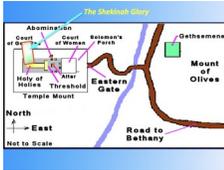


Ezekiel 37 The Valley of Dry Bones

⁴ Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. ⁵ Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: Ezekiel 37:4, 5



The Glory had departed from Israel and with its departure the Babylonians attacked Israel and destroyed its Temple in 586 BC. It was not until Cyrus allowed the Israelis to rebuild the temple between 538 and 515 BC, so that Temple worship began again.

The Shekinah Glory never returned to the Second Temple. Uniquely, it witnessed the Glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ during the days of His ministry upon the earth. Following Israel's rejection of Him as Messiah, God judged Israel by bringing the Romans to destroy this temple in AD 70.

In our last lesson we learned that God planned to dwell with man throughout history, beginning with the Garden. As a result of the Fall, God's dwelling on earth was suspended. During the Church-Age, He now dwells within true believers through the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, He will again dwell with righteous men and women in the New Jerusalem on the New Earth.

During the days of the Tabernacle, and then in the Temple in Jerusalem, God dwelt with Israel according to the conditions of the Mosaic Covenant.

That Covenant declared that God would bless Israel when the nation obeyed Him and when they disobeyed, He would chastise them, up to and including removing the Glory of His presence until they repented and turned back to Him.

According to Ezekiel 8-11, God reluctantly departed from the land of Israel as a result of their disobedience.

At the end of the time of the Lord's earthly ministry in Israel, He again said an emotional "goodby" to His people from the Mount of Olives in Matthew 23 verse 37-39

³⁷ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! ³⁸ Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. ³⁹ For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

From Ezekiel chapter 12 to chapter 35, Ezekiel records numerous prophecies concerning Israel's leaders, priests, people and its neighboring countries – actions justifying His departure.

The Future Restoration



But even as the Glory left, God promised a future restoration to His people in the **land** - chapter 11 verse 17:

Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and **I will give you the land of Israel.**



The conditions of that restoration was outlined in Leviticus 26:41, 42:

...if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham, will I remember; and I will remember the land.

The steps of that final restoration are given in the last chapters of Ezekiel.



- Ezekiel 36 - describes the **future** restoration of Israel
- Ezekiel 37 - illustrates the **process** of restoration, beginning with the land.
- Ezekiel 38, 39 - informs us **when** these events will take place.
- Ezekiel 40-42 - describes the Millennial Temple in the restored land.
- Ezekiel 43 - describes the LORD's **entrance** into the Temple – the Glory returns.



The process of restoration begins with the **return** of the people of Israel to the land. We read in Ezekiel 36:24

For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land.

As God promised, following AD 73, the Jews were driven in to exile throughout the world.

Ezekiel 37:1, 2 – The Process Begins

Beginning with Ezekiel 37 verse 1, the Lord begins the process of restoration, describes as the regathering of “dry bones.”



*The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the **midst of the valley** which was full of bones,*
Ezekiel 37:1

These verses portrays **two elements**:

- 1) The “valley” of Gentile **domination** during the times of the Gentiles (Luke 21:24), beginning with the Babylonian exile.
- 2) The “bones” are “very dry (v. 2),” reflecting Israel’s **lack** of spiritual life.

True spiritual life for Israel can only be realized when the people are back in the land and they, as a nation, repent and recognize their Messiah.

In Ezekiel’s day, and in our day, many have wondered if God ever will restore Israel and establish the messianic earthly kingdom; thus God poses a question to Ezekiel:

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O LORD God, thou knowest.

Ezekiel 37:3



God answered His own question with a comforting response:

*Thus saith the LORD God unto these bones; Behold, **I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live.***
Ezekiel 37:5

In verse 11, God identifies the “bones” as not just the exiled Jews of Ezekiel’s day but future Jews as well:

*Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are **the whole house of Israel:** behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.* Ezekiel 37:11

In this chapter, God uses the metaphor of a dead body in its elemental state being resurrected to a glorified state by God.

Let us now look at God’s four steps:

Step One: God miraculously will re-gather Israel’s scattered, spiritually dead bones (v. 4).

