

Shepherds and sheep (Quality: Poor)

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- [0 : 00] We will speak of the Lord's help from the prophet Ezekiel chapter 34 and verse 11. Verse 11 in the 34th of Ezekiel.
- For thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out.
- For thus saith the Lord God, Behold I, even I, will both search my sheep and seek them out.
- The Lord starts in this solemn chapter with the shepherds. The shepherds of Israel, those to whose charge was committed, the oracles of God.
- And those who were such as Hothni and Phinnihah brought some disrepute upon the old law and old temple services.
- [1 : 10] And as we go on further in the history of Israel, we can see how God abominated their worships.
- They could ostentatious knowledge of what was ordained to be for their real good under the law.
- And according to God's own mind, they turned it into complete evil. So that, he says, by more than one of his prophets, I cannot have way with it, he says.
- I can't bear it. It is a strange by not. Malachi finally sums the matter up in the Old Testament.
- Malachi, therefore, refers to the complete failure of the old law in the hands of man.
- [2 : 18] God put man under his own will, gave him the Lord Moses, Mount Sinai, promised him every favor.
- And he undertook to engage it. But when it came to working it out, there was such a solemn failure. And it proved itself, as Paul says, for what the law could not do.
- God sending his son in the likeness of sinful flesh and poor sin, condemned sin in the flesh.
- So in our reading of the word of God, we need ever to distinguish between the old law and the new. Never confuse the two.
- Do not bring the old and compare it with the new after the manner of men. It is true that the old law times much of a spiritual nature.
- [3 : 30] True that the moral law still stands as man's guide and counselor as regards his neighbor. But it can do nothing but condemn.
- And there is no mercy under the old law. Fulfill it, keep it, for the large jot and tickle and heaven is yours.
- Break it in one voice. And you're guilty of all. And there is the summing up of the position as regards the shepherds whom God so pointedly speaks to here that they just serve mainly for what they could get out of it.

How Paul must have looked at such scriptures as this when he came into the position of an under-shepherd. No wonder he speaks about the love of money and ruling it over God's heritage and mourns Timothy concerning the evils though the neighbor have been worthy of his hire.

He is not to be a robber of the sheep. So God kneels at the top. As I think it's Mr. Philpott says, the fish always thinks of the egg first.

[5 : 13] And so it is. We, southern men, have to feel that we are under a tremendous responsibility to be faithful to your souls.

We wish to give no offense not in word or deed. On the other hand, we wish pray for a clear conscience that none shall be able to say that we doubt deceitfully will and keep from you the play in fact whether you receive them or whether you do not.

So this is preaching as we understand the setting form of the gospel. The shepherd, therefore, scattered the sheep.

There was no influence. There was no finding these problems. They may and did have an outward form even until the time of Christ.

Jesus analyzed it very solemnly and pointed out that although they kept the outside and the plate clean within they were full of dead men's fellows.

[6 : 57] He did not hesitate to point out the shepherds in his day Pharisees, the scribes, the doctors.

He didn't hesitate. Here lay the root of the trouble and let those of us that stand upon the walls of Zion ever keep it in mind that here lands the trouble like priests, like people.

Start and I this or that or the other and away goes the foundation eroded by evil.

God in this text put his own hand for I set the Lord ground behold I even I it is divine emphasis you get it here and there you don't want to gloss over it either you think to yourself if you were giving some edict or saying something in your family I even I your father tell you not to do this you would be in a determined mood you would give the clear impression that you meant it and you put emphasis on it and God speaks to his people thus it is not to be idly put on one side behold I even I will both search my sheep and seek them out

I'll do myself what was not done under my old cover my sheep was scattered how would I have gathered thee quoted yesterday I think the prayer meeting in his own scripture Jesus said oh Jerusalem Jerusalem that can't the prophets how would I have gathered thee the hand that gathered her chicks under her wick but she would not this is so clear Israel under the law cannot in any sense apply to Israel true Israel under grace else else we should be under our own power how many of these chicks refuse the whims of the head until divine grace brings them to seek a shelter in place and this was our

