

CAN THESE BONES LIVE?

"I prophesied as I was commanded" (Ezekiel 37:7).

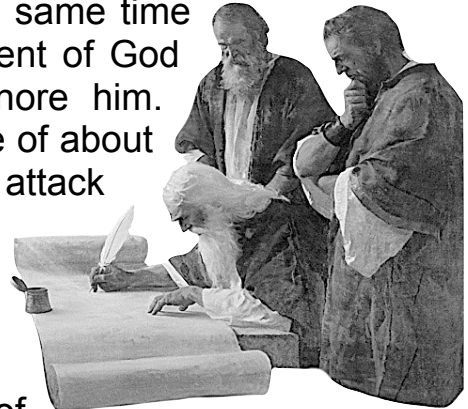


"They lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army...**these bones are the whole house of Israel** (Ezekiel 37:10-11).

B. Kirkland

THE PERSON

Jeremiah, Daniel and Ezekiel, all lived during the same time period. Jeremiah warned about the coming judgment of God coming upon Israel; however most chose to ignore him. Daniel did not ignore Jeremiah; however, at the age of about fifteen he was taken into bondage during the first attack against Israel, and Ezekiel was taken about eight years later. Jeremiah was a much older man who remained in the land and ministered to the people who remained.



Daniel was used of God to minister to the king of Babylon while Ezekiel spoke to the captives who had been brought to the rivers of Babylon. Many of the captives wept when they remembered Zion; however, Ezekiel was privileged to be used of God to look forward rather than hopelessly looking back.

False prophets were saying that the people would be returned to Jerusalem and that the city would not be destroyed; however, the final deportation, during Zedekiah's reign, the city was destroyed. This was about eleven years after Ezekiel was taken captive.

Jeremiah had sent a message to Babylon (Jeremiah 29) saying that the city would be destroyed. Ezekiel confirmed this message and warned the people that they must turn to God before they could return to Jerusalem. Ezekiel began his ministry five years after his captivity, when he was about thirty years old.

Ezekiel had to meet the false hope given by the false prophets and the indifference that sets in when God's people turn their backs on God.

THE PEOPLE

The word ***"Israel"*** occurs 186 times in the Book of Ezekiel. God was very displeased with His people.

Ezekiel 2:3,

*"Son of man, I send thee to the children of **Israel**, to **a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me.**"*

Ezekiel 3:7,

*"**Israel will not hearken unto thee; for they will not hearken unto me:** for all the house of **Israel** are **impudent and hardhearted.**"*

Ezekiel 3:7,

*"I have made thee a watchman unto the house of **Israel**: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and **give them warning from me.**"*

THE PROPHECY

Ezekiel 37:1-14,

1 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,

2 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

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

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:

6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

8 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

9 Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

11 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.

12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

13 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.



Ezekiel 37:1-2,

*"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. And caused me to pass **by** them **round about**: and, behold, there were **very many** in the open valley; and, lo, they were **very dry**."*



Ezekiel said he was "in the midst", "by," and "round about" the bones. The word "midst" has been translated "middle" seven times. The word "by" has been translated "through" fifty-eight times. Ezekiel had a through understanding of the situation. He said the bones were "very dry." To be dry is to

Jewish Population:

- 10. Brazil (95,000)
- 9. Australia (113,000)
- 8. Germany (118,000)
- 7. Argentina (182,000)
- 6. Russia (190,000)
- 5. United Kingdom (290,000)
- 4. Canada (380,000)
- 3. France (478,000)
- 2. United States (5,425,000)
- 1. Israel (6,014,000)

be without water. Water is a type of the Word of God. Ezekiel also said there were "very many." There are very few Jews in the world today that have any understanding of what is referred to as "the washing of water by the word" (Ephesians 5:26).

THE POSSIBILITY

Ezekiel 37:3,

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

The first time we find the word "possible" in the Bible occurs in **Matthew 19:26** where we read, "... with God all things are possible."

THE PROPHECYING

Ezekiel 37:4-6,

*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:

6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

The word **“prophecy”** occurs ninety time in Ezekiel, and the phrase **“the word of the LORD”** occurs sixty times in the Book. Forty-nine times Ezekiel said, **“the word of the LORD came unto me.”**

The Lord said He would do three things.

Ezekiel 37:5,

(1) “I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live.”

Ezekiel 37:10,

“So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them.”

Ezekiel 37:6,

(2) “I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin.”

Ezekiel 37:8,

“I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them.”

Ezekiel 37:6,

(3) “And put breath in you, and ye shall live.”

Ezekiel 37:10,

“So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them.”

THE PERCEPTION

Ezekiel 37:6,

“And ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.”

The word “know” in verse six has been translated “perceive” eighteen times, and translated “understand” seven times. I the near future Israel will understand who Christ is.

“YE SHALL KNOW”

Ezekiel 6:7, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 7:4, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 7:9, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 11:10, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 11:12, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 12:20, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 13:9, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 13:14, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 13:21, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 13:23, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 14:8, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 15:7, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 20:38, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 20:42, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 20:44, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 23:49, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”

Ezekiel 24:24, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 25:5, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 35:9, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 36:11, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 27:6, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 37:13, “Ye shall know that I am the LORD.”

