

Lesson 89 The kingdom of God

Scriptural basis: Ezekiel 37, Romans 11, Revelation 22

Memory verse: **“I will make my home among them. I will be their God, and they will be my people.” Ezekiel 37:27**

Ezekiel was a prophet who lived during the time of exile of Israel and Judah. Like the other prophets, Ezekiel was a man sent by God to speak God’s words to His people. God gave Ezekiel many visions, starting with an amazing glimpse at the awesomeness of heaven and God’s glory. And like most of the other prophets, Ezekiel was told by God to deliver bad news: that the people’s sin caused separation from God. But, true to His nature, God also gave Ezekiel good news to share with His chosen people; God showed Ezekiel a vision of a future time in which God would gather ALL of His people in one place where they would live saved from Satan sin and death. This is how God showed Ezekiel the coming Kingdom of God.

Again, a message came to me from the Lord: “Son of man, take a piece of wood and carve on it these words: ‘This represents Judah and its allied tribes.’ Then take another piece and carve these words on it: ‘This represents Ephraim and the northern tribes of Israel.’ Now hold them together in your hand as if they were one piece of wood. When your people ask you what your actions mean, say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will take Ephraim and the northern tribes and join them to Judah. I will make them one piece of wood in my hand.’

“Then hold out the pieces of wood you have inscribed, so the people can see them. And give them this message from the Sovereign Lord: I will gather the people of Israel from among the nations. I will bring them home to their own land from the places where they have been scattered. I will unify them into one nation on the mountains of Israel. One king will rule them all; no longer will they be divided into two nations or into two kingdoms. They will never again pollute themselves with their idols and vile images and rebellion, for I will save them from their sinful apostasy. I will cleanse them. Then they will truly be my people, and I will be their God.

“My servant, who will be a descendent of David, will be their king, and they will have only one shepherd. They will obey my regulations and be careful to keep my decrees. They will live in the land I gave my servant Jacob, the land where their ancestors lived. They and their children and their grandchildren after them will live there forever, generation after generation. And my servant will be their prince forever. And I will make a **covenant of peace with them, an everlasting covenant**. I will give them their land and increase their numbers, and I will put my Temple among them forever. I will make my home among them. I will be their God, and they will be my people. And when my Temple is among them forever, the nations will know that I am the Lord, who makes Israel holy.”

Though Ezekiel lived during a very hard time for the nation of Israel, God encouraged him and His people with a vision of a future hope. This encouragement extends to ALL nations, because it is tied to God’s promise made to Abraham in Genesis, chapter 12 that all the families on earth would be blessed through him. This hope was in a Savior, Jesus who being from the line of David, would be the one to bring salvation to all who put their faith in Him, allowing a scattered and rebellious people become reconciled to God the Father and Creator through a profound act of mercy and grace!