[10 : 23] Lord term Vernon and his dad they killed the prophets they didn't imprison them they did banish them like God would banish the patmos they made sure of them they killed them which was the final seal upon their damn nation it was death to the prophets and with death the end of God's message to them no wonder therefore Jesus who in his eternal glory before his incarnation had witnessed all these things coming to pass and seen his dear prophet he had been a mile down into the dunn and many many others who had been reprobated by the people rose up early

God said he did stayed up late preaching mending his service but they would not now he says I even I the subject the sheep and he speaks to his sheep he does himself when he comes to earth one of the most tender of our lord's parables is that of the sheep there is something most gracious about it whether it be the lost sheep in the parable or whether it be the good shepherd there is a reality he brings only with him from the archives of heaven the same truth and

I still see he is still the shepherd he is spoken of here that the lord will raise up it gives us no doubt about it I will set up one shepherd over them says the 23rd verse and he shall feed them even by servant name now I know that many regard these prophecies and similar ones as the complete restoration of the literal children of Israel in the land of Kaya and that there they shall reign under their skin and all their enemies shall be put under their feet I regard that the day as a beautiful prospect of the fulfilment of some prophecies as these there is a divided opinion but the reality of it remains the same whether they be gathered together thus or whether this in my own judgment is the overall picture of the church of God the house of Israel after the spirit she shall be made to lie down in green pastures she shall be saved she is saved she is eternally saved for the wild of the forest not one fear not little thought and they shall never perish in my judgment and I offer it only to you as my judgment knowing the vast amount of the discussion there has been upon this great

Sunday in my judgment this peace safety security only sets forth and more clearly the blessedness of the safety of the church of God in Christ that in this greater shepherd she has all she wants there cannot be anything added to it and this is where God says in this text before us behold I even I will both search my sheep and seek them out God puts his hand on now when we turn to the gospel and see the fulfillment of this how glorious it is he has put his hand to it he had done at this time in the eternal coming but the first point is that he has a sheep a people my flock he calls them in the 17th verse and as for you oh my flock he has those who before knew and these are scattered in the world among all nations and they have to be served for

Jesus saw me when a stranger wandering from the fold of God there it is does not come home to your hearts who know this do you want any other gospel truth than this that the Lord began with you is not this the fact that he found you you have to be searched for look what a remarkable means God has ordained for this searching it's no easy thing although I don't know anything about it no easy thing for a shepherd to find a lot sheep especially in eastern country and David knew much about this and had much experience of it and the 23rd psalm is a very sweet summary of what it entires yea though I walk through the valley and the shadow of death

[17 : 50] I will fear no evil there the sheep are secure amidst the greatest day what has God used to search out what has he put his hand to when he inspired his holy apostles to write and when the subject matter of their writing was the great shepherd himself what a remarkable matter is the first second third of Matthew and of Luke and briefly Mark and what a remarkable opening in John in the beginning was the word divine is grace the one that the devil aspired it and takes to undermine it and undo all that

God has done with regard to the blessedness of our Bibles in our mother tongue this is what God has used has he not used it where could we possibly be if we hadn't got this searching instrument in front of us where were you when God first began with you as regards seeking authority what was right and what was wrong where did you go who could you rely on what could you trust where was there any authority among men anywhere anywhere that your troubled soul could go to if it was the word of God look how you were brought to rest upon it not knowing that it was a light a searching light he that doeth truth cometh to the light you didn't say well

