

Ezekiel Chapter 36

This chapter gives the opposite side to the judgment pronounced on Israel's enemies in the preceding chapter.

While her enemies will be wiped out, Israel will receive the blessings of God.

Her mountains will prosper (verses 1-15), and her people will be re-gathered to this newly blessed land (verses 16-38).

This will be a miraculous regathering by God of all Israel to their land: "I will ... gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land" (verse 24).

Therefore, prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills, to the low places and valleys, Thus saith the LORD Jehovah, Behold, in my jealousy and fury have I spoken, because ye have borne the disgrace of the nations.

It will also be a regathering in belief: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean", "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you", "I will also save you" (verses 25-29).

This will be both physical and spiritual.

See Jer. 31:31-34.

The prophecy indicates that Israel will be regathered in the land before she is reborn spiritually.

Ezekiel 36:1 "Also, thou son of man, prophesy unto the mountains of Israel, and say, Ye mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD:"

In the last lesson, the prophecy was directed to mount Seir.

Now, this prophecy is directed to the mountains of Israel.

This is speaking to the people of Israel.

This chapter presents the prerequisite regeneration which Israel must experience before they can nationally enter into the promised blessings.

This chapter must be understood to speak of a literal Israel, a literal land, and a literal regeneration, leading to a literal kingdom under Messiah.

"Prophesy unto the mountains":

Ezekiel addresses Israel's mountains, as symbolic of the whole nation.

He promises:

1. To give these mountains again to dispersed Israel (verse 12);
2. To cause fruit to grow on them (verse 8);
3. To rebuild cities and to multiply people there (verse 10);
4. To bless in a greater way than in the past (verse 11).

This promise can only be fulfilled in future millennial blessing to Israel that she has not yet experienced, because it includes the salvation of the New Covenant (verses 25-27, 29, 31, 33).

Verses 2-15

This section continues the prophecy against Edom (from chapter 35).

Ezekiel 36:2 "Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because the enemy hath said against you, Aha, even the ancient high places are ours in possession:"

In the last lesson, we saw that Edom had been delighted at the fall of Israel, thinking they would take it over as their land.

They knew God had given this land to Israel, but it was easy for their jealousy of Israel, through the years to grow to hate.

They wanted what Israel had.

They could never have this land, but they thought they could when Israel went into captivity.

God will restore these areas to Israel which their enemies claim to possess (Gen. 12:7).

They will pay for their spite against Israel.

Ezekiel 36:3 "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:"

The people are just sure that the land of Israel will belong to them.

The land of Israel had been ravaged of all its wealth, but the greatest wealth it had, was its natural resources.

They were still there.

Edom was opposed to Israel, and even pleased, when their calamity came.

They saw this as an opportunity to take the Promised Land for themselves.

The lips of talkers were saying that Israel could finally belong to them.

"Infamy":

Means slander.

Ezekiel 36:4 "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;"

God is speaking to nature itself.

The things mentioned, here, were not carried away captive.

They were still in the land.

Remember, there have been 70 years for the rivers to clear up, and the land to be cleansed naturally.

Ezekiel 36:5 "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."

God's heart is stayed upon His wife (Israel).

He may punish her Himself, but He does not want anyone saying, or doing, anything against Israel, His love.

Edom and the heathen nations have angered Him greatly by attacking His beloved.

The land of Israel was a gift from God to His beloved people Israel.

It will not belong to anyone else.

God will see to that.

Ezekiel 36:6 "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:"

The shame was from the war.

This beautiful land had been left in shambles.

The heathen had their way with God's land in battle.

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

God has lifted up His hand, He has sworn.

God testifies, as a formal pledge, that He will bring a turnabout in which the nations that seized the land will be shamed.

God's judgment on Israel is finished.

All of those who thought God would totally do away with Israel, have been made ashamed for believing that.

The blessings of God are about to pour out on Israel.

Verses 8-15

Israel's land will be productive (verses 8-9), populated (verses 10-11), and therefore peaceful (verses 12-15).

These features will be fully realized in the Messiah's kingdom.

