

# Fat Sheep

READING  
Ezekiel 34  
Romans 12

*As for my sheep, they eat that which you have trodden with your feet, and they drink that which you have fouled with your feet.*

**E**zekiel 34 begins with a reprimand to the shepherds of Israel for not looking after their sheep. They're too busy feeding themselves. They kill them, they eat them, they use the wool, but they don't feed them. And now they're all scattered. Food for wild beasts.

And Yahweh is not happy. They are his sheep. And he was entrusting them to the shepherds.

So he's going to rescue them. And he's also going to shepherd them himself.

Clearly he's not talking about actual sheep. Or actual shepherds. The sheep are in fact his people. Israel. Men, not real sheep.

And the shepherds are the leaders of Israel. The senior priests, the kings, anyone in a position of authority.

I doubt you see yourself as a shepherd of Israel, but maybe as a shepherd of God's people.

Maybe you see yourself as a shepherd of a group of Christians?

A church. A class. A youth group. A family.

How do you measure up against Ezekiel 34? Hopefully well.

But here's a thought.

What if you're not a shepherd? What if you're just a fat sheep? Like the ones mentioned in the second half of Ezekiel 34.

And instead of looking after the weaker and smaller sheep, you push them around.

You make sure you get whatever food and water you want, but then you don't take care not to leave it muddied and trampled for the weaker sheep.

We only have one shepherd. Yeshua.

It's like the body illustration in Romans 12. The church is described there as a body, and each one of us is a part of that, and has a particular role and responsibility to the rest of the body.

But that body only has one head. Yeshua.

Nobody in your church is the head. Not even you.

Sure, you might be important. You are necessary for the functioning of the body. And Yeshua may have raised you up for this very purpose.

But don't get too proud. You are not the head.

We all need to remember, (myself included), that we are just sheep. We are just a part of the body. And we need to do our part to the best of our ability, but more importantly, we need to make sure that in doing our part, we are also acting in the best interests of the whole body.

As a part of the body we have that obligation, to look after it.

We can't just be the fat sheep who just looks after himself and forgets about the rest of the flock.

Nothing wrong with being a fat sheep. The flock needs bigger stronger members to help guide and protect it.

The problem comes when those fat sheep are selfish sheep. Arrogant sheep. Self important sheep.

If you know someone like that. Be very brave and go and have a talk with them about it. Or be a little brave and email them this.

Or be a bit timid, but email me their address, and I'll email them this for you.

But don't just run away.