

Ezekiel 34:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And 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.

Analysis

God promises: 'And 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.' This messianic prophecy promises a future Davidic shepherd-king. The phrase 'my servant David' cannot refer to the historical David (dead for 400+ years) but to David's greater Son—the Messiah. The singular 'one shepherd' contrasts with the many failed shepherds just condemned (34:2-10) and points to unity under one ruler. The verb 'feed' (ra'ah, רָעָה) means to shepherd, pasture, and provide for—comprehensive care. Jesus Christ fulfills this as the Son of David (Matthew 1:1, Luke 1:32-33) who shepherds God's people. The promise anticipates both Christ's first coming (inaugurating God's kingdom) and second coming (consummating it fully).

Historical Context

The Davidic covenant (2 Samuel 7:12-16) promised David's throne would endure forever. Despite the monarchy's end with Zedekiah's capture (597 BC) and the absence of Davidic kings during and after exile, God's promise remained. This prophecy assured exiles that God hadn't abandoned His covenant—a future David would arise. Jewish expectation of a Messiah ('anointed one') descended from David permeated Second Temple Judaism. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, crowds proclaimed 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' (Matthew 21:9), recognizing messianic claims. Jesus' teaching about being the Good Shepherd (John 10) and His

resurrection establishing eternal reign fulfill Ezekiel's prophecy. The singular Shepherd unifies Jews and Gentiles into one flock (John 10:16, Ephesians 2:14-16).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus' identity as the promised Davidic Shepherd-King shape your understanding of His authority and care?
2. What does the promise of 'one shepherd' teach about unity and leadership in Christ's church?

Interlinear Text

וְהִקְמַתִּי י	עֲלֵיהֶם	לְרֹעֵהָ:	אֶחָד	לְרֹעֵהָ:	אֶתְּךָ	אֶתְּךָ
And I will set up	H5921	he shall feed	one	he shall feed	H853	H853
H6965		H7462	H259	H7462		
עַבְדִּי	דָּוִד יְד	הָוָא	לְרֹעֵהָ:	אֶתְּךָ	וְהוּא	יְהוָה
them even my servant	David	H1931	he shall feed	H853	H1931	H1961
H5650	H1732		H7462			
לְרֹעֵהָ:	לְרֹעֵהָ:					
H0	he shall feed					
	H7462					

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 30:9 (References David): But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.

Isaiah 40:11 (Parallel theme): He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

Hosea 3:5 (References David): Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.

Ecclesiastes 12:11 (Parallel theme): The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

John 10:11 (Parallel theme): I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Revelation 22:16 (References David): I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

1 Peter 5:4 (Parallel theme): And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Hebrews 13:20 (Parallel theme): Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Isaiah 11:1 (Parallel theme): And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

Zechariah 13:7 (Parallel theme): Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.