EZEKIEL 37

# Dry Bones Live: One Stick, One Shepherd

> *“I will put My Spirit within you and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land.”*
> EZEKIEL 37:14

A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · WITH GUZIK

# Where Ezekiel has brought us

1. Ezekiel 37 sits at the heart of the book's restoration section (chapters 33–39).

2. Chapter 36 promised a new heart and God's Spirit within (36:26–27); chapter 37 puts that promise into pictures — first a valley of bones raised by the breath of God, then two sticks joined into one…

# The Valley of Very Dry Bones

*Carried by the Spirit into a valley of bones, Ezekiel is asked the impossible question.*

EZEKIEL 37:1

*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.*

### DAVID GUZIK

Guzik reads the scene as a true vision, not a journey on foot. Quoting Feinberg: 'The mention of the hand of the Lord indicates prophetic ecstasy and inspiration.'

### WHAT IT MEANS

This is the deadest place imaginable. Ezekiel is a priest, and a field of unburied corpses is unclean ground.

## ʿetsem (עֶצֶם)

ʿETSEM · "BONE"

The word study gives ʿetsem as bone, and also as substance, the self. That second sense deepens the scene: these are not just scattered skeletons but what is left of a people's very being.

# The Word, Then the Breath

*Ezekiel preaches to bones and they come together — but only the breath makes them stand.*

**EZEKIEL 37:8**

*And I looked, and behold, sinews were on them, and flesh grew and skin covered them; but there was no breath in them.*

**DAVID GUZIK**

Guzik sees the restoration coming in stages, and he reads Ezekiel's two commands as preaching followed by prayer.

**WHAT IT MEANS**

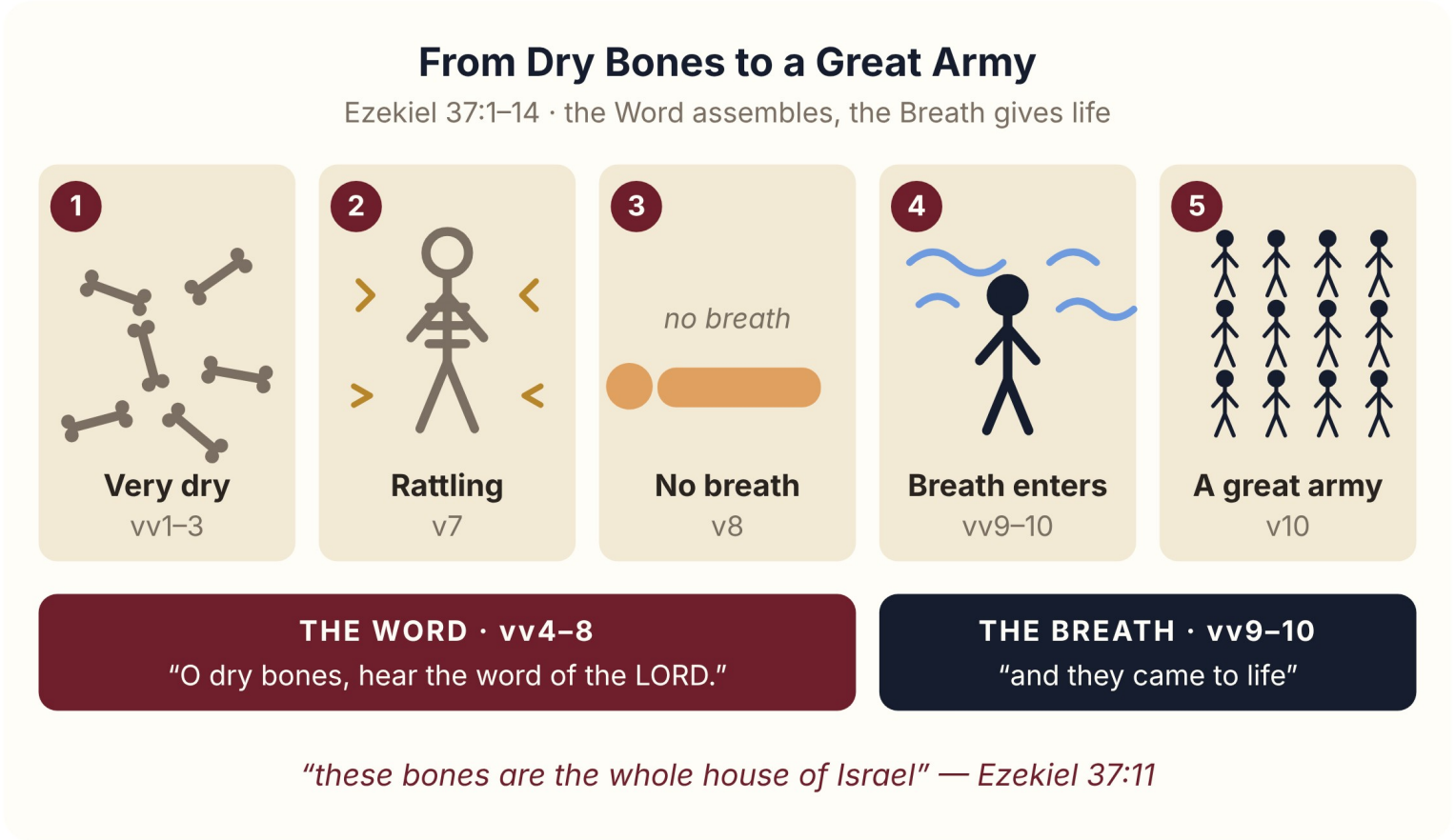
Preaching to bones is a ridiculous assignment unless God is in it, and Ezekiel did it anyway: "So I prophesied as I was commanded" (v7). The Word did real work — a noise, a rattling, bone to its bone, then sinews, flesh and skin.

