

EZEKIEL

Chapter 35

Desolation of Edom

Introduction: Mount Seir is the main mountain in Edom. Idumea is the Greek word for Edom (vs. 15; 36:5); with Bozrah as Edom's capital city. Edomites are the descendants of Esau (Genesis 25:30; 32:3; 36:1). Edom has a history of opposing the nation of Israel as well as being one of 10 nations that confederate against Israel in the future (Psalm 83:6). Edom will be judged for their hatred for God's people both historically and in the future day:

Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end: (Ezekiel 35:5).

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey. (Ezekiel 36:5)

In that day when the LORD will come and deliver Israel, He will exercise a great battle in the land of Edom:

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. (Isaiah 63:1)

Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever: But I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah. (Amos 1:11-12) (See all of Obadiah, Malachi 1:1-4).

In these chapters we see the prophetic end of Edom. In the past, Edom gloried in the destruction of Israel and in the future they will do the same. However, God will make it so they will be the ones desolate, and Israel will be the blessed in the land (see 36:6-11).

In these chapters one needs to contrast these two peoples, Edom and its end (Chapter 35) and Israel and its end (36:16-38).

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against mount Seir, and prophesy against it, And say unto it, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, and thou shalt know that I am the LORD. Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end: Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee. Thus will I make mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth. And I will fill his mountains with his slain men: in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers, shall they fall that are slain with the sword. I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. Because thou hast said, These two nations and these two countries shall be mine, and we will possess it; whereas the LORD was there: Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will even do according to thine anger, and according to thine envy which thou hast used out of thy hatred against them; and I will make myself known among them, when I have judged thee. And thou shalt know that I am the LORD, and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, They are laid desolate, they are given us to consume. Thus with your mouth ye have boasted against me, and have multiplied your words against me: I have heard them. Thus saith the Lord GOD; When the whole earth rejoiceth, I will make thee desolate. As thou didst rejoice at the inheritance of the house of Israel, because it was desolate, so will I do unto thee: thou shalt be desolate, O mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all of it: and they shall know that I am the LORD. (Ezekiel 35:1-15)

The Desolation of Edom (1-15): This chapter deals entirely with the desolation of Edom. In this chapter the LORD will tell why it is that they are going to be judged by Him. The very thing Edom sought for themselves, the nation of Israel will receive; while the judgment they sought on Israel, Edom will receive.

The reasons for the Destruction and Desolation of Edom are:

1. Edom had a *perpetual hatred* for the children of Israel (vs. 5)
 - a. Therefore God will make of Edom a *perpetual desolation* (vss. 6-9)

2. Edom desired the two nations of Israel and these two countries (vs. 10)
3. Edom boasted in the *desolation* of the mountains of Israel (vs. 12)
 - a. Therefore God will make Edom *desolate* (vs. 14-15)

Notice the LORD in these passages is doing to Edom the very thing it sought against Israel; where Edom had a perpetual hatred, God will bring them to perpetual desolation, where Edom boasted in the desolation of Israel, God will bring Edom to desolation.

EZEKIEL

Chapter 36

The Restoration of Israel

The Restoration of Israel and its Land: Edom's actions have provoked the fire of God's jealousy (5, 6). He will do for Israel and the land all the things Edom sought for itself. Throughout these next chapters we need to pay close attention that it is the LORD doing this for Israel. He will not be using the nations to perform His will as He had done against Israel, but rather will deliver the judgments Himself as He established His theocratic Kingdom on the earth. In the first portion of this chapter (vss. 1-15) the LORD prophesy's against the "**mountains of Israel**" (vs. 1), concerning the literal landscape of Israel (see vs. 4). In the latter portion (16-38) of this chapter God will speak concerning the house of Israel (vs. 22).

Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD: Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession: Therefore prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people: Therefore, ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord GOD; Thus saith the Lord GOD to the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, to the desolate wastes, and to the cities that are forsaken, which became a prey and

derision to the residue of the heathen that are round about; Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey. Prophecy therefore concerning the land of Israel, and say unto the mountains, and to the hills, to the rivers, and to the valleys, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I have spoken in my jealousy and in my fury, because ye have borne the shame of the heathen: Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I have lifted up mine hand, Surely the heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame. (Ezekiel 36:1-7)

The Desolate Land (1-7): In these verses we see what the land of Israel had become under the hand of the heathen nations around them:

Therefore prophecy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they have made you desolate, and swallowed you up on every side, that ye might be a possession unto the residue of the heathen, and ye are taken up in the lips of talkers, and are an infamy of the people: (Ezekiel 36:3)

Not only had the *people* suffered tremendously under the hand of the heathen nations, but the *land* suffered greatly. Therefore the fire of God's jealousy will be kindled against the heathen nations that have been instrumental in bringing about the destruction and desolation of the land and its people. Of the heathen nations that God is going to judge it is Edom that is specifically mentioned (vs. 5). Edom or Idumea has done, and will in the future do, what verse 5 is referencing:

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Surely in the fire of my jealousy have I spoken against the residue of the heathen, and against all Idumea, which have appointed my land into their possession with the joy of all their heart, with despiteful minds, to cast it out for a prey. (Ezekiel 36:5)

And because of this God will judge them accordingly:

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I have lifted up mine hand, Surely the heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame. (Ezekiel 36:7)

But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come. For, behold, I am for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown: And I will multiply men upon you, all the house of Israel, even all of it: and the cities shall be inhabited, and the wastes shall be builded: And I will multiply upon you man and beast; and they shall increase

and bring fruit: and I will settle you after your old estates, and will do better unto you than at your beginnings: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. Yea, I will cause men to walk upon you, even my people Israel; and they shall possess thee, and thou shalt be their inheritance, and thou shalt no more henceforth bereave them of men. Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they say unto you, Thou land devourest up men, and hast bereaved thy nations; Therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord GOD. Neither will I cause men to hear in thee the shame of the heathen any more, neither shalt thou bear the reproach of the people any more, neither shalt thou cause thy nations to fall any more, saith the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 36:8-15)

Restoration of the Land (8-15): In these verses the land takes on a personage. The scriptures do this often (*See Isaiah 62:4 – Beulah*). There is a union between the God of Israel and the land itself, and in these verses we see the restoration of the landscape of God’s land. As God says in a host of other passages He will make the place of His feet glorious:

The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious:

The glory of Lebanon shall come unto thee, the fir tree, the pine tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of my sanctuary; and I will make the place of my feet glorious. (Isaiah 60:13)

The LORD will “turn” unto the land of Israel and accomplish some of the following:

- Ye shall be tilled and sown (vs. 9)
- The land will be inhabited with the men of Israel, with cities (vs. 10)
- Man and beast will multiply upon the land (vs. 11)
- The land will be more blessed than at their beginning (vs. 11)
- Israel will be the land’s inheritance (vs. 12)
- The land will not bear the reproach of the nation any longer (13-15)

Just as God promises to beautify the land of Israel that it be no more the wasted among the nations, so He will restore the nation of Israel one day.

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols

wherewith they had polluted it: And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the LORD, and are gone forth out of his land. (Ezekiel 36:16-20)

Israel was Scattered out of the Land (16-20): According to the covenant made with God's nation, they had committed all the abominations of the heathen nations in the land and it "spued" them out of the land:

That the land spue not you out also, when ye defile it, as it spued out the nations that were before you. (Leviticus 18:28)

Ye shall therefore keep all my statutes, and all my judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spue you not out. (Leviticus 20:22)

Thus, the nation had found themselves, and will continue to find them, in a scattered and dispersed state until the LORD gathers them back into His land. How the LORD is to accomplish this is found in the proceeding verses.

But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went. Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. (Ezekiel 36:21-24)

For His Name's Sake (21-24): The LORD will accomplish the restoration of the land and the people of the land for HIS NAME'S SAKE. Through their abominations the nation had corrupted the name of the LORD by their actions. Therefore God will bring them back into the land by His name, to justify His name among the heathen nations. As is said throughout these verses He will "sanctify His great name" which they have profaned in the midst of the nations (22-23).