Step Two: God will place sinews upon the bones, joining the spiritually dead bones together (v. 6).

Step Three: God will add flesh to the bones, giving it the form of a body (v. 6).

Step Four: God will breathe the breath of life into this body giving it spiritual life (vss. 5, 6).

He will do this just as He did when He breathed life into Adam life at Creation (**Gen. 2: 7**).

Just as Ezekiel prophesied, I believe God has been re-gathering the “bones” in our day.

Currently, over one-half of the world’s Jewish population is back in Israel. Individuals have returned from every tribe and nation.

Regrettably, Israel is largely a secular, unbelieving nation with only a small religious remnant looking for the Messiah and the fulfillment of God’s promise. Israel is waiting for God’s “breath of life.”

Unlike the time when the Glory left, the future will see a cleansed and glorified Israel

Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God.

Ezekiel 37:23

Timeline

Let us look at a possible timeline of the gathering of the “bones.”

Overview of Significant Dates in Modern History of Israel

1891

William Eugene Blackstone, a premillennial dispensational evangelist, led a petition drive, signed by 413 prominent Christian and a few Jewish leaders in the United States. Blackstone personally gathered the signatures of men such as John D. Rockefeller, J.P. Morgan, Cyrus McCormick, senators, congressmen, religious leaders of all denominations, newspaper editors, the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court and others for the "Blackstone Memorial." He presented the "Memorial" to President Harrison in March of 1891, calling for American support of Jewish restoration to Israel.

2 November 1917

The Prime Minister of Britain, speaking for the British government, declared that Britain would establish a Jewish national homeland in what was then called Palestine.

9 December 1917

The governing Turks were driven from Jerusalem by British troops under General Edmond Allenby and put under British rule.

June 1922

The League of Nations issued a legal mandate for Britain to govern the land of Palestine.

23 May 1939

Britain declared a White Paper Policy calling for an independent nation governed by Arabs and Jews in 10 years. It also limited Jewish immigration to Israel to 75,000 Jews during the next five years. The Jewish population at the time of the Paper was 450,000 living in the entire mandated area. The British White Paper of 1939 was issued to satisfy mounting Arab pressure against further Jewish immigration to Palestine.

24 October 1945

United Nations began.

29 November 1947

The United Nations, acknowledged Britains' belief that their mandate was no longer feasible: therefore, they divided Palestine into the Arab State, the Jewish State, and the city of Jerusalem – governed by UN trustees. The United Nations declared the British mandate to end on 15 May 1948.

14 May 1948

Jewish leaders in the Jewish State, recognizing the effect of the end of the mandate, declared Israel to be a nation.

15 May 1948,

The Arab state began war with the newly formed Israel with their stated goal "to drive Jews into the sea."

The United States, directed by President Harry Truman, fully recognized the new state of Israel. At the time of its beginning as a nation, there were 806,000 Jews in Israel and 156,000 Arabs living in the state who chose to be citizens of the new nation. 700,000 Arabs chose to leave Israel and migrate to other Arab nations where they were treated as refugees and placed into refugee camps – they were not assimilated into the other Arab cultures.

11 May 1949

The nation of Israel was admitted to the United Nations.

5 - 10 June 1967

During this 6-day War Israel defeated three Arab armies (Egypt, Syria, and Jordan), gained territory four times its original size, and became the preeminent military power in the region. These areas were the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Sinai Peninsula, the Golan Heights and East Jerusalem.

6 – 25 October 1973

Called the Yom Kippur War, Israel was attacked on its most holy day of the year, the Day of Atonement, by Egypt and Syria. To prevent the complete defeat of the Arab forces, the United States stopped Israel from fighting on 25 October.

1979

Israel signed a peace treaty with Egypt, that continues to this day.

1980

Israel declared Jerusalem its capital.

1994

Israel signed a peace treaty with Jordan, that continues to this day.

2005

Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip.

6 December 2017

President Donald Trump declared the United State's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

2020

Israel signed a normalization agreement with Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, and Morocco.

2021

Israel signed a normalization agreement with Sudan.