

God Said It, God Did It

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises to Israel, as demonstrated through the prophecy of the dry bones in Ezekiel 37 and the nation's revival.

Duration: 41:29

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1

Topics: "Voice Of God", "Fulfillment of Prophecy", "Restoration of Israel"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the fulfillment of God's promises as illustrated in Ezekiel 37, where God revives the dry bones representing Israel, showcasing His power to restore and bring hope. He recounts the historical return of the Jewish people to their homeland and the agricultural flourishing of Israel, affirming that what God has said, He has done. Smith encourages believers to recognize the ongoing fulfillment of biblical prophecies and to respond to God's call for faith and commitment in these last days.

Transcript

Let's turn now in our Bibles to Ezekiel chapter 37. Our scripture reading will be the first 14 verses of chapter 37. I'll read the first and the odd-numbered verses, and Pastor Brian will lead the congregation in the reading of the even-numbered verses through verse 14.

Let's stand as we read the Word of God. The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley, which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about. And, behold, there were very many in the open valley, and, lo, they were very dry.

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live.

And I will lay sinews upon you, and I will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall know, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. And so I prophesied as I was commanded, and I prophesied as I prophesied. There was a noise, and, behold, a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them. And then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, Son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon the slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet an exceeding great army.

And then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say our bones are dried, and our hope is lost, and we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

And ye shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land. Then ye shall know that I the have spoken it and performed it, saith the Lord. Let's pray.

Father, we thank you for the sure word of prophecy, and the things that you have said that you would do, you have done. We realize, Lord, there are other things that you said you were going to do that have not yet been done, but we wait for the fulfillment of those prophecies that deal with the things that are yet future. Knowing, Lord, that with the same certainty whereby you have already fulfilled the prophecies of the past, and of the things that we see going on in the present, you will surely fulfill those prophecies that deal with the things yet future.

Help us, Father, to come to the realization today that you have spoken it, and you have performed it. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

You may be seated. And of course, as was announced, there will be no service here tonight, as we will be joining in the Harvest Crusade at the Anaheim Stadium. We invite you to join with us.

This gives us an extra week in Ezekiel chapters 37 through 39. And I think that that is good, because these are very important chapters. Some of them, and some of the things prophesied, have already been fulfilled.

But as we move along into chapter 38 and 39, we will be looking at things which will be shortly fulfilled. And there is sort of a progression of the prophecies here. And we have seen a partial fulfillment of the prophecies, say, in chapter 36, part of it here in chapter 37.

But the prophecy goes on through 38 and 39, which is extremely important. And we'll be looking at that next Sunday and next Sunday night in our studies. On May the 14th in 1948, Ben-Gurion announced to the gathered assembly, Israel now takes its place as a nation in the world.

This announcement marked the beginning of the fulfillment of this prophecy here in chapter 37. As we read in verse 11, the Lord said, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, our bones are dried, our hope is lost, we've been cut off.

Therefore prophecy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves. I will call you to come up out of your graves. I will bring you into the land of Israel, and you shall know that I am the Lord when I've opened your graves.

O my people, I brought you up out of your graves, and I've put my spirit in you, and you shall live. And I shall place you in your own land, and then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have performed it. In the previous chapter, chapter 36, the Lord prophesied of the development of the agricultural potential that was there in the of Israel.

In verse 24, chapter 36, he said, I will take you from among the heathen. I will gather you out of the countries. I will bring you into your own land, for I am with you, and with the mountains of Israel, I am for you.

And I will turn unto you, and you shall be tilled, and you will shoot forth your branches. You'll yield your fruit to my people of Israel, for they shall surely come, and the desolate land shall be tilled, whereas it lay desolate in the sight of all that pass by. And they shall say, this land that was desolate is become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and the desolate and the ruined cities are fenced and inhabited.

I, Jehovah, have spoken it, and I will do it. Of course, from our vantage point, we can say, and he has done it. There's another prophecy of Isaiah that speaks again of the agricultural development of this land, where he said, and you shall cause, or he shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root.

Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the earth with fruit. This little land of Israel, which is just about the same size as the state of New Jersey, because of the development of the agricultural potential, has become the third largest exporter of fruit, vegetables, and flowers of the nations of the world. It's interesting that God speaks about the certainty of his word.

I have said it, I will do it. Throughout Europe, all winter long, you can find fresh vegetables that are grown in Israel. The Jordan Valley is a very warm valley, much like our Imperial Valley, where they are able to grow vegetables year round.

And thus, the markets of Europe are filled during the winter months with vegetables grown in Israel. And God has kept his word, and it has become, agriculturally, a very strong nation. In fact, agriculture is one of the major exports of the nation of Israel.

In verse 21 of chapter 36, God said that he really didn't do this because they were such good people. He said he was doing this for his own namesake that had been profaned by the Jews during their scattering throughout the world. He said, I have pity for my holy name, which the house of Israel have profaned among the nations wherever they went.

