



DEVOTIONAL FOR EZEKIEL 34-39

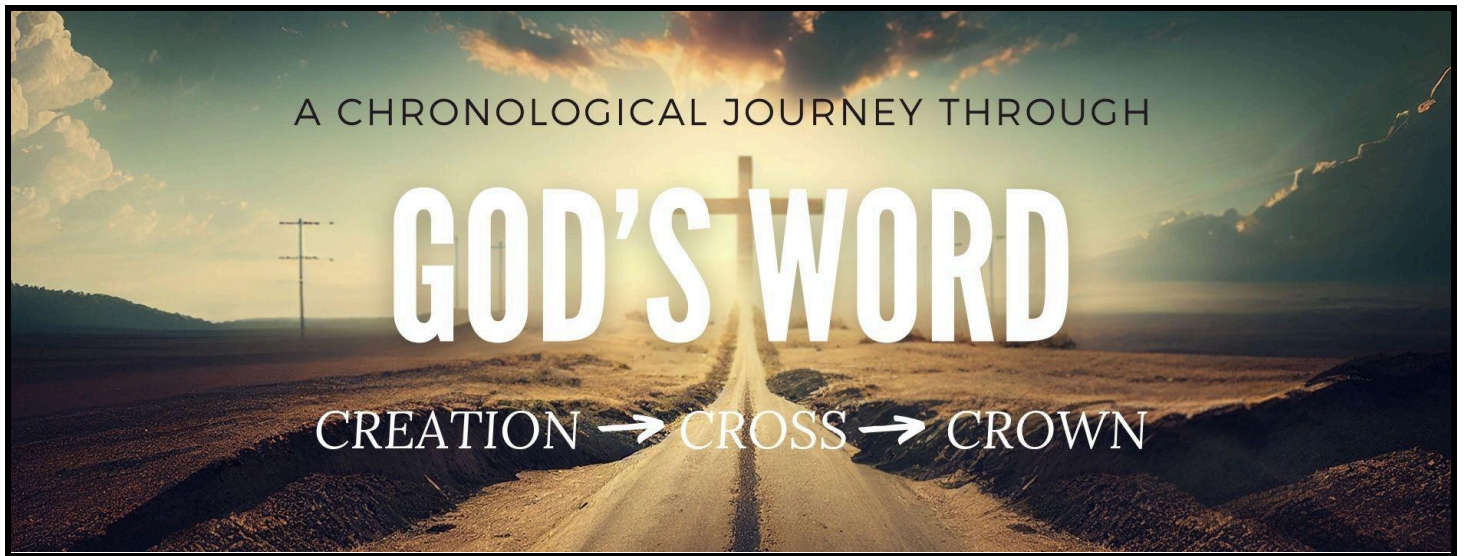
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Surrounded by familiar faces and open fields, it's easy to feel like life is simple and predictable. Yet, even in the calm of our day-to-day lives, there are moments when we face struggles and feel the weight of our mistakes and sins. As I was reading Ezekiel 34-39, I felt God speaking to me about His judgment but also about His incredible grace. These chapters reminded me of how God deals with our sins but also offers us a beautiful promise of restoration, much like He did for Israel.

The leaders of Israel, who were supposed to care for their people, failed miserably. They were selfish, looking out for themselves instead of tending to the needs of the people. As I read this, I couldn't help but think about the times I've failed God and let other people down—times I've been selfish instead of caring for others the way God wants me to. It's a harsh reminder that, like those leaders, I too have failed in my responsibilities. But God doesn't leave us in that place of failure and judgment. In Ezekiel 34:11, He declares that He will become the shepherd for His people. He says, "I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out." I felt such comfort reading that. God isn't content to leave us lost. He promises to come after us, to seek us out, to heal us, and to bring us back. And isn't that exactly what Jesus did for us? He is the Good Shepherd who laid down His life for us. When I think of Jesus going to the cross, taking on the judgment I deserve, it fills me with such gratitude. He took God's wrath so I wouldn't have to. All those times I've messed up, all the sins I've committed—Jesus took the punishment for them.

The vision of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37 hit me hard too. It's this image of bones scattered everywhere, lifeless and hopeless. Sometimes, I feel like that valley—dry, weary, and without hope. But God tells Ezekiel to prophesy to the bones, and they come to life! God breathes new life into what was dead. This is a powerful picture of what God can do in our lives. When I feel spiritually dry or distant from God, I remember that He can breathe new life into me, just like He did with those dry bones.

And then, in Ezekiel 38-39 we hear about God defeating Israel's enemies. It's a reminder that no matter how big our struggles are, God is bigger. He promises to fight for us and to give us victory. Just like God promised to protect Israel, He promises to protect us. Jesus has already won the ultimate victory over sin and death, and because of that, we have hope.



God's judgment against sin is real, and it's something I can't ignore. But the incredible thing is that His grace is even greater. Just as He promised Israel a future and a hope, He promises the same to us through Jesus. I'm reminded that I don't have to face God's judgment because Jesus paid it all for me...and for you. I see how God's faithfulness is evident in every sunrise, in the changing seasons, and in the love of my family and friends. He's always been faithful to His promises, and He will continue to be. Today, I want to trust Him more, to follow the Good Shepherd, and to rest in the hope that He offers. Jesus has bore my sins and given me a new life. And because of that, I have a future that's secure, a hope that's unshakeable, and a Savior who will never let me go.

Questions:

1. How do I respond to God's grace when I recognize my failures and shortcomings? (Romans 5:8)
2. Am I allowing God to breathe new life into the dry, weary places in my heart? (2 Corinthians 5:17)
3. What areas of my life do I need to surrender to Jesus, trusting Him to fight my battles for me? (Matthew 11:28)