The return from Babylon was only a partial fulfillment and foreshowing of the fullness to come in the future kingdom.

Ezekiel 36:8 "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."

When God created the heavens and the earth, He caused the fruit trees to bear, and the grass to grow in preparation for man.

This is what God is doing here.

He is preparing the land for the children of Israel to come into.

He has provided for their needs, when they get home.

Ezekiel 36:9 "For, behold, I [am] for you, and I will turn unto you, and ye shall be tilled and sown:"

This land has rested for many years.

It will be fertile, and produce abundant crops.

It will be tilled again.

This land was a beautiful pastoral land.

Ezekiel 36:10 "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:"

When God brings the people back into the lands, they will build again as they had in the past.

It was thought of as a blessing from God to have many children.

This is saying, they will multiply fast, and fill the land.

They will again build houses.

The entire land will be restored.

Ezekiel 36:11 "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."

Each family will go back to the same portion they were allotted, when they came into the Promised Land at first.

There will be no argument about whose land was whose.

This is their inheritance from God.

With God's blessings upon them, they will soon grow to their former greatness.

God will multiply their animals and their children.

Ezekiel 36:12 "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]."

When Babylon is overthrown, God tells His people to return to their homeland.

There may be a later fulfillment of this, as well.

In 1948, Israel became a nation, and there has been a tremendous flow of Israelis back to Israel. Their land is producing some of the finest fruit in the world.

Ezekiel 36:13 "Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because they say unto you, Thou [land] devourest up men, and hast bereaved thy nations;"

There are many nations who hate Israel.

Their hate is more in the form of jealousy.

Even today, the Jews, who are coming back to the land, are many times, those with high technical training.

The land they leave does not want to give them up.

In this sense, it would bereave the nation that lost them.

God had also blessed them in battle.

The other countries were afraid of Israel, because they were afraid of Israel's God.

Ezekiel 36:14 "Therefore thou shalt devour men no more, neither bereave thy nations any more, saith the Lord GOD."

Israel will live at peace with God and man.

Ezekiel 36:15 "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."

This verse is looking beyond the return from captivity in Babylon.

There was not, at that time, a total restoration.

There have been other times, when the Hebrews were in exile in foreign lands, as well.

This is probably speaking of the return that is going on in Israel today.

A partial fulfillment was in the days after the Babylonian captivity, but it certainly speaks also, of the return going on today.

Verses 16-19

Ezekiel gives a backward look to underscore why Israel had suffered the past judgments by the LORD.

It was because the Jews had “defiled” their land by their sins that the LORD purged it.

He likened such defilement to a menstrual condition (verse 17).

Ezekiel 36:16 "Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,"

This prophecy seems to be coming in waves to Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 36:17 "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."

We must continue to realize that God thought of Israel as His wife.

When she lived in the land, she had gone after false gods.

God thought of this as spiritual adultery.

All of the things that happened to Israel in the siege, and in the captivity, was from a jealous husband, who still loved His wife.

This Scripture is going back to the time, before they went into captivity in Babylon.

“A removed woman”, meaning a woman in her customary impurity.

Ezekiel 36:18 "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:"

God explains, through Ezekiel, that the punishment was not because He did not love Israel.

He punished her, to teach her not to be unfaithful.

Ezekiel 36:19 "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."

This is explaining that God's judgment on Israel was just.

He had ample cause to judge her thusly.

Ezekiel 36:20 "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."

They profaned the name of the LORD, because the heathen would now, think of Him as not being able to protect His people.

This is the same embarrassment caused to God, when someone commits a terrible crime and proclaims to the world he is a Christian.

Even in dispersion, Israelites tainted God's honor in the sight of the heathen, who concluded that the LORD of this exiled people was not powerful enough to keep them in their land.

The Israelites, as well as the Christians of today, should be a sign to the world of the greatness of God.

Everything we do, and say, should glorify Him.

We should never do, or say, anything that would turn people away from God.

Jesus is the Light of the world.

We are to have that Light brightly shining within us, so the world can see the Light in us.

We are to dispense Light, not darkness.