Therefore, say to the house of Israel, thus says the Lord God, I do not do this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for my holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went. I will sanctify my great name, which you have profaned among the heathen, which you have profaned in the midst of them. And the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, says the Lord God, when I shall have sanctified in you before their eyes.

For I will take you from among the heathen, and I will gather you out of the countries. I will bring you into your own land. I, the Lord, have spoken it.

I will do it. What can you say? We've got to admit he has done it. Back in the middle of the 1800s, there were only 24,000 Jews in all of the land of Israel.

But at the turn of the century, as the Jews were being persecuted throughout Europe, they began to immigrate back to Israel. Until in 1915, there were 85,000 Jews in Israel. Then came the war and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire that had controlled Israel and that had kept the Jews pretty much from coming back to the land.

And it became a mandate of Britain. And they opened the doors for a time, and the Jews began to stream back into the land, and so much so that they then closed the doors to the Jews again. But the Jews were making their way back.

There is that book called The Exodus that chronicles how that they came in so many different ways back to the land, for there seemed to be a drawing in their hearts to come back to the land. But as the persecution against the Jews really developed, especially among Germany under Hitler, and when he had the extermination of the Jews, they began to flee and to come to the Israel in droves as they were returning to the land that God had promised unto them as descendants of Abraham. The Lord brought them back to develop the agricultural potential.

Now, for a time, the Jews had a hard time finding work in Israel. So abroad, the Jews formed the Zionist movement, and they began to send money, and they hired these Jews that could not find employment to plant trees on the mountains of Israel. And thus, when you go to Israel today, you will see forest covering the mountains of Israel, as over a hundred million trees were planted during this tree planting operation.

If you will take an old Bible map, and you will see above the Sea of Galilee, what is titled the Hula Lake. If you go to Israel today, you'll say, well, where is the Hula Lake? And they'll smile and say, what? There is no Hula Lake. There used to be.

It wasn't really a lake, however. It was just a vast swamp area that was filled with malaria and uninhabitable. And when the Jews began to come back, they bought this land from the Arab owners who laughed all of the way to the bank about these stupid Jews that were willing to buy property that was totally worthless.

But the Jews then built a channel through the Hula Lake so that the Jordan River no longer was dammed up by the silt of the Hula Lake, and it was able then to flow on down to the Lake of Galilee, and it opened up thousands of acres to some of the richest agricultural land you could ever hope for. And of course, to go now through the Upper Galilee, it is just one vast garden. The land that was desolate has become like the Garden of Eden, just as God predicted.

The same was true for the Sharon Valley. It was a vast swamp for the rivers were all dammed up by silt. Through the years, the silt that was brought into the Mediterranean by the Nile River gradually settled along the shores of Israel, and it formed these sand silt dams, and the water was just there in the Sharon Valley.

It was just a large swamp area, and again, malaria-filled swamps. Again, the Israelis bought the land from the Arabs, and then they opened up the channels of the rivers and took away the silt dams so that the rivers could flow on out to the Mediterranean, and again, this swampy area that was so desolate became the place where they planted the citrus trees. And some of the finest citrus in the world is still being grown there in the Sharon Valley, and of course, the Jaffa oranges are famous all over the world that are grown there, in which was once an uninhabitable area.

The same was true with the Jezreel Valley. The river again had been dammed up and did not flow through to the Mediterranean, made that whole area a vast swamp. But today, if you go and stand there on the Mount of Megiddo, you can look across the Jezreel Valley, and you'll see, again, ideal farmland, and the verdant vegetables and grains and all that are grown there in the Jezreel Valley.

And chapter 36 has been fulfilled. The land has been tilled, the mountains covered with trees, fruit trees of all sorts, and Israel has blossomed and bud and filled the earth with fruit. God said it, God did it.

Now, as we come into chapter 37, the Lord begins to speak of the development of the nation, the rebirth of the nation of Israel. And so God speaks to Ezekiel in a parable form, in a vision, which is a parable, a vision of a great valley that was filled with scattered bones, very dry. And God said to Ezekiel, can these bones be made to live again? And Ezekiel responded, God, you know.

In other words, it would take a miracle, but you are a God of miracles. And so Ezekiel heard this noise, and he saw the bones as they began to come together. The interesting thing is, the nation of Israel was scattered throughout the world.

It, as a nation, died. There were little pockets of Jews all over the world. God had prophesied this back in Leviticus, when God gave to Israel the laws.

The Lord said in Leviticus 26, 14, if you will not listen to me and obey my commandments, if you despise my statutes and you abhor my judgments and not keep all my commandments and you break my covenant, this is what will happen to you. You will have sorrows. You will sow your seed in vain, for your enemies will eat the fruit.

