

ISRAEL

IN TWO CENTURIES

The restoration of Israel, leading to a golden age of blessing, is a prominent theme in Scripture. No passage more graphically illustrates the process than Ezekiel 37.

This vision of the dry bones as the “whole house of Israel” has five stages:

- 1)** *The dry bones are scattered around (v. 2);*
- 2)** *The bones come together, develop connective tissues, and are covered with flesh (vv. 7-8);*
- 3)** *The wind blows breath into these bodies (vv. 9-10);*
- 4)** *The restoration is also a spiritual one (vv. 24-28); and*
- 5)** *“David”, actually Jesus Christ, the “Root and Offspring of David” (Rev. 22:16), will reign over the nation.*

Setting no dates for specific fulfillments, but surveying the trend of Israel’s resurgence in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it appears this divine program of restoration is in progress. The following are highlights of these two centuries:

1814—Presbyterian pastor John MacDonald in Albany New York, began

to preach on Bible prophecy and Israel’s restoration, sparking an interest in the literalist interpretation of Old Testament prophecies about Israel.

1878—W.E. Blackstone’s book *Jesus is coming* was published, predicting and encouraging the return of Jews in fulfillment of the prophecy.

1881-1900—The first Aliya (meaning ascent) occurred and consisted of some 30,000 Jews under persecution in Russia moving to Palestine.

1897—The First Zionist Congress, convened in Basel, Switzerland, adopted Zionism as a program, and stated, “The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish people a home in Palestine by public law.”

1904-1914—The Second Aliya resulted in 32,000 persecuted Russian Jews moving to Palestine.

1917—The Balfour Declaration, read in part: “His majesty’s government views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for Jewish people.”

1924-1939—The Fourth Aliya, when 78,000 Polish Jews moved to Palestine.

1933-1939—The Fourth Aliya, when 230,000 Jews fled from persecution in Germany and central Europe.

1940-1948—The Fifth Aliya, when 95,000 Jews escaped from central Europe. Many Jews remained in Europe, and more than six million were killed during the Holocaust led by Adolph Hitler and Nazi Germany.

1948—The Jewish Agency in what would become the new nation of Israel proclaimed nation status. On May 14, 1948, the United States President Harry Truman’s made this announcement: “The United States recognizes the provisional government as the de-facto authority of the New State of Israel.”

1967—The Six Day War, precipitated by an Arab invasion, results in Israel capturing Jerusalem and the West Bank.

1973—Another attack by Arabs was repulsed with Israeli victories.

1978-2000—Egypt recognizes Israel; the Arab-Palestinian resistance movement begins; negotiations, agreements, and tensions continue.

It seems that during these two centuries, the dry bones have come together to form a living nation, the most powerful small nation on earth (with just over 5 million people), but there awaits the complete spiritual awakening, when true life enters them, as prophesied here and in Joel 2:28-29.



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Pastor Harlan & Doris Stilwell Sr.

