

CAN THESE BONES LIVE?

(A Biblical Analysis of Ezekiel's Dry Bones)

Ezek 37:1 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, (KJV)

Ezek 37:2 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. (KJV)

Ezek 37:3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. (KJV)

Ezek 37:4 Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. (KJV)

Ezek 37:5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

Ezek 37:6 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. (KJV)

Ezek 37:7 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. (KJV)

Ezek 37:8 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. (KJV)

Ezek 37:9 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. (KJV)

Ezek 37:10 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. (KJV)

Ezek 37:11 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. (KJV)

Ezek 37:12 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. (KJV)

Ezek 37:13 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, (KJV)

Ezek 37:14 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. (KJV)

VALLEY OF DRY BONES

As we begin to unravel a portion of this chapter, we notice in verse one that Ezekiel is given a vision. He is carried away in the spirit and is set down in the midst of a valley full of bones. This valley may be identified with the valley in Psalm chapter twenty-three.

"Yea, though I walk through the VALLEY of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil..."

In both instances the valley seems to depict the complete earth. Every person walks through the valley of the shadow of death, because that is where our temporal existence is. We are constantly in the shadow of death as we live out our lives in this world. The only difference is that the true believer is to fear no evil, because the Lord is with him, as Psalm 23:4 assures us. Ezekiel is given a glimpse of this valley, which would be typical of the entire world. Ezekiel sees that it is full of bones.

Moreover, this valley may spiritually signify the curse upon the earth, which God put upon it.

Genesis 3:19

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

This is the curse of which God bestowed upon Adam and Eve, and thus the human race. The sentence is death. Man is condemned to the eternal death of this present earth. The word "ground" in the above verse is also translated in the Hebrew as "earth," "soil" and "land." It is representative of this temporal earth in its present condition. "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou *return*." "Dust" is also a word that is interchangeable in the Hebrew with soil, earth, ground and land. All having a cursed earth in view.

A skeleton is the final form of man before he turns back into the dust of the earth. This ground, dust, land, or earth can be identified in Scripture with valley. It is this valley that is man's "testing ground"; the arena of God's purpose, separated in its midst by two mountains (kingdoms), both spiritual - God's and Satan's. All whom God plans to save out of this valley of death will be saved, for Christ said:

John 6:39

"And this is the father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lost nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."

We read an interesting confirmation of this promise in Jeremiah 31:40 as it is fulfilled in eternity's New Heaven and New Earth.

"And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse gate toward the east, shall be holy unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever,"

Before man is saved out of this "valley of the shadow of death," he is facing God's eternal judgment:

"Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision," (Joel 3:4).

"Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about," (Joel 3:13).

The meaning of the name "Jehoshaphat" is "Jehovah has judged." Every human ever born on this earth has walked through this valley of judgment, this valley of the shadow of death. "Many are called, but few are chosen," Scripture tell us. Except for the mercy and grace of God the father, all would continue as dry bones in this great valley, void of any spiritual life. In verse 3 God poses a most important question to Ezekiel: "Can these bones

live?" Ezekiel's answer was "Thou knowest." From this point on God spends the next 25 verses showing the prophet how He (that is God) will cause these bones to live.

LO, THEY WERE VERY DRY

In verse 4 we see that these bones are "DRY" bones. The Hebrew translation defines this word "dry" as: "to be ashamed"; "to be confounded"; "to wither away"; or to be "dried up." This is indeed the spiritual implication. When we read of God drying up waters or trees or bones in Scripture, it means one thing: IT IS VOID OF SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING - IT IS LACKING ETERNAL LIFE. They are ashamed and confounded. They have spiritually withered away.

In recalling Psalm chapter 22, which is a prophecy of Christ as He hung on the cross, we note that it states in verse fifteen "... my strength is DRIED up like a potsherd ..." This word "dried" is the same Hebrew word that we see here is Ezekiel: "O ye dry bones," or "Lo, they were very dry." Christ wasn't merely referring to His physical "strength" being dried up, although His body was dehydrated and He did thirst physically. Scripture tells us of Christ on the cross:

"My strength is dried up like a potsherd." The word "strength" here in Psalm 22:15 means His ability, His power, His might, and His strength. All were "dried up." Not only was He dried physically, but also spiritually Christ hung on the cross burdened with the sins of all believers. Christ was, in every sense, spiritually dried while He hung on the cross. He was ashamed and confounded (dried spiritually) which was part of His punishment for our sins. Christ, God

incarnate, went into hell as a doomed sinner for us, and came out after three days. Christ experienced the awfulness of being without hope, as are these bones in Ezekiel.

