

**Saturday, November 16**

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**Ezekiel 33:1 - 34:31**

**33** **1** Once again a message came to me from the LORD : **2** “Son of man, give your people this message: ‘When I bring an army against a country, the people of that land choose one of their own to be a watchman. **3** When the watchman sees the enemy coming, he sounds the alarm to warn the people. **4** Then if those who hear the alarm refuse to take action, it is their own fault if they die. **5** They heard the alarm but ignored it, so the responsibility is theirs. If they had listened to the warning, they could have saved their lives. **6** But if the watchman sees the enemy coming and doesn’t sound the alarm to warn the people, he is responsible for their captivity. They will die in their sins, but I will hold the watchman responsible for their deaths.’ **7** “Now, son of man, I am making you a watchman for the people of Israel. Therefore, listen to what I say and warn them for me. **8** If I announce that some wicked people are sure to die and you fail to tell them to change their ways, then they will die in their sins, and I will hold you responsible for their deaths. **9** But if you warn them to repent and they don’t repent, they will die in their sins, but you will have saved yourself. **10** “Son of man, give the people of Israel this message: You are saying, ‘Our sins are heavy upon us; we are wasting away! How can we survive?’ **11** As surely as I live, says the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of wicked people. I only want them to turn from their wicked ways so they can live. Turn! Turn from your wickedness, O people of Israel! Why should you die? **12** “Son of man, give your people this message: The righteous behavior of righteous people will not save them if they turn to sin, nor will the wicked behavior of wicked people destroy them if they repent and turn from their sins. **13** When I tell righteous people that they will live, but then they sin, expecting their past righteousness to save them, then none of their righteous acts will be remembered. I will destroy them for their sins. **14** And suppose I tell some wicked people that they will surely die, but then they turn from their sins and do what is just and right. **15** For instance, they might give back a debtor’s security, return what they have stolen, and obey my life-giving laws, no longer doing what is evil. If they do this, then they will surely live and not die. **16** None of their past sins will be brought up again, for they have done what is just and right, and they will surely live. **17** “Your people are saying, ‘The Lord isn’t doing what’s right,’ but it is they who are not doing what’s right. **18** For again I say, when righteous people turn away from their righteous behavior and turn to evil, they will die. **19** But if wicked people turn from their wickedness and do what is just and right, they will live. **20** O people of Israel, you are saying, ‘The Lord isn’t doing what’s right.’ But I judge each of

you according to your deeds.” **21** On January 8, during the twelfth year of our captivity, a survivor from Jerusalem came to me and said, “The city has fallen!” **22** The previous evening the LORD had taken hold of me and given me back my voice. So I was able to speak when this man arrived the next morning. **23** Then this message came to me from the LORD : **24** “Son of man, the scattered remnants of Israel living among the ruined cities keep saying, ‘Abraham was only one man, yet he gained possession of the entire land. We are many; surely the land has been given to us as a possession.’ **25** So tell these people, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: You eat meat with blood in it, you worship idols, and you murder the innocent. Do you really think the land should be yours? **26** Murderers! Idolaters! Adulterers! Should the land belong to you?’ **27** “Say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: As surely as I live, those living in the ruins will die by the sword. And I will send wild animals to eat those living in the open fields. Those hiding in the forts and caves will die of disease. **28** I will completely destroy the land and demolish her pride. Her arrogant power will come to an end. The mountains of Israel will be so desolate that no one will even travel through them. **29** When I have completely destroyed the land because of their detestable sins, then they will know that I am the LORD .’ **30** “Son of man, your people talk about you in their houses and whisper about you at the doors. They say to each other, ‘Come on, let’s go hear the prophet tell us what the LORD is saying!’ **31** So my people come pretending to be sincere and sit before you. They listen to your words, but they have no intention of doing what you say. Their mouths are full of lustful words, and their hearts seek only after money. **32** You are very entertaining to them, like someone who sings love songs with a beautiful voice or plays fine music on an instrument. They hear what you say, but they don’t act on it! **33** But when all these terrible things happen to them—as they certainly will—then they will know a prophet has been among them.”

**34** **1** Then this message came to me from the LORD : **2** “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds, the leaders of Israel. Give them this message from the Sovereign LORD : What sorrow awaits you shepherds who feed yourselves instead of your flocks. Shouldn’t shepherds feed their sheep? **3** You drink the milk, wear the wool, and butcher the best animals, but you let your flocks starve. **4** You have not taken care of the weak. You have not tended the sick or bound up the injured. You have not gone looking for those who have wandered away and are lost. Instead, you have ruled them with harshness and cruelty. **5** So my sheep have been scattered without a shepherd, and they are easy prey for any wild animal. **6** They have wandered through all the mountains and all the hills, across the face of the earth, yet no one has gone to search for them. **7** “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD : **8** As surely as I live, says the Sovereign LORD, you abandoned my flock and left them to be attacked by every wild animal. And though you were my shepherds, you didn’t search for my sheep when