I don't want to look in there when God began with you did you your Bible became a thousand times more precious to you as one of the surprises to you when God began with you and when you found that this word was a searching word you perhaps had to walk alone you perhaps had to be laughed at and suffer scorn there were those who thought you were indeed old factors quite out of day they do today the scoffers haven't decreased have they by a long way the devil keeps a good army of scoffers and they are very very successful people they last you to score should you be old passionate enough to believe the bible and say on it it's the word of god it's inspired you're in good company you will be among those who understand and you will not be there to turn away from the inspired word of god but this is the main instrument that the lord uses here upon earth when our country had no bible it was in heat and darkness when the famous wick of said that he would so interpret the bible and translate it that even the ploughboy should read it it come to pass and with that came light and earnest desire to see what the bible said alas now it's gone the other way in this the lord is still supreme he uses the inspired or peter puts double emphasis on this in his epistles where he speaks of the pine jewels desiring to look into those things that were written being so inquiring in their minds as to wonder what the sacred prophets were writing and then peter goes on to say that they weren't writing for themselves well they weren't but unto us he said and finally he finishes with this word and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto them so when we come to view

God's authority its statement I even I we need the confirmation of it in our hearts to know whether his word is such to us and whether it is the word of light power favour but it searches out this is its purpose and searching work you see might be looked at in many ways you might look at it over ground or underground you might consider the 28th of Joe what is said there of the man who digs in the rock for the gold and the silver or the brass or the iron now the ancient language says of this that he overturneth the mountains by their roots graphic language but still indicated the tunneling of the mire we know it to be only to true don't we in search of coal for example in this country miles and miles of tunnels under the ground

God's word is searching the dark labyrinths of your heart the guilty thoughts hidden deep away those veins of iniquity ungodliness hatred enmity which he has searched out and is still searching out finding out your secret thoughts and letting you know about it convicting you of it not letting you pass by with an idle excuse that you couldn't help it but bringing with it a solemn discovery searching out is not this

[26 : 14] God wonderful work with his holy word but the beauty of it is this that this particular people love to be searched the human mind says as regards preaching the gospel now don't you hurt their feelings and don't you go and hurt the children's feelings the young else they won't come and hear you oh what a misconception isn't it how natural for the natural creature and there are still scores on them about who trampled the word of God under their feet and feed the flock with the residue the trampled grass quite unpalatable to the believer but no it shall be as

God has determined it to be and it shall be straight from the shoulder it will be in the language written on the wall in the time of Daniel T-Kel thou art wailing the balances and found wanting it will hurt and what a mercy to sit after a sermon that hurt you really stings your conscience and sends you home and your head down how many have blushed felt under the preaching of the gospel how many have felt a stick of it but gone again for some more can't keep away from it you know what it is because it's a real experience not something that you can say is denominational worldwide it's truth as the believer appeals receives love them but

God's word is a searching word it doesn't confine itself to just the sheep as you see here it's the shepherds start with the shepherds start there don't exclude them as if they were free from any trouble or danger and God does condemn them too doesn't he how solemn it is therefore to keep back part of the price under the pretense that you may hurt people's feelings and they may not come again to hear you and such things as that on the other hand does it mean sigh that the shepherds have to purposely set out to injure the preacher is to seek out acceptable words you can scare a flock of sheep easily enough with your voice can't you be easy enough left to one's own spirit to be hard unaffectionate cold give a fence on the left hand and on the right then but not so with the work of

God in the cross if it hurts if it cuts so it did pentacles so it did in the hearts of the 4,000 who believed word of God struck them in the heart they were cricked in their hearts hearts so that this is how God searches out his sheep and they are born to realize that there is something wrong or to come to the next great youth and now a person which God has chosen appointed his coming called Holy Spirit he searches out the sheep he doesn't leave it in any other hand than divine it could not be left in any other hand no creature upon earth can go through the ranks of people and select or choose as one might even hear upon earth we are equally ignorant as they were when they hung the two malefactors no one knew that one of those poor men was a vessel of mercy no one there hung the two and there hung just one that was searched out out when

