

## **The Valley of Dry Bones**

Ezekiel 34 – 37

by Don Falkos

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Ezekiel had a vision of a valley filled with dry bones. Suddenly a rattling sound echoed throughout the valley as the bones came together, each in its proper place. Ligaments grew on them, flesh appeared, and skin covered them. But they lay still as corpses on the ground. Then the breath of the Lord came into them, and they were alive! They stood up, a huge army!

The Lord said, "Israel's leaders failed to shepherd my flock. Their sins have brought about the desolation of the land and the destruction of the nations surrounding them. My people broke our covenant and have suffered for it. But I will open their graves of exile. I will breathe my Spirit into them, and they will be alive. I will give them back their land, and they will know I am the Lord."

In front of a crowd of exiles, Ezekiel took two sticks. On one he wrote 'Judah.' On the other he wrote 'Ephraim.' He held them in his hand so they looked like a single stick and said, "The Lord will bring the people of Judah, the southern kingdom, and the people of Ephraim, the northern kingdom, from the places they have been scattered and will unite them as one people, the nation of Israel. You will once again live in your own land. You will be a transformed people. Your heart of stone will be replaced with a heart of flesh, a heart to love the Lord and to love others. The Lord will raise up a new David, a Messiah who will rule over you, not as others before him have done, but as the Lord has always intended."