You will be slain before your enemies, and they that hate you will rule over you. When you are besieged, you will eat the flesh of your sons and daughters, and I will abhor you, and I will make your cities waste. I will destroy your sanctuaries.

I will not accept your sacrifices, and I will cause your land to be desolate, and I will scatter you among the heathen. However, when you are in the land of your enemies, I will not cast you away or destroy you completely, for I am Jehovah, your God. And so Israel was scattered throughout the nations of the world, and they formed their little communities in the nations around the world, even as God declared.

But the miracle of all miracles is that without having a homeland, they maintained their national identity for 2,000 years. The Jew was still recognized as a Jew. They maintained their national identity.

How many Hittites have you met lately? How about how many Amorites do you know? Are they Perizzites? These were all once great nations, but when they lost their homeland, they lost their national identity as they were melded into the different nations where they were scattered. Not so the Jew. He maintained his national identity, though he did not have a homeland.

Unparalleled in the history of the world, no other nation has been able to maintain national identity without having a homeland, but yet it was so among the Jews. For 2,000 years, scattered throughout the world, without a homeland, the nation had been long dead, and the hope of becoming a nation was long dead. But the Lord asked Ezekiel, can these bones be made to live again? And Ezekiel, Lord, you know.

So the Lord commanded Ezekiel to prophesy over these bones. And as he began to prophesy, he heard this noise, and the bones began to connect together until it formed a skeleton. The skeleton stood on its

feet, and it became covered with flesh and with muscle and then with skin.

And then God said, prophesy to the winds. Breathe upon it. The Spirit will come upon it, and they will become a nation again.

And so he prophesied to the winds, and the Spirit of God came upon them, and they became a nation once again. Of course, we saw the fulfillment of this prophecy in part back in 1948, March, May the 14th, when Ben-Gurion announced that Israel was once again a nation among the nations of the world. The first thing God said he was going to do was to bring them back into the land, make them a nation.

Now he's done that. Put flesh and muscle upon them. He's done that.

They became a military power there in the Middle East. It is interesting that after the Six-Day War back in 1967, that the Jews became very cocky. As we were over and talking to them, and especially talking to them about the Six-Day War and all, they would talk about their military might, their ability to outthink their enemies, and the strategies, and they were very impressed with their victory, and high on the victory of 67.

But after 1973, the Yom Kippur War, where Israel was almost wiped out. It was called by the codename of the War of Eradication, when these Muslim nations that surrounded Israel were determined to destroy Israel as a nation, and to drive them into the Mediterranean, and were almost successful. The Egyptians came across the Suez, and through the Barlev Line that the Jews had built, and were taking the Sinai Peninsula.

Syria had attacked from the north with a thousand tanks, and they had captured again the Golan Heights, and were overlooking the Sea of Galilee. And Israel looked like it was doomed. But through a series of miracles, there was a turnaround in that war.

And Israel ultimately drove the Egyptians out of the Sinai. They crossed the Suez Canal. They encircled the fourth army of the Egyptians, and the Egyptians, of course, called for a ceasefire.

They drove the Syrians out of the Golan Heights, and as the result of that Yom Kippur War, rather than Jerusalem, or rather than Israel being eradicated, they actually enlarged their borders. But a different story. They recognized that it was a miracle that they were able to bring a victory out of certain defeat.

In fact, the president of Israel, Chaim Herzog, at the time, wrote an interesting book called, The Miracles of the War of Atonement. And he recounts the many miracles that happened on the various fronts of how that God guided and helped them, and the way that God helped them to defeat their enemies. But they began to recognize that God had a part of the victory.

They weren't nearly as cocky after that in talking about what they could do, but they began to talk about the of the war of Yom Kippur. But as a nation, they still remain very secular. Only one in five Jews is really religious, according to the Orthodox beliefs.

Only one in five. For the most part, it is a very secular country. The time when God's Spirit comes upon them, and they acknowledge and recognize God, is yet future.

There's going to be a real movement spiritually in Israel. And in chapter 39, it tells us of what will cause this spiritual awakening to take place. We'll wait till next Sunday to deal with that particular part.

But you wonder, what will it take to make them believers? I was talking with a very wealthy Jewish man who was very bitter against God, because his parents, both of them, were killed by the Nazis during World War II. And he was saying, where was God when the Nazis gassed my parents at Auschwitz? And I had a hard time getting through to him. But I began to tell him about the prophecies concerning Israel, how that it would become an agricultural power.

And I said, God said it. And look at Israel today, how that they are third largest exporter of agriculture of the nations of the world. And look at the agricultural developments that are there.

And he said, we're smart people, and we are not convinced that God did it. And I said, well, the Lord prophesied that they would become a nation again in Ezekiel 37. And look, they are now a nation again.