The next question we might ask ourselves is how can bones take on human feelings such as being confounded or ashamed? Of course God is using "bones" as an analogy or metaphor in portraying the lost sinner. The Hebrew word for "bone" in the Old Testament can mean "the whole substance of man." In verse 4 God commands Ezekiel to say unto these bones "HEAR the word of the Lord." These bones would clearly never hear the Word of God if God didn't command them to Hear, as He does in this verse. If God doesn't command them to hear, they would remain as dry bones. Therefore, because God Himself commands these bones to "hear" His Word, thus we know that these bones are representative of His elect. Christ, our Good Shepherd, has called them forth unto eternal life.

Before we look at how God brings these bones to life, we first need to understand why God uses this picture of bones. Ezekiel sees a great open valley filled with bones that were very dry. They were dry because they had physically been there a long time. More importantly they were there because they were representative of mankind in its unregenerate state, i.e. dead to Christ, the God of Creation.

These bones were displayed throughout the valley, meaning they were scattered. Keep that in mind. This scene pictures (in parabolic fashion) the destination of all of God's elect, had He not predestinated them to eternal life. They would be just as

doomed as the rest of the world - the enemies of God.

SCRIBES AND PHARISEES: DEAD MEN'S BONES

Jesus gives us a great clue concerning dry bones in Matthew chapter 23 where He says:

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye are like unto whited sepulchers, which indeed appear beautiful outward but are within ... FULL OF DEAD MEN'S BONES,..."

The Scribes and Pharisees were religious hypocrites, Jesus says. They were like whited sepulchers; that is they were like tombs that were washed clean. Outwardly they appeared sincere, but inwardly (that is spiritually) they were full of dead men's bones, and Christ adds "and of all uncleanness." They were spiritually dead. Christ Clearly associates dead men's bones with being unclean. "Dead men's bones" is clearly a term referring to one's spiritual decay.

In Numbers 19:16 we read the following: "And whosoever toucheth one that is slain with a sword in the open fields, or a dead body, or a BONE OF A MAN, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days."

In the above verse God is contrasting four distinct nouns (slain, dead body, grave and bone) and is attaching them to one another for the common meaning, which is death. All four words have death in view. Recall

that Christ told the Scribes and Pharisees that in addition to being full of dead men's bones, they were full of all uncleanness. To be unclean "seven days" would spiritually represent the unsaved. Christ might have had Numbers nineteen in view when He rebuked the Scribes and the Pharisees. Having touched dead men's bones - you are unclean. Thus the Scribes and Pharisees were sepulchers with a "whited" appearance, but inwardly unclean, full of dead men's bones.

THESE BONES: SCATTERED

Another condition of these bones in the valley of Ezekiel Chapter 37 is that they were no doubt broken. While this chapter doesn't say this, one would logically reason that a skeleton that lies in an open field eventually breaks down and its bones become broken and scattered. Ezekiel doesn't mention the fact that these bones were scattered, however this is a parable depicting dry, scattered and thus broken bones. We read in Psalm 53:5 the following:

"God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee ..."

Spiritually the implication is that one's whole being or substance is scattered. Remember "bones" can mean "one's whole substance." Not only are these dried bones scattered, but they are broken as well.

When God brought Israel out of bondage from Egypt, that grand event of the Exodus pictured the believer being brought out of bondage from sin and into Christ. Numbers

Chapter 24:8 in speaking of Israel might ultimately have Christ in view:

"God brought him forth out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of an unicorn;"

When Scripture speaks of a unicorn, it is usually in reference to God's power. If this verse has Israel in view, it is ultimately God's spiritual Israel - all believers being typified by Old Testament national Israel. This verse, however, lends much evidence in typifying Christ as our highest "Israel." Numbers 24:8 continues:

" He shall eat up the nations his enemies, and shall break their bones, and pierce them through with his arrows."

