

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.