

## Ezekiel 37:15-28 (NIV)

15 The word of the Lord came to me: 16 “Son of man, take a stick of wood and write on it, ‘Belonging to Judah and the Israelites associated with him.’ Then take another stick of wood, and write on it, ‘Belonging to Joseph (that is, to Ephraim) and all the Israelites associated with him.’ 17 Join them together into one stick so that they will become one in your hand.

18 “When your people ask you, ‘Won’t you tell us what you mean by this?’ 19 say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I am going to take the stick of Joseph—which is in Ephraim’s hand—and of the Israelite tribes associated with him, and join it to Judah’s stick. I will make them into a single stick of wood, and they will become one in my hand.’ 20 Hold before their eyes the sticks you have written on 21 and say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will take the Israelites out of the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from all around and bring them back into their own land. 22 I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel. There will be one king over all of them and they will never again be two nations or be divided into two kingdoms. 23 They will no longer defile themselves with their idols and vile images or with any of their offenses, for I will save them from all their sinful backsliding,[\*] and I will cleanse them. They will be my people, and I will be their God.

24 “‘My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd. They will follow my laws and be careful to keep my decrees. 25 They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your ancestors lived. They and their children and their children’s children will live there forever, and David my servant will be their prince forever. 26 I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant. I will establish them and increase their numbers, and I will put my sanctuary among them forever. 27 My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people. 28 Then the nations will know that I the Lord make Israel holy, when my sanctuary is among them forever.’”

Footnotes: \*Ezekiel 37:23 Many Hebrew manuscripts (see also Septuagint); most Hebrew manuscripts all their dwelling places where they sinned

## Sanctuary: God’s Dwelling Place

### OPEN

- What do you think of when you hear the word “sanctuary?”
- As we dig into today’s passage, we find that Jerusalem has been decimated by the Babylonians and a remnant of Jews, including Ezekiel, are living in exile in Babylon. For a more thorough background, check out this summary: <https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-ezekiel/>.
- Read Ezekiel 37:15-28 together.

### STUDY

- Describe Ezekiel’s task in verses 15-23. How does the image of the sticks add to God’s message?
- List the Lord’s promises in verses 21-23. Why would these promises be helpful to the people of God at this time?
- Looking at verses 24-28, what new promises does God make?
- What do these promises say about the nature of God and his relationship to his people?
- What do you think it means that God will put his sanctuary among his people? Is it a spiritual, physical, or some other kind of sanctuary?
- What is the purpose of this sanctuary?
- How has Christ been (or how would you long for him to be) a sanctuary for you?
- What hope could this passage have for our ever-growing family of God at First Pres Bakersfield?

### PRAY

- Keeping in mind the rebellion and subsequent exile Israel has just experienced in this passage, spend time in confession before the Lord. Then boldly ask God to continue to fulfill the promises of this passage within us and our congregation!