We believers affect the way the world feels about God.

Verses 21-23

"For My holy name":

Restoring Israel to the land that God pledged in covenant (Gen. 12:7), will sanctify His great name, and move other peoples to "know that I am the LORD."

This glory for God is the primary reason for Israel's restoration (verse 32).

Ezekiel 36:21 "But I had pity for mine holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the heathen, whither they went."

Even if they did not represent God to the world in a positive manner, He still loved them and forgave them.

Ezekiel 36:22 "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."

God will cause the heathen to have respect for His name, even if the children of Israel have caused them to have disrespect for Him.

This is just saying, their return to the Promised Land was a free gift to them from God.

They did not deserve to be His wife anymore.

He saved them, regardless of their worthiness.

This is the same with the Christians.

Christ did not wait until we were worthy to be saved, to save us.

He saved us, while we were yet in sin.

We are saved by grace.

Our salvation is a free gift from God.

Ezekiel 36:23 "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."

God had given His Word to Abraham that the land of Israel would belong to Abraham's descendants forever.

God keeps His Word, even though, Israel did not keep theirs.

The heathens worshipped false gods that had no power at all.

God wanted even the heathen to know that He is the One True God.

His power is not just in one country, but He is the God of all people.

One of the things that set Israel apart from the other nations was their God.

This shows that God is truly Creator of all mankind.

God is Supreme Ruler of the entire creation.

Ezekiel 36:24 "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land."

“Bring you into your own land”:

It is by no power of their own, that they are set free, and that their homeland will be ready for them.

These are all things that God set up.

They do not just come haphazardly, God brings them.

God assured Israel that He will bring them out of other lands back to the Promised Land (verse 24), the very land from which He scattered them (verse 20).

It is the same “land that I gave to your forefathers” (verse 28), a land distinct from those of other nations (verse 36), and a land whose cities will be inhabited by those who return (see verses 33, 36, 38).

The establishment of the modern state of Israel indicates this has already begun.

Verses 25-27

"I will cleanse you":

Along with the physical reality of a return to the Land, God pledged spiritual renewal:

1. Cleansing from sin;
2. A new heart of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:33-34);
3. A new spirit or disposition inclined to worship Him;
4. His spirit dwelling in them, enabling them to walk in obedience to His word.

This has not happened, because Israel has not trusted Jesus Christ as Messiah and Savior, but it will before the kingdom of Messiah (Zech. chapters 12 to 14; Romans 11:25-27; Rev. 11:13).

Ezekiel 36:25 "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."

The physical return of the people was not enough.

They must return to their God.

The washing of the water symbolizes the removal of their past life, and starting them all over again in newness of life.

What is figuratively described (in verse 25), is explained as literal (in verses 26-27).

The gift of the “new heart” signifies the new birth, which is regeneration by the Holy Spirit (11:18-20).

The “heart” stands for the whole nature.

The “spirit” indicates the governing power of the mind which directs thought and conduct.

A “heart of stone” is stubborn and self willed.

A “heart of flesh” is pliable and responsive.

The evil inclination is removed and a new nature replaces it.

This is New Covenant character (as in Jer. 31:31-34).

Ezekiel 36:26 "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 a heart of flesh."

The following Scripture describes, better than I could, the meaning of this Scripture above.

Hebrews 8:10 "For this [is] the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:"

Ezekiel 36:27 "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]."

This is speaking of the Spirit of God taking up His abode in man.

The following Scripture describes this happening well, for the Christian.

Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Ezekiel 36:28 "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."

God had given them the Promised Land.

There was a condition that gave them the privilege of staying there.

They must keep the commandments of God.

God always wanted to be their God.

The only question was, did they really want to be His people?

He offers this to them, but they must accept it.

Ezekiel 36:29 "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."

This is the offer to wash them in the blood of the Lamb, and take away all unrighteousness.

When they are washed in this blood, they will be white as snow spiritually.

The blessings of God will be showered on them.

They would have an abundance of corn.

They will never hunger again, if they accept Him as their Savior.

Ezekiel 36:30 "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."

