

Ezekiel 36:38

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Analysis

This verse points toward God's gracious purposes of restoration despite Israel's persistent unfaithfulness. The Reformed emphasis on sovereign grace shines through—restoration doesn't depend on Israel's merit or ability but on God's covenant faithfulness and irrevocable purposes (Romans 11:29). This anticipates new covenant promises where God gives a new heart and His Spirit to enable obedience (Ezekiel 36:26-27). The pattern of judgment followed by grace-based restoration prefigures the gospel: humanity deserves condemnation but receives mercy through Christ's atoning work. God's restoration demonstrates His glory by showing grace triumphs over judgment.

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

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

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

בְּמַעַד יְהִי יְרוּשָׁלָם קְדוּשָׁ יְמִינָה כִּי |
in her solemn feasts of Jerusalem as the flock As the holy
H3651 H3389 H6944 H6629

מַלְאָה וְתַהֲרֵי יְהָה אֲלֹם כִּי אֲלֹם יְהָה
as the flock of men so shall the waste be filled cities
H120 H6629 H4392 H5892 H1961

יְהָה אֲלֹם וְתַהֲרֵי יְהָה
that I am the LORD and they shall know
H3068 H3045 H589 H3588

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.

1 Kings 8:63 (References Lord): And Solomon offered a sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.

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