

Week 5 Student Study Guide

Title: False Shepherds & the True Shepherd

Primary Text: Ezekiel 34 (KJV)

Historical & Literary Context

Ezekiel 34 is delivered after the fall of Jerusalem and directly addresses Israel's leaders. The nation's collapse is traced not merely to political failure, but to spiritual malpractice. Shepherds—kings, priests, and leaders—have exploited rather than protected the flock. God intervenes as both Judge of false shepherds and Shepherd of His people.

Theological Exposition

The shepherd metaphor is covenantal and royal. Leaders were entrusted with care, justice, and protection, yet they fed themselves instead of the flock. God responds decisively: He removes corrupt shepherds and personally assumes the role of Shepherd. This passage introduces a messianic promise—"one shepherd"—pointing toward David's line and ultimately fulfilled in Christ.

Ezekiel 34 also reframes restoration. Healing, regathering, and peace flow not from leadership reform alone, but from God's direct shepherding. Divine compassion and accountability meet in this chapter.

Key Verses for the Week (KJV)

- 1 Ezekiel 34:1
- 2 Ezekiel 34:2
- 3 Ezekiel 34:4
- 4 Ezekiel 34:6
- 5 Ezekiel 34:8
- 6 Ezekiel 34:10
- 7 Ezekiel 34:11
- 8 Ezekiel 34:12
- 9 Ezekiel 34:15
- 10 Ezekiel 34:16
- 11 Ezekiel 34:20
- 12 Ezekiel 34:22
- 13 Ezekiel 34:23
- 14 Ezekiel 34:24
- 15 Ezekiel 34:31

Memory Verse

Ezekiel 34:23 (KJV): "And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them..."

New Testament Cross-Text Mapping

- John 10:11–16 – Jesus declares Himself the Good Shepherd.
- Matthew 9:36 – Compassion for sheep without a shepherd.
- Hebrews 13:20 – Christ as the great Shepherd.
- 1 Peter 5:2–4 – Shepherding responsibilities for leaders.
- Revelation 7:17 – The Lamb shepherds His people.

Contemporary & Spiritual Application

Ezekiel 34 challenges both leaders and believers. Leaders are warned against self-serving ministry, while believers are reminded that ultimate care comes from God Himself. This chapter offers hope to those wounded by failed leadership, affirming that God sees, judges, and restores.

Discussion Questions

- 1 What responsibilities did Israel's shepherds neglect?
- 2 Why does God choose to shepherd His people personally?
- 3 How does Ezekiel 34 shape New Testament leadership ethics?
- 4 What comfort does this chapter offer wounded believers today?