It is God who brings the abundant crop.

We can plant the tree and care for it, but God must give the increase.

Ezekiel 36:31 "Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that [were] not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations."

They will be truly repentant for their past sins.

They will be so grateful to God, they will desire to please Him in all they do.

The thought of their past sins will be painful to them.

In Ezekiel (chapter 6:9 and 20:43), repeat almost the exact same thing.

Ezekiel 36:32 "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."

God wants them to be ashamed of their sins.

He wants them to, also, know that their forgiveness is His doing, and not theirs.

They have received unmerited favor from God.

He does this to elevate His name to them and the heathen.

God's glory and reputation among the nations, not Israel's, causes this restoration to be promised.

Ezekiel 36:33 "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."

This is speaking of a time of prosperity that God has brought.

God wants the cities to again be thought of, as they were before the captivity.

Ezekiel 36:34 "And the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that passed by."

At one time, the passerby had thought the land to be totally uninhabitable.

Now, it will bloom like a flower in the desert.

This had two fulfillments.

This happened, when they returned from Babylon, and will again happen in the millennium.

Ezekiel 36:35 "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."

The ones that say this, are the heathen lands around Israel.

God caused the spoiled land of Israel to grow, and met the people's needs.

God is causing it to grow again, as He did in Eden.

Their efforts are not bringing this about.

God's blessings are bringing it about.

Millennial conditions will be similar (not identical), to those in Eden.

Ezekiel 36:36 "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]."

We see this will happen, after the heathen have been destroyed, and there will be few left.

Those left will recognize the hand of the LORD in this.

It would be nothing at all for Creator God to restore this land.

He took nothing, and made the world.

God spoke, and the world became.

God will speak, and the ruined places will be built again.

Ezekiel 36:37 "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."

God will sovereignly work this return/renewal, yet give Israelites the human privilege of praying for it to be realized.

This prophecy was to stir up the people's prayers.

"Increase them":

There will be an increase in the population during the Millennium.

When the male population came to Jerusalem, they brought vast numbers of animals for sacrifice.

That was small compared to future kingdom conditions.

Ezekiel 36:38 "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."

The temple in Jerusalem had been a place for people from other areas to come to and worship.

Many times, the streets were overcrowded with these people.

The time will be, when just the Israelites will be as large as those numbers had been.

God will enlarge their numbers greatly, and will enlarge their love for God as well.

Ezekiel Chapter 36 Questions

1. Who is this prophecy addressed to?
2. What false hope had Edom had?
3. What does "infamy" mean?
4. What is God speaking to in verse 4?
5. How had the land been cleansed?

6. God's heart is stayed upon His _____.
7. How had Edom and the heathen nations angered God so greatly?
8. What was the shame that the rivers and valleys had suffered?
9. Verse 7 speaks that God's _____ on Israel is over.
10. When God created the heavens and the earth, He caused the fruit trees to bear, and the grass to grow for _____.
11. This land was a beautiful _____ land.
12. What is verse 10 saying God will cause to happen?
13. How will they know, which land belongs to whom?
14. What is the land called in verse 12?
15. When are two times in history, that we know of, when the people of Israel, scattered all over the world, came home?
16. The hate the nations have for Israel is more in the form of _____.
17. Why were the other countries afraid of Israel?
18. What is verse 14 saying?
19. What return to Israel, does the author believe verse 15 is speaking of?
20. God thought of Israel as His _____.
21. What was the sin she had committed?
22. God poured His fury on her, because of what?
23. God's judgment on Israel was _____.
24. How had they profaned the name of the LORD?
25. How do people, who call themselves Christians, profane the name of the LORD?
26. Everything we do and say should _____ Him.
27. Christians should dispense _____, and not _____.
28. He restores Israel for who's sake?
29. We are saved by _____.

30. Who had God given His Word to about the Promised Land?
31. The physical return of the people was not enough. They must return to their _____.
32. God wanted to be their God, then what was the question?
33. We plant the tree, but _____ gives the increase.
34. When did Israel bloom like a flower?
35. God spoke, and the world _____.