Ezekiel 34:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

> For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.

Analysis

After condemning Israel's failed shepherds (leaders), God declares: 'For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out.' The emphatic 'I, even I' (hineni-ani, הִנְנִי־אָנִי) stresses divine personal involvement—God Himself will shepherd His flock since human shepherds failed. The verbs 'search' (darash, דָּרַשׁ) and 'seek out' (biqar, בִּקֵּר) describe diligent, careful shepherding. God will personally attend to each scattered sheep. This promise finds fulfillment in Christ, the Good Shepherd who seeks and saves the lost (Luke 15:4-7, 19:10, John 10:11-18). Whereas human shepherds exploited the flock for personal gain (34:2-3), God shepherds for the flock's welfare. This shepherd imagery saturates Scripture (Psalm 23, Isaiah 40:11, John 10, 1 Peter 5:4), revealing God's tender care and intimate involvement with His people.

Historical Context

Israel's kings, priests, and prophets had failed as shepherds—they exploited rather than protected God's flock. The exile resulted from leadership failure to guide people in covenant faithfulness. This indictment came after Jerusalem's fall (post-586 BC), when exiles needed assurance that God would restore them despite human leadership's catastrophic failure. The promise that God Himself would shepherd anticipated both the physical return from exile and the ultimate Shepherd-King, the Messiah. Jesus explicitly identified Himself as fulfillment of this prophecy (John 10:11-16). The early church recognized Jesus as 'that great

shepherd of the sheep' (Hebrews 13:20) and the 'Chief Shepherd' (1 Peter 5:4) who fulfills Ezekiel 34.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does knowing God personally searches for and seeks out His scattered sheep comfort you in seasons of feeling lost or abandoned?
2. In what ways do you see Jesus fulfilling this Good Shepherd promise in your life?

Interlinear Text

כִּ֣י	כֹּ֣ה	אָמַ֔ר	אֲדֹנָ֖י	יְהֹוִ֑ה	הִנְנִי	אָ֫נִי
H3588	H3541	**For thus saith**	**the Lord**	**GOD**	H2005	H589
		H559	H136	H3069		

וְדָרַשְׁתִּ֥י	אֶת	צֹאנִ֖י	וּבִקַּרְתִּֽים׃
Behold I even I will both search	H853	**my sheep**	**and seek them out**
H1875		H6629	H1239

Additional Cross-References

John 10:16 (Parallel theme): And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Luke 19:10 (Parallel theme): For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Jeremiah 23:3 (Parallel theme): And I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.

Isaiah 56:8 (References God): The Lord GOD which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.

Jeremiah 31:8 (Parallel theme): Behold, I will bring them from the north country, and gather them from the coasts of the earth, and with them the blind and the lame, the woman with child and her that travaileth with child together: a great company shall return thither.

Isaiah 45:12 (Parallel theme): I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded.

Psalms 80:1 (Parallel theme): Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.

Psalms 119:176 (Parallel theme): I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.

Deuteronomy 32:39 (References God): See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.