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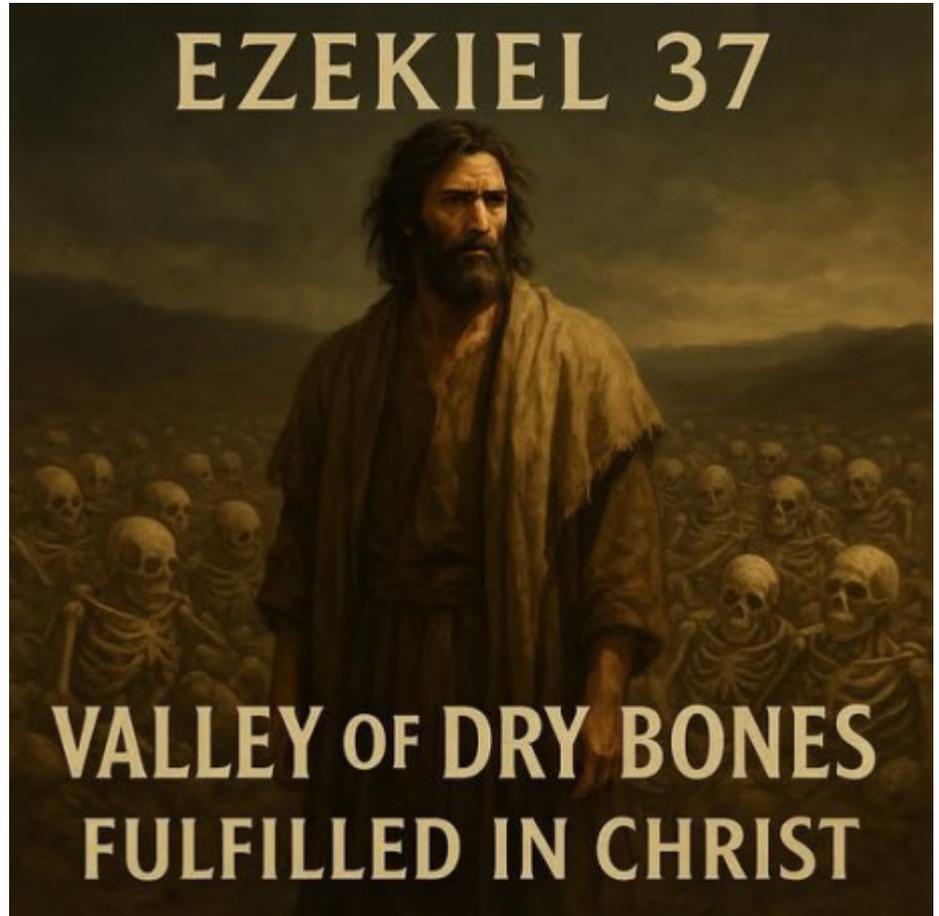
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Ezekiel 37 and the Fulfillment in Christ



By Dan Maines

Ezekiel 37 and the Fulfillment in Christ

Ezekiel 37:1-3

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and He brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley, and it was full of bones. He had me pass among them all around, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. Then He said to me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, Lord God, You Yourself know.

† The valley of dry bones is not a prophecy of physical resurrection, but of covenant restoration. Israel in exile was as good as dead, cut off from the presence of God.

† This same imagery is used in Hosea 6:2 where God promised to revive His people on the third day. These texts point to spiritual renewal, not to graves opening in the far future.

† Josephus writes that the Jews in Babylon and afterward longed for national renewal, but their hopes were misplaced in political restoration instead of the covenant renewal that would come through Christ (Antiquities 11.1.1).

Ezekiel 37:4-6

Again He said to me, Prophecy over these bones and say to them, You dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. This is what the Lord God says to these bones: Behold, I will make breath enter you so that you may come to life. And I will attach tendons to you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin, and put breath in you so that you may come to life, and you will know that I am the Lord.

† The breath of God recalls Genesis 2:7, when God breathed life into Adam. Here, the Spirit brings covenant life back into His people.

† Paul connects this to the new covenant life in the Spirit: For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life (2 Corinthians 3:6).

† Eusebius says this prophecy was fulfilled when Christ brought Jew and Gentile together as a new body, raised from death into life through His Spirit (Ecclesiastical History 1.4).

Ezekiel 37:11-12

Then He said to me, Son of man, these bones are the entire house of Israel; behold, they say, Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off. Therefore prophesy and say to them, This is what the Lord God says: Behold, I am going to open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people, and I will bring you into the

land of Israel.

† God Himself interprets the vision: the bones are the house of Israel. The graves are symbolic of their national death in exile. The return to the land foreshadowed the greater restoration in Christ.

† This same language is used in Daniel 12, where the resurrection is a covenantal rising of God's faithful remnant while the wicked perish.

† Tacitus remarks that after the Jewish War, the scattered survivors still clung to their identity, but the old system was dead. Only through Christ's kingdom was there true resurrection life (Histories 5.13).

Ezekiel 37:15-17

The word of the Lord came again to me, saying, And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions; then take another stick and write on it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions. Then put them together for yourself one to another into one stick, so that they may become one in your hand.

† The joining of the two sticks represents the reunification of God's people under one covenant.

† This was never fulfilled politically, but spiritually in Christ, who made both one and broke down the dividing wall (Ephesians 2:14).

† Josephus records that even in the first century the northern tribes were still scattered, never returned as a united nation (Antiquities 11.5.2). Only in Christ was true unity restored.

Ezekiel 37:24-25

My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd, and they will follow My ordinances and keep My statutes and comply with them. They will live on the land that I gave to My servant Jacob, in which your fathers lived, and they

will live on it, they, their sons, and their sons' sons, forever, and My servant David will be their leader forever.

† This is messianic prophecy. David here is not the old king, but the greater Son of David, Jesus Christ, who is the Good Shepherd (John 10:11).

† The forever land is the eternal inheritance in Christ, the kingdom that cannot be shaken (Hebrews 12:28).

† Eusebius testifies that the early church saw this fulfilled in Christ's reign over His people, Jew and Gentile together as one body (Ecclesiastical History 2.3).

How it applies to us today

† Ezekiel's valley of dry bones is about covenant restoration, not a future global resurrection of corpses.

† In Christ we live in the reality of this promise, raised from death in sin into newness of life by His Spirit.

† The two sticks remind us that God's people are united in one body, with Christ as our Shepherd-King.

† This fulfilled prophecy gives us confidence that we are already living in the eternal kingdom God promised.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Josephus – Antiquities 11.1.1; 11.5.2

† Josephus – The Jewish War 6.5.3

† Tacitus – Histories 5.13

† Eusebius – Ecclesiastical History 1.4; 2.3; 3.5

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