**ruach (רוּחַ)**

RUACH · "BREATH, WIND, SPIRIT"

Ruach is the key word of the vision. It means breath, wind and spirit, and Ezekiel 37 uses all three.

# From Dry Bones to a Great Army




*The Word brings the bones together and clothes them, but only the Breath of God makes them live and stand.*

# Our Hope Has Perished — I Will Open Your Graves

*God names the bones as the whole house of Israel and answers their despair with resurrection.*

EZEKIEL 37:11

*Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.'*

### DAVID GUZIK

Guzik agrees the passage is 'undeniably' about Israel's national restoration, even though God chose the language of resurrection to picture it.

### WHAT IT MEANS

God interprets His own vision: "these bones are the whole house of Israel" (v11) — north and south together. The valley is a picture of what the exiles were saying about themselves, and God answers their exact words.

**tiqvah (תִּקְוָה)**
TIQVAH · "HOPE"

Tiqvah means hope or expectation, and the word study notes that it is literally a cord — something to hold on to. That is exactly what the exiles say has snapped: "our hope has perished" (v11).

# Two Sticks Become One

*Judah and Joseph are joined in the prophet's hand — one nation, cleansed, under one king.*

**EZEKIEL 37:16**

*"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.'*

**DAVID GUZIK**

Guzik, passing on Clarke, explains the northern label: 'Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, was an Ephraimite.'

**WHAT IT MEANS**

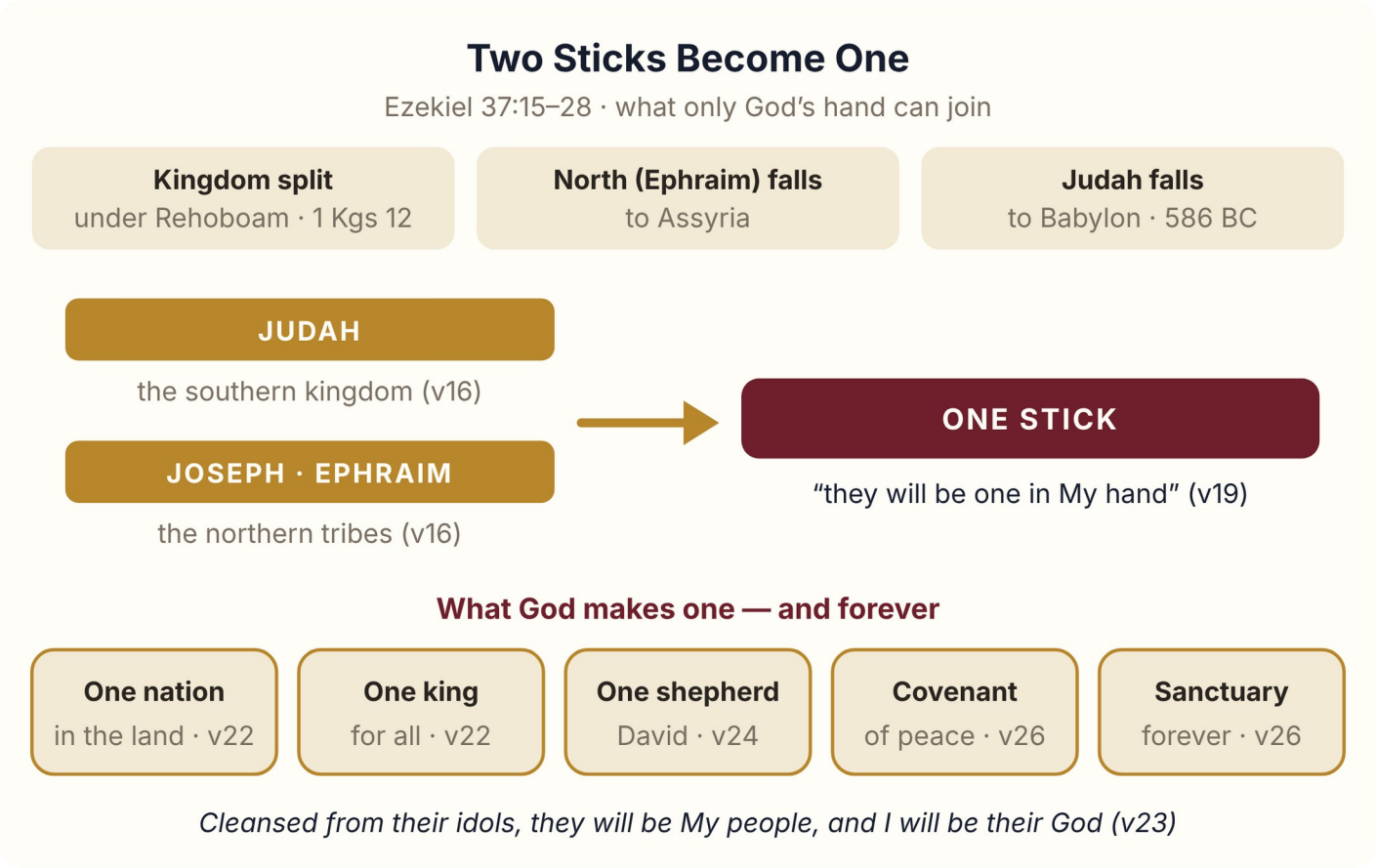
Israel had been split since Rehoboam (1 Kings 12), roughly 350 years. Ezekiel's neighbors watched him write on two sticks and asked, "Will you not declare to us what you mean by these?"

