

# God's Mission

The holidays are over and, at this time of year, many people engage in goal setting and strategizing for the year ahead. They take a look at the direction they are going and make plans to help them achieve success, whatever that looks like.

For the most part, I am the same. I tend to be very strategic by nature, which means that I typically live in the future and very seldom in the present. It means that I like to know where I'm going and what I will be doing in the days, weeks, and months ahead. I use this time to reengage with my life's purpose and also to realign with my personal and professional mission.

**Q:** What about you? Do you have any thoughts or considerations about what the year ahead looks like? Take a moment and reflect on them.

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Looking at this concept through a spiritual lens, I wonder if God has a specific direction that he has determined for Himself. It's hard to think of an omniscient sovereign being as needing a "north star" statement to help guide His actions. However, in my reading today, I stumbled upon a particular verse that caused me to pause and consider that God also has "a mission".

In **Ezekiel 34:11-16**, the passage emphasizes God's profound care and mission as he cares for His people.

The passage begins with God declaring, "*For thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I, I myself will search for my sheep and will seek them out*" (**Ezekiel 34:11**).

Imagine the Creator of the universe actively searching for you, personally seeking you out amidst the complexities of life. This is a powerful affirmation of God's commitment to His mission – to care for His people individually.

There is also assurance that God gives in **verse 12**: "*As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his sheep that have been scattered, so will I seek out my sheep, and I will rescue them from all places where they have been scattered on a day of clouds and thick darkness.*"

In the same way a shepherd diligently gathers his scattered sheep, God promises to rescue and gather His people from the challenges and uncertainties of life. As you step into the new year, embrace the knowledge that God is actively working to bring you back into His fold.

**Consider verse 13**, where God affirms, *"And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them into their own land. And I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the ravines, and in all the inhabited places of the country."*

God's mission includes not only rescue but also restoration. He wants to lead you to a place of abundance, peace, and fulfillment – your own metaphorical "land of promise." Reflect on the aspects of your life where God is leading you to a place of thriving.

**Verse 14** further underscores God's intentions: *"I will feed them with good pasture, and on the mountain heights of Israel shall be their grazing land. There they shall lie down in good grazing land, and on rich pasture they shall feed on the mountains of Israel."*

The imagery of being led to, and fed in, a good pasture speaks to God's desire to provide not just the essentials but abundance. Consider the areas of your life where you need God's abundance and trust that He is leading you to places of richness.

**Verse 15** introduces a profound promise: *"I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord GOD."*

God, the ultimate Shepherd, takes personal responsibility for His people. Reflect on the comfort and security that comes from being under the care of the Almighty Shepherd. How does it feel to know that God is intimately involved in guiding your journey?

As we finish this concept, consider God's commitment in **verse 16**: *"I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak, and the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them in justice."*

God's mission encompasses seeking, bringing back, healing, strengthening, and ensuring justice. Reflect on the areas in your life where God is working to bring restoration, healing, and strength.

As you start the year, express gratitude for God's mission as outlined in **Ezekiel 34**. Thank Him for actively seeking you out, rescuing you, leading you to places of abundance, and personally shepherding you.

## My Prayer

*Gracious Heavenly Father, as I start this new year, I come before You with a heart full of gratitude and anticipation. Thank You for the timeless wisdom found in Ezekiel 34:11-16, which reminds me of Your unwavering love and dedicated care.*

*Lord, I acknowledge that You are the Shepherd who seeks me out amidst life's complexities. Today, I surrender any feelings of being lost or scattered, trusting in Your promise to rescue and gather me. Lead me, dear Lord, to the abundant pastures of Your grace and peace.*

*In moments of uncertainty, help me remember that You are actively working to restore and bring me to a place of fulfillment. Guide me to a "land of promise" where I can experience Your abundance in every aspect of my life.*

*I find comfort in knowing that You, the Almighty Shepherd, take personal responsibility for my well-being. Thank You for the assurance of Your guidance, security, and intimate involvement in my journey. May I lie down in the assurance of Your love, trusting that You are the Shepherd who strengthens, heals, and provides justice.*

*Heavenly Father, as I embrace the new year, grant me wisdom and discernment to recognize Your guidance. Strengthen my faith to trust Your plan, and help me surrender any fears or uncertainties into Your capable hands. May Your mission and care inspire me to face the future with confidence, knowing that I am held securely in Your love.*

*I pray for the grace to live in alignment with Your divine purpose and to reflect Your love in all that I do. May this new year be a season of growth, transformation, and deepening intimacy with You. Thank You for Your abiding presence and the assurance that, as I journey through the year ahead, You are my Shepherd, my Guide, and my Redeemer.*

*In the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, I offer this prayer with a heart full of hope and gratitude.*

*Amen.*



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