Israel of old was ordained to carry forth the Word of God just as the New Testament spiritual Israel - the Church - is ordained to preach the Gospel. The Word of God will do one of two things: it will break the bones of Israel's enemies, or it will bring one to his knees in repentance, that he may be eternally saved. God's eternal Israel will "break the bones" of their enemies, Numbers tells us. And who are the enemies of Israel? The entire world that has not come to Christ with a broken and a contrite heart. All who forsake God's salvation plan. These are they who spiritually have had their "bones broken." **THEY WILL REMAIN IN THEIR SINS AND TRESPASSES!**

When Christ hung of the Cross for the sins of the lost sheep of the House of Israel, why was it so important that none of His bones should be broken? John 19:36 tells us:

"For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, a bone of him shall not be broken."

CHRIST: GOD'S SACRIFICIAL LAMB

Christ was crucified in fulfillment of Old Testament Scripture. Again, why was it crucial that a bone of Christ should not be broken? Because Christ was the sacrificial "lamb of God." John the Baptist took his first look at Christ and declared:

"Behold, the lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world."

Christ was foreshadowed by the sacrifice of the Old Testament Passover Lamb. Every year as the Hebrews celebrated their freedom from Egypt at the Passover, every household would sacrifice a lamb. This lamb would have to be without spot and without blemish, thus being a spiritual picture of God's true Sacrificial Lamb, Christ Himself, howbeit unknown to Israel at that time. In addition to this, the lamb was not to have any broken bones. We read this in Exodus 12:46:

"Neither shall ye break a bone thereof."

The reason God could not allow Christ to suffer any type of a broken bone was in keeping with His Holy and infallible Word with regard to the tradition of the Old Testament sacrificial lamb. While this played an important part, yet the real intent behind this tradition was to disclose in Scripture the truth that God's own Son would someday be the Sacrificial Lamb (without spiritual spot, blemish or broken bones), who would take away the sin of all true followers of Christ. Our Lord was

spotless (worthy) in the spiritual sense to qualify as God's own Sacrificial Lamb. Only God could meet these qualifications for this task. Thus God sent Himself in the second person of the Deity - the Son of God - yet God Himself. God allowed Christ to become sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21), and stood in place of our judgment in order to spare us from the blackness of eternal hell. As Christ atoned for the damnable sins of His elect, He (God incarnate) sank to the lowest spiritual depths of hell, becoming a worm (Psalm 22:6), and a serpent (Numbers 21:9; John 3:14) for us, thus fulfilling the demand for a ransom (Matthew 20:28).

Spiritually and physically Christ's bones were not to be broken; a testimony to His Divinity. If we are not trusting exclusively on Christ for salvation, we are yet a living corpse, plagued by sins that can never be atoned for apart from Christ. At journey's end, a Christ less life withers away into bones and dust ...

"to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever," (Jude 1:13).

CAN THESE BONES LIVE?

"Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O LORD, heal me; for my bones are vexed." (Psalm 6:2)

Was the Psalmist calling for a physical healing for his bones? No, Christ did not come to grant physical healing. "Therefore when Psalm. 6:2 says "heal me; for my bones are vexed," it is speaking of spiritual healing - SALVATION. My bones - my whole substance is vexed - HEAL ME O LORD.

The valley of dry bones that Ezekiel sees is a description - a spiritual overview - of how God perceives His children apart from Him. God will bring back the captivity of His people. We have fallen from grace in the Garden of Eden where God could have left us, doomed forever. There is none righteous in the earth, Romans 3:10 tells us. We are all deserving of God's punishment. But God, in His incomprehensible love and mercy, has chosen to keep a remnant out of this lost race, and has chosen to make His remnant heirs to His eternal Kingdom.

"Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion! When God bringeth back the captivity of his people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad."
(Ps. 53:6)

Who are Jacob and Israel if not the Church? Who is to be glad? Who shall rejoice? Concerning the blessings of God, Jesus says on the Sermon on the Mount: "Rejoice and be exceeding glad." Christ tells all believers in Revelation 19:7:

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

Jacob shall be glad and Israel shall rejoice. That is the entire body of believers - Old and New Testament.

God has brought back the captivity of His people, Jacob and Israel. Jacob, whose name God changed to "Israel" is another Old Testament shadow and/or type of Christ and His Church: those whom God has circumcised, not in the flesh but in the

heart. All have been saved out of this valley of judgment, and made to rejoice and be glad, for Christ hath redeemed us for Himself.

