

Ezekiel, Son of Man

Class 10 - June 4, 2014

Reading: Ezekiel 34-36

Chapter 34

The Shepherds of Israel are the leaders of Israel. It is a fairly generic term that could include the kings, the priests, and the leaders that Ezekiel met often called the elders of Israel. We cannot help but to think of our own usage of the terms "elders" and "shepherds" (pastors) for ourselves. Here, the shepherds are receiving a rebuke for their failures in keeping the people out of danger. As well, the shepherds watched over Israel to their own gain.

God rebuked the shepherds in Zechariah for the same reason, many years later.

Zechariah 11:4-5 Thus says the LORD my God, "Pasture the flock doomed to slaughter. Those who buy them slay them and go unpunished, and each of those who sell them says, 'Blessed be the LORD, for I have become rich!' And their own shepherds have no pity on them."

God then promises some changes on shepherds for Israel. He promises a shepherd who will seek out even after the scattered sheep (Matthew 18:12). This shepherd would in fact be David (Matthew 22:42).

God also promises that there would be a new covenant of peace, and that the enemies and beasts that oppose Israel would be removed.

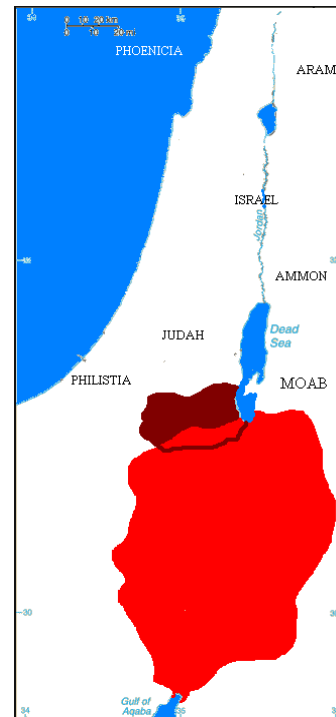
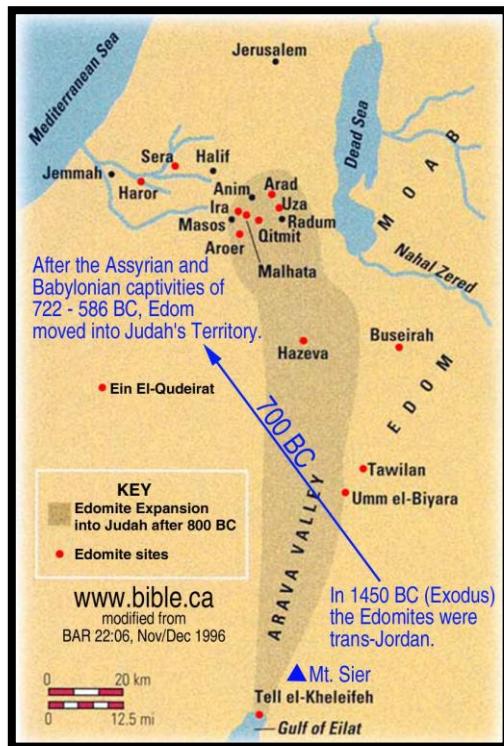
John 10:11-14 "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me"

Chapter 35

We return to God's prophecy against Edom. Mount Seir is the place of reference here, that symbolizes the inheritance of Edom. We have come to understand that in some way, Edom assisted or profited Babylon's assault on Judah.

Obadiah 1:12 "Do not gloat over your brother's day, The day of his misfortune. And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah In the day of their destruction; Yes, do not boast In the day of their distress."

Edom had been providentially blessed by God. They had turned to idolatry and enmity with Israel for most of their existence. Now, because they gloated over Judah's fall, God promises to bring the same desolation on them.



Historically, after the fall of Judah, the Edomites moved up into the southern regions of Judah. When the Hasmoneans took control of Israel around 130BC, they forced the Edomites, then called Idumaeans, to convert to Judaism in a loose manner. In the New Testament, the most infamous Edomite/Idumaeen was Herod the Great. They participated in the rebellion of the Jews that ended in their utter destruction by 73AD.

Chapter 36

Now God has Ezekiel speak to the mountains of Israel. It is an unusual tool of prophecy that Ezekiel has used before (6:2). The Mountains of Israel seem more to be victims than the real culprits; they suffered the high places and the false worship, they did not engage in them. So God promises them a restoration. Of course, the Mountain theme of prophecy is not reflective of a restored physical Israel, but the church that Jesus would build.

Isaiah 2:2 Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it.

God says that He will restore Israel not because of their hearts, but His holy name. He will cleanse them with clear water (Hebrews 10:22), and give them a new heart. This is all new covenant language. The promise of the Gentiles, the restoration of blessings, the new covenant of peace are all points of the covenant of Christ.

Hebrews 8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.