“THEY SHALL KNOW”

Ezekiel 6:7, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 6:14, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 7:27, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 12:15, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 12:16, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 24:27, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 25:11, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 25:17, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 26:6, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”

Ezekiel 28:22, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 28:23, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 28:24, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 28:26, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 29:9, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 29:16, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 29:21, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 30:8, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 30:19, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 30:25, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 30:26, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 35:15, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 36:38, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 38:23, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”
Ezekiel 39:6, “They shall know that I am the LORD.”



THE PROCEDURE

Ezekiel 37:7-10,

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: (1) and as I prophesied, there was a noise, (2) and behold a shaking, (3) and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

8 And when I beheld, lo, (4) the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

9 Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, (5) and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

1. “There Was A Noise”

The word “noise” occurs eleven times in Ezekiel. The dictionary says a noise is “a sound that causes a disturbance.”

2. “Behold A Shaking”

Ezekiel 38:19 says, “Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel.”

3. “The Bones Came Together”

On May 14, 1948, in Tel Aviv, Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion proclaims the State of Israel, establishing the first Jewish state in 2,000 years. In an afternoon ceremony at the Tel Aviv Art Museum, Ben-Gurion pronounced the words “**We hereby proclaim the establishment of the Jewish state in Palestine, to be called Israel,**” prompting applause and tears from the crowd gathered at the museum. Ben-Gurion became Israel’s first premier.



4. “The Sinews And The Flesh Came Up Upon Them”

These prophecies were partially fulfilled in 1948. Ezekiel's prophecies shows the event as a valley of dry bones. The bones started shaking and joining together into a skeleton. Then the skeleton was covered by muscles and skin. The rebirth of the nation of Israel is a stark fulfillment of this vision.

However, the last part of that vision has not yet been fulfilled. Just as God had first formed Adam and then breathed life into him, in Ezekiel's vision, God also breathes new life into Israel, and gives her a new heart. These are pictures of spiritual birth, but most of the people of Israel have not yet experienced this spiritual transformation. It will happen in time, according to this and other prophecies about God's Chosen People. Multitudes of Jewish people have already turned to Jesus as their Messiah in our generation!



THE PRESERVATION

Ezekiel 37:11-14,

*11 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.*

*12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, **Thus saith the Lord GOD**; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.*

13 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

*14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and **I shall place you in your own land**: then shall ye know that **I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it**, saith the LORD.*

Not only did God bring Israel into being as a nation in 1948, God keeps Israel as a nation. Immediately after being declared a nation the new Jewish state was plunged into the War of Independence. Israel was forced to defend itself against the Arab League which consisted of Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq.



In the book "The Fall And Rise of Israel we find Israel was outnumbered, and short of everything necessary to win a war. Only one soldier in three had a rifle. They also has a shortage of food.

"The Arabs had modern planes, heavy guns, tanks and armored cars. Most of such equipment was denied to the Jews. They had to depend on light arms and had to endure the shelling day by day from Arab artillery, without being able to reply" (Hull, p. 334)

William Hull describes their military victory:

"The whole war, at least the defense of Jerusalem, was a miracle. Arms, ammunition, food, water and trained soldiers were in desperately short supply. Added to this was the weariness of the soldiers, mostly young men who had been fighting, with little relief, little sleep and little food since the beginning of December 1947. The two or three Bren guns [light machine guns] the Jews possessed had to be rushed from one point to another to give the Arabs the

idea that the Jews had a large number of them. The Jews sometimes beat large tin cans as the guns were fired, thus giving the effect of many shots. Musrara, an all-Arab district of Jerusalem, was captured by the Jews with the following equipment: five rifles, two Sten Guns [9mm machine guns] and thirty tin cans. And the Arabs ran. It was like a repetition of Gideon's victory in Bible days" (The Fall and Rise of Israel, p. 338).

The War of Independence was only the beginning of Israel's battles. Between 1951 and 1955, Fedayeen suicide squads killed 1,000 Israelis. In 1956 they fought **the Suez War**. In 1967 they fought **the Six Day War** which was a great victory against all-odds. America and France had imposed an arms embargo on Israel, while Israel faced 250,000 troops, 2,000 tanks, and 700 aircraft. In spite of the odds, Israel won the war. Following the Six-Day War there was Egypt's **War of Attrition** against Israel from 1968-70. Then there was the Yom Kippur War of 1973.

Frederick the Great once demanded proof in one word that the Bible is inspired. The answer provided was the "Jew."



God has said:

- The Jews would be disobedient—and they were.
- The Jews would be disbursed—and they were.
- The Jew would be discredited—and they were.
- Pharaoh could not destroy God's chosen people.
- The Red Sea could not drown them.
- Nebuchadnezzar's furnace could not burn them.
- The gallows of Haman could not execute them.
- Hitler could not annihilate them.

Since 1948, Israel has had her own state and Jews have resettled there from all over the world; however, a much greater regathering remains for the future.

Isaiah 2:2-4,

2 And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

"I the LORD have spoken it, and will do it" (Ezekiel 22:14).