

THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

Ezekiel 37:1-14

by Jack Arvin

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Ezekiel is noted for the bold and striking imagery of his prophecies.
- B. This vision of the valley of dry bones is one of the most vivid of all.
 - 1. We look over the prophet's shoulder to behold a somber valley of dry human bones.
 - 2. We listen in amazement as the prophet is told by God to prophesy over these bones.
 - 3. We stare in unbelief as the bones become bodies of men and live again.
 - 4. We whisper to ourselves, "What mean's this!"

I. To Answer That We Must Look At The Background Of The Prophecy.

- A. Powerful and prosperous in David and Solomon's day, the Kingdom of Israel had fallen to a miserable state.
- B. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had invaded and conquered, reducing Israel to a tributary nation with a puppet king, then finally taking the whole of the nation into Babylon and slave labor.
- C. Ezekiel was evidently with the Israelites in Babylon. His primary task was to impress upon Israel that they were in captivity because of their own disregard for God's word and worship not because of any superiority of Babylonian worship or failure of Israel's Allies. (Deut. 28:15,33; Jer. 20:4; 21:4-10).

II. The Primary Meaning Of The Passage.

- A. It is quite clear that the dry bones represent Israel removed from its land and apparently dead as a nation (Ezek. 37:11).
- B. By the power of God they were to be restored to vigor and strength and returned to their own land (37:13,14).
- C. Babylon was actually overthrown (Dan. 5:30,31).
- D. Israel did return to its own land (Ezra 2:1; Neh. 2:5-8).

III. Some Other Practical Lessons.

- A. The wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23).
 - 1. Men today may be dead in trespasses and sin (Col. 2:13; Eph. 2:1,5).
 - 2. Those who continue in disobedience to be separated eternally from God, the second death (Rev. 20:14,15).
- B. The power of God is clearly demonstrated.
 - 1. The "bones" of Israel were clothed with muscle, skin and endowed with life. Returned to Canaan, the nation served as an instrument for bringing Christ the Savior in-to the world.

2. God's power to resurrect those dead in trespasses and sin is the gospel (Rom. 1:16).
 - a. This gospel must be obeyed by the individual in order to secure the blessing offered (Mk. 16:15, 167 Heb. 5:8,9).

C. The word of God is sure.

1. Isaiah, who died about 100 years before Israel went into captivity named Babylon as the captor (Isa. 39:5-7) and went so far as to name Cyrus as the ruler who would authorize the return of Israel from captivity (Isa. 44:28).
 - (1) It is to be noted tint Cyrus was not even born at the time!
2. God's word, sure in this matter, is also sure in relation to the judgment, to salvation and to heaven.