

## Ezekiel Ch 37:15–28 • “They Will Be One in My Hand”

- Background* Ch 37 continues a new section in the book of Ezekiel (Ch 33–39) in which God speaks words of hope and restoration to His people. After Ch 39, the remaining chapters of Ezekiel focus on the Millennial Kingdom. After opening with a picture of Israel being regathered in UNBELIEF (fulfilled in 1948), the second half of the chapter emphasizes the regathering of Israel in BELIEF following Christ's Second Coming.
- v15 This is a new prophecy – related but distinct from that in the first half of the chapter. This is also the last object lesson in Ezekiel!
- v16-17 “Tribe of Judah” points to the southern kingdom (Judah, Benjamin, potentially the Levites). “Joseph” points to Ephraim (Joseph's son) that was a key tribe in the northern kingdom (eg Jeroboam was from the tribe of Ephraim). Notice God is avoiding to referring to either the northern or southern kingdom as “Israel” in anticipation of reunification under that name!
- v18-20 Note that the order in which kingdoms are listed is reversed, emphasizing that one is not lording over the other — two halves are being rejoined as one whole.
- v21-23 Clearly this is long-term (end times) prophecy. The first verse-and-a-half could be post-exilic, but v22b cannot be – Israel hasn't had a king since 586BC. But Israel HAS (v23) defiled themselves and transgressed. So the fulfillment of these verses follows the Great Tribulation (cf Daniel 9:24 @ “put an end to transgression”).
- v24-25 Some messianic commentators see a promise of a resurrected King David ruling over Israel in the millennium, but comparing Scripture with Scripture this seems MUCH more likely to be One Greater Than David (ie Jesus). Also note that “judgments and statutes” does NOT refer to Mosaic Law but rather to a Millennial Law that will be discussed in Ch 40–48.
- v26-27 “My sanctuary” and “my tabernacle” seems redundant at first, but “sanctuary” refers to God's sacred place whereas “tabernacle” refers to God's DWELLING place. Is this God as in Jesus returning to the temple? Yes, but not only that — cf Isaiah 4v2-5. What's in view here is God's Shekinah Glory returning to dwell in the temple!
- v28 God's people will finally be the testimony to the nations God always intended for them to be!

## **Discussion**

*Our supersessionist brothers and sisters want to discount this chapter, arguing that the Israel we see in the Middle East today isn't truly Israel: "That's just a political entity; that's not God's people."*

*In reality, the nation we see today IS spiritually separated FROM God, but is by no means forgotten BY God. In fact, Ch 37v15-28 gives us 14 promises in 14 verses pertaining to the future of Israel! (1) God will regather His people (2) God will bring them into their own land (3) He will make them one nation (4) That nation will have one king (5) The revived kingdom will never again be divided (6) God will cleanse, forgive, and be in fellowship with His people (7) Israel will never again fall into idolatry (8) The Son of David will be King and Shepherd over Israel (9) God will enable Israel to walk in obedience (10) God will preserve His people in the land forever (11) Israel will enter into a New Covenant with God (12) God will multiply and prosper His people in the land (13) God will establish a sanctuary in the land AND tabernacle among His people (14) God's people will be a testimony to the nations of God's mercy!*

*The last promise is perhaps the most important — God will use Israel to demonstrate and testify to His mercy (see Exodus 34:6–7).*

*Israel handing Jesus over to be crucified does NOT exempt them from His mercy. Jesus CAME to die (John 3:16; Matt 20:28; 1 Cor 15:3, and many more). Even if Jesus had not been crucified, He still would have been put to death — for us! On the cross He was suffering for OUR sin. If we want to blame someone for His death, we need to start by pointing the finger at ourselves!*

## **Application**

*The right response to God's promises to Israel CANNOT be to deny them!*

*The right response to God's promises to Israel is to embrace them as they apply to us today. (The things that WILL be true for Israel physically in the Millennial Kingdom CAN be true for the church today while the Kingdom of God is in us).*

*Are we walking in His promises?*