AND I WILL CAUSE BREATH TO ENTER INTO YOU

"Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:" (Ezekiel 37:5)

The breath that is spoken of is much more than physical breath. God has given breath to all people in a bodily sense. God is speaking here of spiritual breath. When God bestows His Holy Spirit upon men, it is symbolized by breath or wind.

"And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:" (John 20:22)

"The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8)

It is interesting to note that the Holy Ghost is typified by breath and again by wind that is blown. It was Christ's own breath that was blown on the disciples in John 20:22, which signified the Holy Ghost. When the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the world, beginning in Jerusalem at Pentecost, it was done in the form of a "rushing mighty wind," Acts 2:2. A "rushing" mighty wind depicts a great blowing of wind. It is this same rushing wind, this spiritual breath that God will put into these dry bones. Ezekiel

37:9 further confirms that God's Holy Spirit is symbolized by His breath.

"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." (Ezekiel 37:9)

God is absolutely collating the "wind" with "breathe" and "breath" as we see from the above verse. God is calling to the wind to breathe spiritual life into these bones, these "slain" upon the valley floor. Ezekiel chapter thirty-seven depicts man's spiritually destitute condition before God applies His Holy Spirit to us. This word "BREATH" is the same Hebrew word that is translated "SPIRIT" in reference to God throughout Scripture. It is also translated as "WIND." Of course "wind," as we have seen, is figurative for God's Holy Spirit. "Wind" at times may also symbolize judgment or trials as well.

Notice that it is God Himself who causes His breath to enter into these dried bones, thus causing them to live.

By breathing into these bones, God is putting His law into our inward parts. He is writing His Law in our hearts, as Jeremiah 31:33 foretold:

"but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Consider also Romans 2:29:

"But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

In verse six of Ezekiel chapter thirty-seven we see further evidence that God does all the saving. He will lay sinews upon us. He will bring up flesh upon us. He will cover us with skin. He will put breath in us. After all of this God says that "THEN" we shall know that He is the Lord. One must be born-again before we truly know who God is. It is only after God gives us this new heart that we are able to say in all sincerity that ... "I KNOW GOD."

Many people today confess that they know God. Sadly, however, their confession amounts to only a few scattered bits of head knowledge, without the real desire to serve Christ in a humble way. Christ says that they honour Him with their lips, but their heart is far from Him.

Millions of people today worldwide declare that they know God, and yet have never been taken out of this valley of dry bones. They may have a concept of who or what God is, according to their own reasoning, but they have never come to Him with a broken and a contrite heart. Therefore they do not really know Him, they have only heard of Him. We should all ask ourselves ... do we really know Christ, or do we merely know of Him?

A NOISE AND A SHAKING

In Ezekiel 37 God is bringing His elect into eternal salvation. In verse 7 Ezekiel says:

"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."

God is bringing about the first resurrection of every believer. This is not accomplished in one instance, as this verse might indicate. This is a spiritual parable. To be baptized or resurrected in the spirit is when God calls you to spiritual life. This is done throughout man's history, but mainly within the era of the Church Age. As God opens up the spiritual eyes and ears of every believer, He is bringing them into His fold. He is doing a spiritual miracle within the soul of that person. "...THERE WAS A NOISE, AND BEHOLD A SHAKING, AND THE BONES CAME TOGETHER..." verse 7 tells us. No one can really give us the exact time that they were truly quickened in the Spirit. No one knows the day or hour when Christ acted upon His promise to His elect. God indeed knows it all. But when this does occur in every real Christian's life, what is the NOISE and the SHAKING that verse 7 speaks of? You might ask yourself, "did I hear a great noise and did I feel a great shaking once I became saved?"

Of course not, however this noise that God speaks of is also translated as "to call aloud, voice, sound or thunder." It is used most often in Scripture as depicting the voice of God. We are on solid biblical ground in presuming that the noise that is spoken of in verse seven might well be God's hidden voice or call to that spiritual corpse to "awake" unto eternal life. Much like Christ called forth Lazarus out of the tomb.

