

Ezekiel 34:22

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.

Analysis

This passage employs the shepherd metaphor to contrast failed human leaders with God as true Shepherd of Israel. Ancient Near Eastern kings commonly used shepherd imagery for their rule; Ezekiel exposes how Israel's leaders failed this calling by exploiting rather than caring for God's flock. From a Reformed perspective, this anticipates Christ as the Good Shepherd (John 10) who lays down His life for the sheep, and calls undershepherds (pastors/elders) to feed and protect God's flock (1 Peter 5:1-4). True shepherds serve the sheep's welfare, not their own interests, demonstrating Christlike servant leadership.

Historical Context

This passage was delivered during the Babylonian exile (c. 586-571 BCE) after Jerusalem's destruction. The exiled community grappled with theological and practical questions: Why had judgment come? Would restoration occur? How should they live in exile? The historical context of ancient Near Eastern covenant patterns, conquest and exile practices, and prophetic literature provides essential background. Archaeological discoveries from this period illuminate the exile's realities and the return's historical fulfillment. Yet Ezekiel's prophecies extend beyond immediate historical context to find fuller realization in Christ and the church, with ultimate consummation in the new creation.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does this verse deepen your understanding of God's character, purposes, or ways of working in history?
2. What specific application does this passage call you to make in your current circumstances or spiritual life?
3. How does this Old Testament passage illuminate New Testament teaching about Christ, salvation, or the church?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתָּה Therefore	תָּמִיתִי will I save	לְצַאֵן my flock	עַל H3808	תְּהִלִּיתִי H1961	וְלֹא H5750
H3467		H6629			
לְבָשָׂר and they shall no more be a prey		וְשָׁפֹטֵת and I will judge	H996	לְשָׂהָר and cattle	לְשָׂהָר and cattle
H957		H8199		H7716	H7716

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 34:10 (Parallel theme): Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against the shepherds; and I will require my flock at their hand, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; 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.