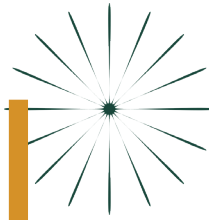


EZEKIEL



VALLEY OF DRY BONES

PART 6

Bringing Back the Children

READ EZEKIEL 37:16-28

INTRODUCTION

Here in Ezekiel we see another task that God puts before the prophet to symbolize the restoration of the people to the family of God. We have seen that the people of Israel have returned to their land and that this prophecy has been somewhat fulfilled. The final, main, point of the prophecy will not take place however until the Tribulation period when, "I will be their God, and they shall be My people". This is a yet future occurrence that will bring His children (the nation of Israel) back to Him once and for all time.

Many people misread the Old Testament and claim that God is now finished with the Children of Israel. They believe that any reference to Israel in the New Testament is referring to the Church. This is a fallacy and false doctrine. God is never "finished" with His chosen people. (Romans 11) We, as Gentile believers, have been chosen as a people to be "grafted into" the family of God. (vv. 11) This means that we now enjoy the benefits of being God's children. Make no mistake that God's chosen people, the Israelites, are still His chosen people and we, the Gentiles, do not remove that title from them to put it on us.

God restores His people to Him through the work of Jesus Christ. Most of the children of Israel will realize this only after it is too late or, during the Tribulation written about in the book of Revelation. Jesus Christ came to establish a new covenant with the nation of Israel and they rejected Him at first. This rejection will last a while longer as we wait for the glory of Christ to be revealed and His perfect judgement on the world to take place. Then, on that final day, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of all creation.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think God is so patient with His people? Why doesn't He just turn from them and be done with them? Have you ever felt as though God has turned His back on you? What are some truths that we see in Scripture to help you understand that He never will turn away from you?
2. What are some of the ways we see God being faithful to Israel even today? How is He faithful to us as Gentiles? What do you think it will be like to see, on that final day, one family come to worship Jesus?
3. Do you think it is fair that God still cares for and protects Israel? Why or why not? Knowing that God will never turn from His chosen people, do you think it is important to pray for Israel? Why?
4. Read Romans 11:33-36. What is Paul rejoicing over in these verses? How should we react to the judgements and the promises of God? How can we better worship Him knowing that He is so patient with His people?
5. Has your perspective changed regarding Israel? How often have you thought about them and the promises God has made to them? How can we better bless the people of Israel and love them more?

WRAP UP

Paul had an obvious heart for the nation of Israel. He was called to be an apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13). Our desires sometimes are not matched with what God has for us. This doesn't mean that we stop caring for certain things but that God directs our path. Ezekiel was called to prophecy to the nation of Israel and Paul was called to the Gentiles. We all have a different calling but God knows the end game and how His plan works out. He will get His glory with or without us. It is much better to give Him the glory now.