

THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

INTRODUCTION

One of the truly great prophets of the Old Testament was Ezekiel—considered to be one of the Major prophets—because of the length of the book he was inspired to write. Ezekiel was taken into Babylonian captivity eleven years before the fall of Jerusalem itself TO the Babylonians. Although he WAS a major prophet there are NO direct quotations from him in the New Testament. We DO learn that he was married, and tragically lost his wife. As he sat in a valley of dry bones, God asked him, “Son of man, can these bones live?” This was BEFORE Jesus arose from the tomb, and forever answered that in the affirmative.

Now let’s look at the valley of dry bones, as recorded in Ezekiel 37.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, let’s consider the VISION ITSELF. Read Ezek. 37:1-10

A. God’s ACTION is first set forth. vs. 1-2

1. God posed a question for Ezekiel. v. 3A
2. Ezekiel gives God an answer. v. 3B

B. God follows with two commands.

1. The first command was to “prophesy” over the **BONES**. v. 4
 - a. Ezekiel ultimately prophesied over the bones, as God commanded him. v. 7
 - b. The bones were to **hear the word of the Lord**. v. 4
 - c. The bones were given the promise of LIFE. vs. 5-6
 - d. As a result, people would **know** of God’s power. v. 6
2. The second command was to “prophesy” unto the **WIND**. v. 9
 - a. The bodies then needed a spirit or breath within them. v. 8
 - b. So, Ezekiel’s second prophesying was also successful. v. 10

II. 2nd, let’s consider the MEANING of the vision. Read Ezek. 37:11-14

A. These bones represented hopeless Israel in their bondage. v. 11

1. THIS time, Ezekiel prophesied to fallen Israel. v. 12
2. This prophesy was a promise of **life**.
 - a. This life was an apparent return to their land, at which time God would be glorified.
 - b. This apparently was a Messianic promise, in the coming of Christ and His church. Eph. 3:21

B. The vision gave encouragement of future life. vs. 12-14

III. 3rd, what do we LEARN from the story of dry bones?

A. 1st, we learn that those in captivity to SIN today must also **hear the word of the Lord** in order to live. Rom. 10:17; Matt. 7:24-27

1. The Word has a message to the **lost**.
 - a. The word requires “faith”. Rom. 10:8-10
 - b. The word requires “repentance”. Acts 17:30
 - c. The word requires “baptism” (immersion in water). Mark 16:15-16
2. The Word has a message to the **faithful**. 1 Cor. 15:58
3. The Word has a message to the **unfaithful**. Acts 8:22

- B. 2nd, we learn that the 2 sticks upon which Ezekiel wrote do **NOT** foretell the Bible and the Book of Mormon being joined together in the 19th century.
1. Mormons claim this is a prophecy of the Bible being joined to the Book of Mormon for a complete revelation of God. (Book of Mormon 101:3, 6, 8, 10, 12; Articles of Faith, p. 276)
 2. The **real meaning** of the sticks was THAT the return of Judah and Israel **to God's spiritual kingdom.** vs. 15-22
 - a. They were to become a new "nation". v. 22; cf Matt. 21:42-43; 1 Pet. 2:9
 - b. They were to be ruled by David's offspring—the One Shepherd. v. 24; cf John 10:11, 14; 1 Pet. 5:4
 - c. They were to have the new "covenant of peace." v. 26; cf Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:8; Zech. 6:12-13; Eph. 2:13
 - d. They were to make up the Lord's house, or tabernacle. v. 27; cf 1 Cor. 3:16; Rev. 21:1-4
 - e. They were to enjoy God's sanctification, which is in Christ. v. 28
- C. Finally, we learn of the general resurrection of the dead in the last day, as an illusion to it is prophetic in nature, which was seen in instances of a resurrection in the Old Testament, and would be confirmed by the resurrection of dead ones in the New Testament, and in the future resurrection of the dead at the end of the world.
1. In that day, the **graves** will be opened. John 5:28-29
 2. In that day, the **bodies** will be resurrected to live again. 1 Cor. 15:42-44; Acts 26:8
 - a. If God could put flesh, bones and life together in the valley, He can do the same thing literally in the last day.
 - b. In that day, men shall **know** the power and glory of God.

CONCLUSION

- I. This story reminds us of the own reality of a resurrection at the end of life.
 - A. What a day it will be, to see all who have ever lived, and be with them again.
 - B. But, for the disobedient, it will be a day of regret and sadness.
- II. To prepare for that day, we must become Christians and remain faithful all the days of our lives.

Don Tarbet