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleannesses: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen. Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall lothe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations. Not for your sakes do I this, saith the Lord GOD, be it known unto you: be ashamed and confounded for your own ways, O house of Israel. Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day that I shall have cleansed you from all your iniquities I will also cause you to dwell in the cities, and the wastes shall be builded. And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by. And they shall say, This land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden; and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are become fenced, and are inhabited. Then the heathen that are left round about you shall know that I the LORD build the ruined places, and plant that that was desolate: I the LORD have spoken it, and I will do it. Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them; I will increase them with men like a flock. As the holy flock, as the flock of Jerusalem in her solemn feasts; so shall the waste cities be filled with flocks of men: and they shall know that I am the LORD. (Ezekiel 36:25-38)

Cleansing of the Nation (25-38): Israel's restoration to the Promised Land has always been the subject of prophecy, as these verses point out. Before the nation can be placed into the land, a cleansing must first take place. The nation had become filthy from joining itself to all the abominations of the heathen. So in these verses we see the hinting at this cleansing of the nation that had to take place (25). Then the nation will have a new heart and Spirit given them (26). Once this transformation takes place Israel, as a nation, will be able to keep the law and be that "holy nation" they were called to be. (See Deut. 30:30; Jeremiah 31:31-34).

EZEKIEL

Chapter 37

Valley of Dry Bones

When it comes to understanding scripture nothing should displace the clear statement of the scriptures themselves. In this passage of scripture Ezekiel is given the clear

interpretation of both the Valley of Dry Bones and the Two Sticks so that no other interpretation needs to be applied.

The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. (Ezekiel 37:1-10)

The Valley of Dry Bones (1-10): Ezekiel is carried out in the spirit to a valley full of dried bones that come to life from the dead in a most vivid way. Ezekiel is told to prophesy from the LORD to the bones, thus through the prophet Ezekiel God tells these dried bones that He will do 3 things for them:

1. Gather the bones together
2. Cover them in sinew and flesh
3. Breath His Spirit into them

Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my

spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD. (Ezekiel 37:11-14)

The Interpretation of the Vision (11-14): The interpretation is given to Ezekiel as the “whole house of Israel” (vs. 11). The truth of this vision could not be any clearer, it is not the church, it is the “whole house of Israel”.

There are a couple of things to take note of in the interpretation, first notice that it is clearly stated to be Israel. Israel is likened to ones coming back from the dead, the time when the LORD revives that nation once again. Paul uses this idea in Romans when dealing with the subject of the restoration of the nation of Israel:

For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? (Romans 11:15)

Secondly, notice the emphasis is placed on the “whole house” of Israel. In other words it is the restored northern and southern kingdoms into one nation. This is the purpose of the next illustration given with the two sticks; it is to elevate the truth that both houses of Israel, northern and southern will be one again.

So then God in this vision gives to Ezekiel the promise that He will take the whole house of Israel out of the graveyard of the nations and place them into their land one day and then He will breathe life into them that they may live.

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying, Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand. (Ezekiel 37:15-17)

Two Sticks becoming One (15-17): What Ezekiel is told to do is directly related to the preceding vision of the Valley of Dry Bones; it is a continuation and addition to that vision. Ezekiel is told to take a stick and write upon it for Judah and for the children of Israel his companions. Then Ezekiel is to take another stick and write upon it for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and for all the house of Israel his companions. So what you have is two sticks with the following names:

1. Judah – *for the children of Israel and his companions*
2. Joseph / Ephraim - *for all the house of Israel his companions.*

Then Ezekiel is told to join the two sticks into one stick.

And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, Wilt thou not shew us what thou meanest by these? Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land: And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore. (Ezekiel 37:18-28)

Two Sticks Interpretation (18-28): The interpretation is fairly simple when taken into account the preceding vision of the Valley of Dry Bones. The Valley of Dry Bones is the “whole house” of Israel, thus it is both the northern and southern kingdoms of the house of Israel. The illustration Ezekiel is given to perform is the reality that both kingdoms will be restored into one nation.

This is to be taken literally and not to be looked at as some figurative language used to represent the church or some other group, but is what it plainly states:

And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all: and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: (Ezekiel 37:22)

Summary: What we have in this chapter is the promise of God that the “whole nation” of Israel will be gathered together under one king in the land of Israel. David will be resurrected and will be placed as “prince” over the “whole nation”. God in fulfillment of the New Covenant will make the nation spiritually fit to be God’s people, serving in His tabernacle and functioning as the kingdom of priests to the rest of the nations (Isaiah 66:6-8; Rev. 12:1-5).