It is intriguing to notice that the word "shaking" as used in verse seven "...there

was a noise, and behold a shaking ..." is translated "rushing" as well as "quaking, commotion and noise." Recall that we saw in Acts 2:2 that the Holy Spirit (spiritual life) was given at Pentecost in the form of a rushing wind? When we look at Jeremiah 11:16 God reveals more information concerning the calling forth of His elect from their spiritual graves. As highlighted on the previous page, this verse tells us that God called thee forth with the "noise of a great tumult." The Hebrew defines this word "tumult" as: a sound' to rush (as rain with a windy roar). God indeed calls forth His own with a great and invisible noise and shaking, heard only in the third heaven of our Lord's throne.

On the previous page we also highlighted Haggai 2:7, which reads:

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts."

This word "shake" is the same Hebrew word as "shaking" here in our study of Ezekiel chapter thirty-seven. God is prophesying in Old Testament days of a time when He will call the Gentile nations to salvation in addition to the Hebrew nation of Israel. Haggai 2:7 continues by saying "*and the desire of nations shall come ...*" Scripture, however, teaches that no man will come to Christ on his own accord. No man will have this type of a desire. Looking closely at this word "desire" we discover that it is associated with the spiritual fruits of the nations. It is also translated as "goodly, pleasant or precious." The desire of the nations shall come to God. That is God's chosen from among all nations will be

shaken and awaken into spiritual life with an inaudible noise and the rushing of God's mighty and invisible Holy Ghost.

BONE TO HIS BONE

"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." (Ezekiel 37:7)

At first glance we may pass over this verse simply picturing it as the bones of each person coming together upon his own frame. But perhaps Scripture shows us more than each man's bones being reassembled upon his own skeletal structure. Verse seven states that the bones came together, bone to His bone. The Hebrew is not clear whether this is "his" or "its" bones. The New King James translates the verse as "bone to bone." Supposing the old King James is the accurate translation, and there's a good chance it is. It doesn't say bone to their bone, but ... "bone to his bone." Whose bone is "his bone?" All of the elect are grafted into Christ's bones spiritually speaking. Ephesians 5:30 says: "*For we are members of His body [that is Christ's body of course]. For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."*

When we go back to Genesis and read of the creation of the first woman, we see that she was created from Adam's bone, or his rib. In Genesis 2:23 Adam says the following concerning his wife Eve:

"And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh..."

Eve was made from Adam's bone just as the believer is spiritually made from Christ's bones. Remember Ephesians 5:30, we the believers are members of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones.

Adam was a picture of Christ, while Eve was altogether a picture of the bride of Christ - His Church. Therefore, it is no wonder that God has placed such a high regard and sanctity upon marriage. Some Christians know and understand that Adam was a picture of Christ and Eve a picture of the Church, the bride of Christ. How many have considered what God did to Adam while Eve was being formed, since Eve was created from Adam's bones or rib? Recall in Genesis 2:21, God caused a "deep sleep" to fall upon Adam, during which time God took Adam's rib or bone and formed Eve. This all took place during the time that Adam was in this deep sleep. Both of these words in the Hebrew "DEEP and SLEEP" can be used figuratively to imply death. What was Christ required to do in order for His bride, the Church, to be born? Philippians 2:28 says:

"And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,"

Christ had to die at the cross in order for His bride to be formed from His spiritual bones. The deep sleep that God put upon Adam while creating Eve may well be a picture of Christ's atonement, who was required to suffer the death of the cross and the agony

of hell in order to atone for the sins of His elect, thus creating a bride for Himself.

In Ezekiel we see God bringing these bones together ... Bone to his bone. This is accomplished only when Christ speaks: His voice, His thundering, His noise, this great spiritual awakening, and this great spiritual shaking within our souls.

"Awake thou that sleepest [Adam's deep sleep?] and arise from the dead, [dead is associated with sleepest] and Christ shall give thee light," (Ephesians 5:14)

FOUR WINDS

God first tells the prophet Ezekiel to prophesy upon these bones. When we go to verse nine we find God again commanding Ezekiel to prophesy. This time God tells him to prophesy unto the wind. Ezekiel is to speak to the wind and say to the wind that God has commanded the wind to come from the "four winds" and breath upon these slain bones. It is interesting to note in verse nine that when God speaks of wind, He labels it as "O breath," and brings it forth from the four winds. "... say to the wind ... Come from the four winds, O breath." The term "four winds" might well represent the purpose of God. Four signifying universality, the four corners of the earth (Revelation 7:1), thus the wholeness of the earth will be the recipient of God's breath or wind of eternal life. This is not to say that all of the people of the earth will be saved, but only that all nations of the earth will hear God's Words of life, the wind and breath of God.