Paul was put into the Philippian jail and received the latches at the command of the jail could he see in that man a vessel of mercy never never he was searched out and who searched him out how did Paul come there Paul was directed he wanted to go one way but the spirit suffered him not and he had to go another now this guidance and application of the work of the Holy Ghost is God's appointed means Jesus again brings it from the heavenly treasury archive when he speaks of his departure in the 14th and 16th of John he says it is expedient for it that I go away for if I go not away the comforter will not come on him but he shall come he shall convince the world of sin

[33 : 59] God is revealed therefore in the Holy Spirit's work of searching out and this cannot fail this is the great point and the glory of the gospel that there can be no failure to find the lost search this is a beautiful word to contemplate isn't it and you consider the millions upon this earth and the millions that have already been here and passed away the searching nature of divine grace and go on sometimes for years right down to the borders of the grave other times the infant of a few days like

David's son that Bathsheba bore he says David shall not return to me but I shall go to him infant salvation that peep which we have given into the vast purposes of Jehovah searching out Paul rejoiced to say of this nevertheless the foundation of God stand assured having this seal the Lord knoweth them as his and let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity in this therefore we have the sacred assurance that I even

I will search my sheep and this is where the church of God is found I shall be called sought out says another prophecy by Isaiah saw saw down well you meditate upon this in your own life as a dying sinner you stop and think did God seek you out did he search you out did he what's the answer I don't expect you to answer me of course conscience will and it'll give a true answer too this searching is by the work of the holy skin now this is twofold it is first of all by divine guidance an overruling in providence a providential manner you have so many instances of this which I have spoken many times before of the overruling of the hand of God in

Christ leading people to a particular flight for a particular purpose their salvation hinging what appears to be a very fragile frame a very little incident that's what we call it we look at it as men we say yes well that's very tiny minute so it is in our office but what are they in the purposes of God can you call anything minute that God does in fact so that the Holy Spirit leads dies dies and centuries beforehand he begins to work where there's no time if it come to a matter of history

Cyrus was forenamed though he wasn't known 500 years before he was born I have surnamed thee though thou hast not known me says the prophet it was he who was instrumental in bringing the children of Israel back free of charge to their own land a mighty king not some secondary king but a man of mighty conquest now you have the two extremes but the leading of the spirit in matters of providence is a most remarkable way in which God searches he searches he brings them to a certain place at a certain time and the more simple it is the more magnificent it is in the eyes of the receiver never say that anything that God does is small pure footsteps a left hand turn instead of a right hand turn to be the means in

[40 : 36] God's hand of you being brought under the sound of the gospel how many many times has he done this an ordinary incident in life a quiet decision made in your own home that led to the word of God's grace searching you out finding them bringing you to that that you could not get away from and did not want to get away from so that I even I will both search my sheep this brings the word sheep into focus it becomes a very sweet name and a very desirable possession to be one of the sheep of

Christ's flock it becomes a paramount desire of life only to be among them yes one of the sheep of Christ's past so that when you come back to the inspired word you're arrested by the thought of being the sheep in the fold of Christ it isn't a matter of being the first sheep and you see in a flock of sheep they're all the same I don't think that the shepherd doesn't know the difference in them because he does a shepherd knows everything that's the great wisdom of an earthly shepherd that to us they look all alike but one thing about that they all are one are a flock not one better than the other more meritorious more deserving now we all deserve eternal death thus we all are even so the shepherd seeks and searches and he uses his own appointed means and he makes us aware of them now

David said thy rod and thy star may comfort me now the rod of the eastern shepherd was that with which he protected his flock he had cause to use it too the star was that with which he recovered and hooked them back again when they fell in the water or the life but David saw comfort in those oh yeah he didn't say one was better than the other and it means this the Lord had taught David the same thing as he was teaching all his people in Utah the searching word of God if it does and he is searching you thanking for it valuing it is life eternal life it may bring you down it may discover what you are you might hear the black sheep in the flock never mind never mind about that there is the great shepherd

I even I will both search my sheep and find them in good God very great Lawless work

Thank you.

[46 : 32] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[50 : 02] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.