

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION
Ezekiel: Effective Ministry To The Spiritually Rebellious
Part LVII: God's Renewal Of The Nation Israel
(Ezekiel 37:1-14)

I. Introduction

- A. In times of hardship when all opportunities for blessing seem lost, God's people are tempted to give up hope.
- B. However, God is both omnipotent and immutable, all-powerful and unaffected by the difficult circumstances that afflict His mortal people, so He has an infinitely endless ability and energy to restore His people.
- C. Ezekiel 37:1-14 presents this truth as applied to the nation Israel, what we view for our insight and edification:

II. God's Renewal Of The Nation Israel, Ezekiel 37:1-14.

- A. Ezekiel 37 "illustrates the promise of chapter 36" where God had predicted He would restore Israel as a nation to her land with her king and temple, Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1298.
- B. In Ezekiel 37:1-14, God then gave a sign to Ezekiel that pictured the restoration predicted in Ezekiel 36, *Ibid.*:
 - 1. The Lord illustrated His future restoration of Israel with a vision of a valley of dry bones, Ezekiel 37:1-10:
 - a. God took Ezekiel in the spirit realm out a valley that was full of bones, Ezekiel 37:1.
 - b. Ezekiel noticed the many bones were very dry, indicating there was no life in them, Ezekiel 37:2.
 - c. The Lord then asked Ezekiel if the dry bones could live, a humanly impossible feat, but since God was doing the asking, and He could do the impossible, Ezekiel replied, "O Lord God, you know," Ezekiel 37:3.
 - d. God then told Ezekiel to prophesy over the bones, saying that God would cause them to have fully formed bodies and give them breath so that they would know that He was the Lord, Ezekiel 37:4-6.
 - e. When Ezekiel prophesied as ordered, the bones rattled as they came together, forming skeletons, v. 7.
 - f. The skeletons then were covered with sinews, flesh and skin over the flesh, Ezekiel 37:8.
 - g. God then told Ezekiel to prophesy that breath might come into these bodies that they might live, v. 9.
 - h. Ezekiel gave the prophecy, and breath indeed entered the bodies, they lived and stood up on their feet, forming a very large army, Ezekiel 37:10.
 - 2. God then explained this illustration in Ezekiel 37:11-14 (as follows):
 - a. The Lord claimed these bones represented the whole house of Israel that was then *figuratively* saying, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are clean cut off," Ezekiel 37:11 ESV.
 - b. God thus had Ezekiel prophesy, telling His people [in alluding to their *figurative* saying] that He would *figuratively* open their graves and bring them into the land of Israel, predicting His supernatural restoration of His people back to the Promised Land regardless of their lack of hope of such a destiny, Ezekiel 37:12.
 - c. When God then [in alluding to their *figurative* saying] *figuratively* opened up His people's graves and raised them up from those graves, they would realize that God was the Lord, Ezekiel 37:13.
 - d. God would put His Holy "Spirit," translating the Hebrew noun *ruah*, within His people, what is also the same word for "breath" (*ruah*) that entered the bodies in the illustration in Ezekiel 37:5-10, and God's people would live spiritually, what will be fulfilled in the future Messianic Kingdom, Ezekiel 37:14a; Joel 2:28-29. (Kittel, Biblia Hebraica, p. 872-873; B. D. B., A Heb. and Eng. Lex. of the O. T., p. 924-926)
 - e. [The Hebrew word *ruah* meaning "spirit, wind, breath" matches the Aramaic *ruah* in spelling and meaning (*Ibid.*, p. 1112), and Jesus spoke in His native Aramaic to Nicodemus in John 3:1-21. John 3:8 is written in Greek, and the Greek noun for "wind" there is *pneuma*, with *pneuma* also meaning "Spirit," so the Greek noun *pneuma* matches the Hebrew and Aramaic *ruah* in **meaning!** Jesus thus alluded to Ezekiel 37:4-10 in telling Nicodemus in John 3:8 that the Holy Spirit's work was like that of the wind (B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 329), for Nicodemus as a teacher of the Jews would know it was **Biblical** and **true!** Also, when the Holy "Spirit" (*pneuma*) came at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-2), He came with the sound of a great "wind" (*pneuma*) (*Ibid.*, p. 419), another play on *pneuma* as a foretaste of the Ezekiel 37:4-14!]
 - f. God's people would then know that He was the Lord. He had spoken, and He would perform it, v. 14b.

Lesson: *When the people of Israel had given up hope of having their nation restored to its former glory in unity and divine blessing and dwelling in the Promised Land, God predicted with an illustration given in a valley of dry bones His plan to restore Israel miraculously as a nation, with His Holy Spirit being in His people.*

Application: *(1) May we never underestimate the power and willingness of God to fulfill His promises! (2) May we always be optimistic even in the hardest of times, for God is great and His will is sovereign over all our obstacles.*