In Matthew 24:14 we read:

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

THEY STOOD UPON THEIR FEET, AND LIVED

Ezekiel says in verse ten that he prophesied as God commanded him and breath came into these bones, and they lived. They stood upon their feet, and were an exceedingly great army. When we read in Ezekiel 37:10 that they "lived," it must pertain to eternal life; they were spiritually alive. The word "lived" in the Hebrew denotes physical life in many cases. It can also mean spiritual life. "Lived" is also translated as: to nourish up; to preserve, to quicken; to recover; to repair; to restore to life; to revive; to be whole among other things. We clearly see that it is speaking of eternal life.

When the wind of heaven breathed upon these bones, they lived. "Lived" is translated "revive" in Isaiah 57:15 - listen to what God says:

"For thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to REVIVE [meaning to live] - to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

God breathed the breath of life on these bones, and they revived spiritually, they lived eternally! This same word "lived" is again seen in Ezekiel 18:27 as "save."

"Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall SAVE [meaning to live] - he shall save his own soul."

God breathed the FOUR WINDS of His Holy Spirit into these dried bones, and they became "SAVED"- they lived eternally!

Once more this word "lived" is translated as "quicken" in Psalm 122:88:

"Quicken [to make alive] me after thy loving kindness; so shall I keep the testimony of thy mouth."

How can we keep the testimony of God's Word? Apart from Christ it is totally impossible. God breathed upon these bones from the four winds of heaven and they were "quickenened" ... they lived eternally, and kept His testimony.

Finally this word "lived" as seen in Ezekiel 37:10 "... and breath came into them, and they lived ..." is also translated as preserve. Jeremiah 49:11 reads:

"Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve [meaning live] ... I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me"

God will breath into these dried bones and they will be PRESERVED for all of eternity. They will live forever. This is God's promise to the human race.

Ezekiel 37:10 tells us that after these bones became alive, they "STOOD UP UPON THEIR FEET." The Hebrew word for stood is also

translated as raised. These bones "STOOD up" because Christ has "RAISED" us up. Ephesians 2:6 tells us that God has:

"...raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

From being spiritually dead as dry bones, Christ has resurrected us, and has stood us upright in heavenly places in His everlasting Kingdom.

GOD'S PEOPLE: THE WHOLE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

"... Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel..." (Ezekiel 37:11)

We are told in Ezekiel 37:11 that these bones are the whole house of Israel. The word "whole" means exactly that: entirety, whole, all or complete. These bones are not the entire Jewish population whose has ever lived upon the face of the earth. Many churches today teach that heresy. These bones are the whole house of Israel. In other words they are the completed "Israel of God." The New Testament assures us that Christians are the fulfillment of God's spiritual Israel.

"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham." (Gal. 3:7)

Those who walk by faith in Christ are the real children or spiritual seed of Abraham. Therefore they are the true Israel of God.

"For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature."

"And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." (Galatians 5:15-16)

As many as walk confessing this rule: that in Christ Jesus we are new spiritual creatures, and being either circumcised or uncircumcised in the flesh means nothing to God. All who walk by faith in Christ are spiritual stones in God's true Temple - THE WHOLE HOUSE OF ISREAL.

"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." (Philippians 3:3)

"In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:" (Colossians 2:11)

These bones of Ezekiel typify God's whole and completed Church - not the physical buildings but the spiritually SAVED.

"And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:" (Colossians 2:10)

Ezekiel is first commanded to prophesy to these bones. Then he is told to prophesy to the wind. Finally, in verse twelve he is commanded to prophesy to "my people." God now addresses these bones as "MY

PEOPLE." God promises us in this verse that He will open our graves and cause us to come "up" out of our graves. Some may ask the question, "how can this be? I'm still alive, I have never been in a grave as of yet?" We must realize that from the time of our conception, we were in a spiritual grave awaiting eternal damnation. This of course is the result of man's rebellion to God.

God has made provisions to open our spiritual graves and cause us to come up out of our graves. Christ commanded Lazarus to "COME FORTH," and he came up out of his physical grave, which was a picture of all who would ever be saved coming up out of their spiritual graves. There is only one thing that God wants in return for bringing His elect out of their spiritual graves, and that is found in John 4:23:

"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship Him."

END OF STUDY
