verse: *“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.”*
—Ezekiel 34:23

Selected Scripture:
Ezekiel 34:23-31

out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country.”—vss. 12,13

Although Ezekiel was given the task of preaching righteousness to the Israelites while they were in Babylon, God foreknew they would continue to be unfaithful well beyond the end of their captivity. This would eventually result in their being scattered among other nations throughout the world.—vss. 16-21

Despite Israel’s disobedience, the rejection of her

THROUGHOUT EZEKIEL 34, a contrast is made between false shepherds or leaders in Israel who were not interested in the people’s welfare, and God, who as the Great Shepherd will rescue his sheep that have strayed from his protective care.—vss. 1-10

“As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them

Messiah, Jesus Christ, and the chastisements received for her iniquity, the prophet Ezekiel promises her salvation and restoration.—vs. 22

Our Key Verse declares that Israel will be blessed when the kingdom is established on earth through God's servant, David. In this verse, David is a symbol of Christ, who truly will be earth's ruler in God's kingdom. The beloved David of past ages will be raised from the tomb, and will also serve in a leadership capacity in that righteous earthly government.

During that time of righteousness, we learn of the mountains dropping down new wine, the hills flowing with milk and honey, and a fountain watering the valley of Shittim. This will perhaps have a literal application concerning the abundance of flocks and herds as well as pasturage that will exist in a renewed earth. However, the symbolic application of wine representing pure doctrine, milk symbolizing basic truths, and the water of life bringing blessings and peace to Israel and all who will become "Israelites indeed" in the earthly kingdom, seems very appropriate.—Joel 3:17,18; Isa. 55:1

Israel, as God's chosen people in the past, will then appreciate the Great Shepherd's care for them. Additionally, with the highway of holiness in operation, all mankind will be glad that the former conditions associated with sin and unrighteousness will have forever passed away.—Isa. 35:10

Today, only the Lord's true sheep, his church, hear and obey the Master's voice. (John 10:27) However, Christ died to bring an opportunity for salvation to all, so there will be other sheep of an earthly fold that will profit from his great sacrifice.—vs. 16

Thus, in due time will be realized the fulfillment of those words that Jesus taught his disciples to pray—"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10) God surely will be with all who desire to be his sheep at that time. ■