Individual Bible Study Lesson: “The Shepherd-King Cares, Rules, and Calls His People to Reflect His Heart”

Format: Personal study (about 45–60 minutes)

Theme: The Lord is the Shepherd-King who seeks and saves His flock, rules with justice, and calls His people to worship Him, know His power, and serve “the least” as they await His return.

Scripture Focus: Ezekiel 34:11–16, 20–24; Psalm 100; Ephesians 1:15–23; Matthew 25:31–46

Opening Prayer

Shepherd of our souls, open our eyes to see You in Your Word. Teach us to receive Your care, worship You with grateful hearts, and reflect Your compassion toward others. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Summary

In Ezekiel 34, God promises to shepherd His scattered people Himself because human shepherds had failed. He seeks the lost, brings back the strayed, binds up the injured, strengthens the weak, and judges between the strong and the weak. He promises one shepherd, His servant David—a messianic hope fulfilled in Jesus.

Psalm 100 responds to this Shepherd with joyful worship: “We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.” Worship flows from knowing who God is—good, faithful, and worthy of thanksgiving.

Ephesians 1:15–23 prays that believers will know the risen, exalted Christ—the One who is head over all things for the church. The Shepherd-King is not distant; He is exalted and active on behalf of His people.

Matthew 25:31–46 reveals the Son of Man as King and Judge. The King identifies Himself with “the least of these.” Genuine faith in the Shepherd-King produces practical compassion—not to earn salvation, but as the fruit of belonging to Him.

Big idea: The Shepherd-King seeks us, rules over all, and sends us to reflect His care—especially toward the vulnerable and overlooked.

Key Points

1. The Shepherd takes the initiative to seek and save.

Ezekiel 34:11–16

God says, “I myself will search for my sheep.” He does not wait for the lost to find their way back. He rescues, gathers, feeds, gives rest, binds wounds, and strengthens the weak. This is grace before it is duty. The Shepherd’s care is personal and active.

2. The Shepherd’s care includes justice.

Ezekiel 34:20–24

God judges between “fat sheep” and “lean sheep.” The strong who push, shove, and scatter the weak are confronted. God’s flock is not a place for self-serving strength. He promises one Shepherd—His servant David—pointing to Jesus, the Son of David. Strength in God’s flock is meant to protect, not crush.

3. Worship is the grateful response to the Shepherd’s goodness.

Psalm 100

We are called to joyful worship, thanksgiving, and glad service. The psalm grounds worship in identity: “Know that the LORD, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.” Worship is not merely a mood; it is a response to the Shepherd’s steadfast love and faithfulness.

4. We need enlightened eyes to know the exalted Christ.

Ephesians 1:15–23

Paul prays for believers to know the hope of their calling, the riches of God’s inheritance, and the greatness of His power—the same power that raised Christ and seated Him above every rule and authority. Christ is head over all things for the church. The Shepherd-King is exalted, and His power is for His people’s good.

5. The King identifies with “the least.”

Matthew 25:31–46

The Son of Man comes in glory and separates sheep and goats. The King says, “As you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.” This passage does not teach salvation by good works; it shows that genuine faith produces merciful action. Our treatment of the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and imprisoned reveals whether we truly recognize the King.

6. Grace produces grateful worship and faithful service.

These passages together show the flow of discipleship: the Shepherd seeks us, we worship Him, we pray to know His power, and we serve the least as we await His return. We do not serve to earn His love; we serve because we have received it.

Personal Reflection Questions

Ezekiel 34:11–16, 20–24

1. Where do you feel scattered, lost, injured, or weak right now? How does God's promise to "seek," "bind up," and "strengthen" speak to you?

2. In what ways might you be acting like a "fat sheep"—using strength, influence, or comfort to push past the weak? What would repentance look like?

3. How does the promise of "one shepherd, my servant David" point you to Jesus and give you hope?

Psalm 100

4. Which line of Psalm 100 especially helps you worship today? Why?

5. What changes when you remember that you are "the sheep of his pasture"—belonging to God rather than to your fears, work, or reputation?

6. Make a short gratitude list. Where have you seen God's steadfast love and faithfulness?

Ephesians 1:15–23

7. Paul prays for "the eyes of your heart" to be enlightened. What do you most need to know about God's hope, inheritance, and power right now?

8. Where do you feel powerless? How does Christ's resurrection power and headship over all things encourage you?

9. Pray Ephesians 1:17–19 for yourself and for one other person this week.

Matthew 25:31–46

10. Who are "the least" in your daily life—people who are hungry, lonely, sick, overlooked, or in need?

11. When have you served Christ without realizing it? Where might you have neglected Him by neglecting others?

12. How can you serve this week in a concrete way without seeking recognition?

Integration

13. How do these four passages together correct your view of God, yourself, and your neighbor?

14. What is one specific step of obedience you will take because of this study?

Application

As an individual study, choose one action from each category this week:

1. Receive: Set aside 15 minutes to sit with Ezekiel 34 and Psalm 100. Write down one way God has sought, fed, or strengthened you.

2. Worship: Begin or end each day with Psalm 100. Thank God for one specific expression of His steadfast love.

3. Pray: Pray Ephesians 1:17–19 for yourself and one other believer. Ask God to give you a deeper knowledge of Christ's hope and power.

4. Repent: Identify one "fat sheep" behavior—self-protection, indifference, harshness, or using influence for yourself—and confess it. Ask God to make you a protector of the weak.

5. Serve: Choose one concrete act toward "the least": make a meal, send a card, call someone isolated, visit the sick, give to a food pantry, or advocate for someone vulnerable. Do it as unto Christ.

6. Remember: When you serve, remind yourself that you are not earning the Shepherd's love. You are reflecting the Shepherd's heart.

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, Shepherd-King, thank You for seeking us when we were lost and for ruling all things for Your church. Open the eyes of our hearts to know Your hope and power. Make us a grateful, worshiping, compassionate people. Help us recognize You in the least and serve faithfully until You return. Amen.