they were lost. You took care of yourselves and left the sheep to starve. **9** Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD . **10** This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I now consider these shepherds my enemies, and I will hold them responsible for what has happened to my flock. I will take away their right to feed the flock, and I will stop them from feeding themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths; the sheep will no longer be their prey. **11** “For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I myself will search and find my sheep. **12** I will be like a shepherd looking for his scattered flock. I will find my sheep and rescue them from all the places where they were scattered on that dark and cloudy day. **13** I will bring them back home to their own land of Israel from among the peoples and nations. I will feed them on the mountains of Israel and by the rivers and in all the places where people live. **14** Yes, I will give them good pastureland on the high hills of Israel. There they will lie down in pleasant places and feed in the lush pastures of the hills. **15** I myself will tend my sheep and give them a place to lie down in peace, says the Sovereign LORD . **16** I will search for my lost ones who strayed away, and I will bring them safely home again. I will bandage the injured and strengthen the weak. But I will destroy those who are fat and powerful. I will feed them, yes—feed them justice! **17** “And as for you, my flock, this is what the Sovereign LORD says to his people: I will judge between one animal of the flock and another, separating the sheep from the goats. **18** Isn’t it enough for you to keep the best of the pastures for yourselves? Must you also trample down the rest? Isn’t it enough for you to drink clear water for yourselves? Must you also muddy the rest with your feet? **19** Why must my flock eat what you have trampled down and drink water you have fouled? **20** “Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will surely judge between the fat sheep and the scrawny sheep. **21** For you fat sheep pushed and butted and crowded my sick and hungry flock until you scattered them to distant lands. **22** So I will rescue my flock, and they will no longer be abused. I will judge between one animal of the flock and another. **23** And I will set over them one shepherd, my servant David. He will feed them and be a shepherd to them. **24** And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David will be a prince among my people. I, the LORD, have spoken! **25** “I will make a covenant of peace with my people and drive away the dangerous animals from the land. Then they will be able to camp safely in the wildest places and sleep in the woods without fear. **26** I will bless my people and their homes around my holy hill. And in the proper season I will send the showers they need. There will be showers of blessing. **27** The orchards and fields of my people will yield bumper crops, and everyone will live in safety. When I have broken their chains of slavery and rescued them from those who enslaved them, then they will know that I am the LORD . **28** They will no longer be prey for other nations, and wild animals will no longer devour them. They will live in safety, and no one will frighten them. **29** “And I will make their land famous for its crops, so my people will never again suffer from famines or the insults of foreign nations. **30** In this way, they will know

that I, the LORD their God, am with them. And they will know that they, the people of Israel, are my people, says the Sovereign LORD . **31** You are my flock, the sheep of my pasture. You are my people, and I am your God. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken!"

## Hebrews 13:1 - 25

**13** **1** Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. **2** Don't forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it! **3** Remember those in prison, as if you were there yourself. Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies. **4** Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery. **5** Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you." **6** So we can say with confidence, "The LORD is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?" **7** Remember your leaders who taught you the word of God. Think of all the good that has come from their lives, and follow the example of their faith. **8** Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. **9** So do not be attracted by strange, new ideas. Your strength comes from God's grace, not from rules about food, which don't help those who follow them. **10** We have an altar from which the priests in the Tabernacle have no right to eat. **11** Under the old system, the high priest brought the blood of animals into the Holy Place as a sacrifice for sin, and the bodies of the animals were burned outside the camp. **12** So also Jesus suffered and died outside the city gates to make his people holy by means of his own blood. **13** So let us go out to him, outside the camp, and bear the disgrace he bore. **14** For this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come. **15** Therefore, let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance to his name. **16** And don't forget to do good and to share with those in need. These are the sacrifices that please God. **17** Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit. **18** Pray for us, for our conscience is clear and we want to live honorably in everything we do. **19** And especially pray that I will be able to come back to you soon. **20** Now may the God of peace— who brought up from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, and ratified an eternal covenant with his blood— **21** may he equip you with all you need for doing his will. May he produce in you, through the power of Jesus Christ, every good thing that is pleasing to him. All glory to him forever and ever! Amen. **22** I urge you, dear brothers and sisters, to pay attention to what I have written in this brief exhortation. **23** I want you to know that

our brother Timothy has been released from jail. If he comes here soon, I will bring him with me to see you. **24** Greet all your leaders and all the believers there. The believers from Italy send you their greetings. **25** May God's grace be with you all.

### **Psalm 115:1 - 18**

**115** **1** Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to your name goes all the glory for your unfailing love and faithfulness. **2** Why let the nations say, "Where is their God?" **3** Our God is in the heavens, and he does as he wishes. **4** Their idols are merely things of silver and gold, shaped by human hands. **5** They have mouths but cannot speak, and eyes but cannot see. **6** They have ears but cannot hear, and noses but cannot smell. **7** They have hands but cannot feel, and feet but cannot walk, and throats but cannot make a sound. **8** And those who make idols are just like them, as are all who trust in them. **9** O Israel, trust the LORD ! He is your helper and your shield. **10** O priests, descendants of Aaron, trust the LORD ! He is your helper and your shield. **11** All you who fear the LORD, trust the LORD ! He is your helper and your shield. **12** The LORD remembers us and will bless us. He will bless the people of Israel and bless the priests, the descendants of Aaron. **13** He will bless those who fear the LORD, both great and lowly. **14** May the LORD richly bless both you and your children. **15** May you be blessed by the LORD, who made heaven and earth. **16** The heavens belong to the LORD, but he has given the earth to all humanity. **17** The dead cannot sing praises to the LORD, for they have gone into the silence of the grave. **18** But we can praise the LORD both now and forever! Praise the LORD !

### **Proverbs 27:21 - 22**

**27** **21** Fire tests the purity of silver and gold, but a person is tested by being praised. **22** You cannot separate fools from their foolishness, even though you grind them like grain with mortar and pestle.