

## **THE WATCHFUL FATHER (Ezekiel 34:7-24)**

### **I. God saw their affliction (vs. 7-10).**

- A. God had seen the treatment of the people for whom He cared so much.
  - 1. They had become a prey to other countries and their own leaders.
  - 2. Nations swept through Judah and took cities, people and goods and no leader was strong enough to stop this.
- B. For that matter, there was no leader that even tried to stop it.
  - 1. God pointed out the fact that the shepherds didn't even go look for the flock.
  - 2. The leaders did not care what happened to the people.
  - 3. They were too busy feeding themselves to worry about the people of God.
- C. God see that through which we are going.
  - 1. Whatever problems of life that may arise, God calls for us to cast those burdens on Him through prayer.
  - 2. It may be problems within the church or problems outside, God still sees and knows.
- D. Not only that, God will deliver His people in some manner from the troubles that beset them.

### **II. God sought after them (vs. 11-12).**

- A. Unlike the greedy leaders, God promised to search and seek for His people.
  - 1. God would not allow them to drift off without trying to get them back.
  - 2. He would do so with affection and care.
  - 3. The word "seek" in verse 12 carries the idea of seeking and examining minutely and with affection.
  - 4. He would seek them because He loved them and wanted their good and not their belongings.
- B. God wants His people, not for what they offer Him, but because He loves them and seeks their good.
  - 1. The people wanted someone to care for them and did not have it in the form of their leadership.
  - 2. Sadly, they had followed the leadership in abandoning God but God would not abandon them even though He was allowing them to be punished.
- C. God seeks after His lost children today.
  - 1. He is that Father looking for His children to return to Him.
  - 2. He won't go grab them, but does send reminders in the form of scripture and faithful children who go to them to bring them back.

### **III. God promised to sustain them (vs. 13-16a).**

- A. When God found them and brought them back, He promised to care for them.
- B. He would feed them and care for their wounds they had sustained and

- provide rest for them.
  - C. God provides His people today with spiritual sustenance through His word.
    - 1. He provides it for our growth.
    - 2. He provides it for our protection.
  - D. God also sustains us physically with the blessings of food, clothing and shelter that we have.
    - 1. Every good and every perfect gift is from God.
    - 2. It is He that allows us to earn a living.
    - 3. It is He that provides for us through others when help is needed.
  - E. God provides what we need when we most need it.
- IV. God promised to separate the unrighteous from them (vs. 16b-22).**
  - A. God promised to remove those that harmed them.
    - 1. The leaders who had taken advantage of the people would be removed from power.
    - 2. They would no longer be able to harm the Israelites as they had been doing.
  - B. One day, God will separate the wheat from the chaff.
    - 1. At the judgment, Jesus will remove those from us that caused harm and suffering.
    - 2. He will take us to that place where there will be no unrighteousness and all is holy.
  - C. He also, through His word, gives us the tools we need to be able to discern between good and evil.
    - 1. We are to judge righteous judgment based on the actions of others.
    - 2. In this way, we can separate ourselves from evil people, even those who claim to be Christians.
- V. God promised to send His Servant (vs. 23-24).**
  - A. In these two beautiful verses, God promised to send His Servant, who would come from David.
    - 1. This Servant, of course, is Jesus Christ.
    - 2. This great Servant would feed God's people with that which they needed the most.
    - 3. He would shepherd them with loving care.
  - B. God did send this great Servant and we benefit from Him still today.
    - 1. Every great thing we have is because of Jesus.
    - 2. It is Him who allows us to have all spiritual blessings.
    - 3. He still provided leadership for His people today.
    - 4. He feeds us through His word, He cares for us through His providence and always seeks for us to live joyful, abundant lives even in adversity.