**ʿets (עֵץ)**

ʿETS · "WOOD, A STICK"

ʿEts is simply wood, a piece of wood — the plainest object Ezekiel could pick up. On one he writes Judah, the southern kingdom; on the other, Joseph and Ephraim, the northern tribes.

# Two Sticks Become One




*The kingdoms split since Rehoboam are joined in God's hand into one nation under one Shepherd, with His sanctuary among them forever.*

# One Shepherd, One Covenant, One Sanctuary

*David My servant, an everlasting covenant of peace, and God's dwelling in their midst forever.*

EZEKIEL 37:24

*"My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them.*

### DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that most commentators take "My servant David" as the Messiah, the Son of David, but he holds that the reference is 'most appropriately seen' as David himself, raised and ruling under Christ in the…

### WHAT IT MEANS

David had been dead four centuries, so "My servant David will be king over them" (v24) points to a King still to come.

**miqdash (מִקְדָּשׁ)**
MIQDASH · "SANCTUARY"

Miqdash is a holy place, a sanctuary — God's house. The chapter climbs to it: "My sanctuary in their midst forever" (v26, again in v28).

# What to carry from this chapter

1

### One word, three meanings.

Ruach is breath, wind and Spirit, and Ezekiel 37 uses it all three ways (vv1, 5, 9, 14).

2

### A body is not life.

The bones came together with sinews, flesh and skin, “but there was no breath in them” (v8).

3

### Preaching, then prayer.

Guzik reads the two commands — prophesy to the bones, then prophesy to the breath — as the Word spoken and the Spirit sought.

4

### Hope is a cord.

Tiqvah, the hope Israel said had perished (v11), literally means a cord.

# More to carry

5

### God answers despair with resurrection.

To “our hope has perished,” God replies, “I will open your graves” (vv11–12).

6

### Not lost tribes, not scrolls.

Guzik rejects the ‘lost ten tribes’ theory and the Mormon reading; the sticks are the tribes, joined in God’s hand.

7

### Cleansing comes before unity.

God ends the old division by dealing with the idols that caused it (vv22–23).

8

### The climax is God’s presence.

Guzik, quoting Smith, calls the restored sanctuary ‘the climax of all that this prophet had to say’ (vv26–28).

# Talk it through

1. God asked, “Son of man, can these bones live?” What valley in your life, or in someone you love, looks too dry to live?

2. Why did God have Ezekiel prophesy twice — first to the bones and then to the breath?

3. Where have you seen a man clean up on the outside with no breath inside? What does he actually need?

4. Israel said, “Our hope has perished.” What does God’s answer in verses 12–14 say to a man who feels completely cut off?

5. What changes for God’s people when they have “one shepherd” instead of many failed kings?

CLOSING

*The valley was full of bones, and God asked if they could live. Then He answered His own question: the Word assembled them, the Breath raised them, and one Shepherd will gather them home. No valley is too dry and no man too dead for the Lord GOD who has spoken and done it.*

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides and reflection journal: see the Ezekiel study page.