He said, I told you, we're brilliant people. And then I began to tell him the things of 38 and 39. And he said, when that happens, I'll be a believer.

And I said, well, good, but you might be too late. But I wonder today, what it's going to take to make you a believer. The prophecies in the Bible have been and are being fulfilled before our very eyes.

The things that God said were going to happen in the last days are happening now. Jesus, in talking about his coming again, said, unless those days were shortened, there would no flesh remain upon the earth. Today, rogue nations are gaining the technology for nuclear power.

Iran, North Korea, developing their nuclear arsenals, and China with its nuclear arsenal. This week, one of the generals of the Chinese army warned and threatened the United States that if when they move against Taiwan, we seek to interfere, that they will send their ICBM missiles against the United States, and they'll destroy our major cities. You cannot imagine, you cannot fathom, what would happen to this world if there was another major world war.

With the weapons of mass destruction that have been developed, no flesh would really remain upon the earth. The very scenario that Jesus described would exist when he returned again, and thus, for the elect's sake, those days will be shortened. The Bible speaks of a new system of commerce.

Now, what is one of the major problems today, as far as money is concerned, as far as your bank accounts and all are concerned? What is it that we are being warned of every week on television? The new scams that are being developed for identity theft, where people are seeking to discover a little information about you, your social security number, your mother's maiden name, and so forth, so that they can steal your identity and strip your bank account of all of your funds, charge your charge accounts to the limit, and it is a major problem today in our world, the identity theft. What is the answer? Well, of course, the credit card companies and everybody is working hard to find a foolproof credit card. But as rapidly as they develop a new system, the hackers and the people who are out to steal money from you develop the plans to go around the new systems that are set up to halt that.

The only answer seems to be a code put on your body. Maybe a computer chip under the skin on your wrist where you won't be able to buy or sell without that number or that computer chip that is embedded into the body. Interesting that the Bible foresees such a thing and tells us that there will come a cashless, checkless society.

And of course, it will be promoted as number one and foolproof identity, a elimination of all of the robberies, bank robberies, and so forth, where money is taken, because money will have no value. All of

your account will be in a coded account within the bank and you can't buy or sell unless you show the identity that you have and probably the ability to scan it with a telephone or something. If you're making a credit card call, you'll have to scan across the code in your hand.

But the elimination of these social problems that have developed in the days in which we live, and interestingly enough, the technology is now there and they've already begun to implant chips in people for information on their health records and also for locating people who maybe are kidnapped or have been taken as captives. The ability to locate them through these little chips, transmitters, and so forth, that will be placed in the human body. But what will it take? The Bible tells of these things.

They are now being developed. What will it take to make you believe that God, when he says something, means it? And what he said will indeed come to pass. As I said, we look at Israel.

It's an agricultural power. God said it would be. It is.

We look at Israel. It is a nation. God said they would become a nation again.

They have. And we see these things taking place before our eyes. How long before you believe what God has said? God has promised the rise of Europe as the major world power.

And we see Europe unifying and becoming a major world power. What will it take? What must happen before you become a believer? Surely there's sufficient evidence that the Bible is true, that it is the Word of God, that God said what he meant, he meant what he said, and what he said will indeed come to pass. It has up to this point.

And what would cause you to think that the rest of the story will not be completed? I don't know what it will take for you to become a believer. But I do know that if you wait too long for some of these events that the Bible predicts, if you wait for this man of sin to arise and take over the world, you'll be too late. And you'll have to go through the great tribulation.

You say, well, when the Lord takes his church out, then I'll believe. Well, okay, have your luck at it. Because you're too late.

You'll be seeing then the things that are described in Revelation 6 through 18, the great tribulation that's going to take place upon the earth, the nuclear warfare and the tragic consequences. The Bible says today is the day of salvation. Call upon the Lord while he is near, while he yet may be found.

And I would encourage you that this day, surely the evidence should be sufficient that you would make a reasonable decision and conclusion. The Bible is the word of God. What the Bible said is true.

What God said would happen has happened. And thus, the chances of the rest of it happening are very, very good. Surrender your life.

Find out what God has in mind for you and the plan that he has for you and for the future. Father, we thank you for the fact that you've laid out in advance the things that would happen that should awaken us and cause us to realize that these are the last days. And even as Paul said, knowing the time, it's high time to awake out of our sleep.

For now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed. Lord, wake them out of their sleep. And may they make their commitment to follow Jesus Christ in these last days right out until you come and receive

your church out of this world.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Shall we stand? The pastors are down here at the front to minister to you who would like to submit your life to follow Jesus Christ.

So as soon as we're dismissed, make your way forward and they're here to pray for you. May the Lord be with you. Watch over and keep you.

And as Jesus said, when you see these things begin to come to pass, look up, lift up your head for your redemption is drawing nigh. The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee and be gracious unto thee.

The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace. God bless you.

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