

The Valley of Dry Bones

They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your fathers lived. They and their children ... will live there forever.—Ezekiel 37:25

Ezekiel, a priest, was used by God to prophesy as was Daniel. The faithful Israelites yearned to know about their future as a nation—what were God’s plans for his chosen people? Daniel had worked in a heathen palace and spoke about his God to the Babylonians, but Ezekiel taught his own people and lived among them.

The elders of Israel came to Ezekiel to learn God’s will. Although they had obeyed God’s prophets in peacefully surrendering to Nebuchadnezzar and being taken captive to Babylon, they longed to return to their homeland.

God caused Ezekiel to see a vision. In that vision the prophet saw a valley full of dry bones. He knew these bones represented the nation of Israel—scattered throughout Babylon, their hopes dead (Ezekiel 37:1-6).

As Ezekiel walked among the bones in this vision, he wondered if they could ever live again—could the nation of Israel ever be restored? The vision showed that the day would come when the scattered bones would come together to form a full skeleton. The breath of life would enter that body and it would live again. Yes, the nation of Israel would live again!

This would happen at a time of great commotion—thunder and earthquakes—picturing that God would restore Israel during the time of trouble at the end of the Gospel age (Daniel 12:1-4).

Evidence that the bones had come together to form a skeleton came in 1948 when Israel was recognized as a nation. Near the end of the Gospel age God brought the dry bones back from where they had been scattered for so many centuries! This was not a resurrection from the dead, but of the “dead hopes” of the Israelites.

Yet the prophecy’s fulfillment had only just begun. The complete fulfillment belongs to a future time, to the Millennial age, when God will remove the stony hearts of the people and replace them with new hearts of flesh. This will not be an instantaneous work. It will come about gradually through the troubles and afflictions of the “day of wrath.” By instruction in righteousness and blessings from God, the transformation to hearts of flesh will take place (Ezekiel 11:19).



Israel has been coming back to life, and in 1948 was recognized as a nation.