

Ezekiel 37

verses 15–28



FOR BACKGROUND

The Twelve Tribes

There were twelve tribes that inherited land in Israel.

Northern Kingdom

Reuben, Simeon*, Issachar, Zebulun, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Ephraim (son of Joseph), Manasseh (son of Joseph)

Southern Kingdom

Judah, Benjamin

Note: Levi received no territory — set apart for priestly service (Numbers 18; Joshua 21). Ephraim became dominant in the North and sometimes stands in for the whole Northern Kingdom.

Jesus descended from King David. The New Testament presents him as heir to David's throne (Luke 1:32–33; Luke 3:31; Acts 2:29–30; Rom. 1:3–4; 2 Tim. 2:8; Rev. 22:16). As you study, consider how these relate to Ezekiel 37's promises.

In this Sunday's message, we discussed the prophecy of the Valley of the Dry Bones. Ezekiel 37:11 makes it clear that the dry bones are the people of Israel. The second half of the chapter continues with further details regarding its application to Israel. Sometimes, interpreting prophecy can be difficult without examining context and other passages in Scripture. In this case, there is some debate amongst scholars as to whether Ezekiel 37 is a prophecy that has been fulfilled, or one that applies to a future event in the end times. This study guide walks the reader through the relevant passages to allow one to determine which side of the debate they tend to agree on. Faithful Christians have reached different conclusions on this question while affirming the authority of Scripture.

WALK THROUGH SCRIPTURE

1 Sunday's Message

Read Ezekiel 37:15–28

- List every promise God makes in this passage.

2 Fall of the North

Read 2 Kings 17

- What happened to the Northern Kingdom of Israel?
- Why does the text say God allowed this to happen?
- What happened to the people who remained in the land after the exile?

3 The Samaritans

Read John 4:1–26

- What does this passage suggest about the identity of the people living in Samaria? Had any of Ezekiel 37's promises been fulfilled by this point?
- Jesus references religious practices of the Samaritans — what are they still doing that led to their fall in 2 Kings 17?

4 Gospel to Samaria

Read Acts 1:8 & Acts 8:4–25

- How do the Samaritans respond to the preaching of the gospel?
- Which promises you listed from Ezekiel 37 seem fulfilled here? Which remain arguably unfulfilled?

5 Vision of the Tribes Restored

Read Revelation 7:1–17 & Revelation 21:1–4

- What do you notice about the listing of the twelve tribes?
- What might the presence of all twelve tribes suggest in light of Ezekiel 37?
- What similarities do you see between Ezekiel 37 and Revelation 21:1–4? What promises will only be fulfilled in the end times?

CONCLUSION

Scholars debate whether Jesus's ministry, the disciples' preaching in Samaria in Acts, and the Gospel's application to both Jews and Gentiles shows Ezekiel 37 fulfilled — or whether complete fulfillment only comes with the passages from Revelation. After studying these passages, what is your conclusion?