

The Restoration of Israel

Key Verses: *"I will make a covenant of peace with them ... an everlasting covenant ... and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people."*
—Ezekiel 37:26,27

Selected Scripture:
Ezekiel 37:21-28

and ye shall know that I am the LORD." (Ezek. 37:6) As Ezekiel prophesied he observed that "there was a noise, and behold an earthquake, and the bones came together."—vs. 7, *Revised Version*

The bones coming together in Ezekiel's prophetic vision may well point forward to the Zionist movement which began in the late 19th century. In 1878 the first

IN THIS LESSON EZEKIEL

records a vision God gave to him of a valley which was full of "very dry" bones. (Ezek. 37:1,2) As the vision progresses it is stated: "These bones are the whole house of Israel." (vs. 11) Originally founded upon the promises made to their forefather, Abraham, they enjoyed a privileged status as God's favored people until they rejected Messiah and were dispersed.—Amos 3:2; Luke 1:67-75

In the prophet's vision, Jehovah spoke to the dry bones: "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;

Jewish resettlement was established and the name chosen for it was “Petah Tikva,” which means “door of hope,” words found in a prophecy given to Hosea regarding Israel’s restoration. (Hos. 2:14,15) The “noise” and “earthquake” of Ezekiel’s vision may refer to the persecutions and trouble which led to many more Jews coming back to the land of Israel during the ensuing decades.—Jer. 16:14-16

The vision states what happened to these bones. “Lo, there were sinews upon them, and flesh, ... and skin covered them: ... but there was no breath in them.” (Ezek. 37:7,8, *RV*) “Sinews” may denote the temporal organizations and efforts in building homes and preparing the land for recultivation. Literal “flesh” and “skin” are outwardly visible, and might be a picture of Israel’s increased temporal prosperity, including their recognition as a nation since 1948.

Verse 8 states that “there was no breath,” or life, in these bones. We believe the “breath” state of development is still future, when God will infuse breath or spirit into Israel and the nation will return to covenant relationship with him. In our Key Verse the Lord has promised to make an everlasting “covenant of peace” with Israel. The Prophet Jeremiah describes it as a “new covenant,” when God will put his “law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.” The Lord promises that “they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, ... saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.”—Jer. 31:31-34

In Ezekiel’s prophetic vision the Lord also promises, “My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” However, these wonderful promises are not limited to only Israel, because the Lord then states, “And the nations shall know that I am the Lord that sanctify Israel.” (Ezek. 37:28, *RV*) This is wonderfully confirmed by the revelation given to the Apostle John.—Rev. 21:1-4 ■