

CHAPTER 37

INTRODUCTION TO EZEKIEL 37

This chapter contains a prophecy of the Jews' return from captivity to their own land; of the union of the each tribes with one another; and of the glorious kingdom of Christ among them. Their restoration is represented by a vision of dry bones made alive; the place in which they were; the condition they were in; and the manner in which they were made to live, are described, (^{<3570>}Ezekiel 37:1-10), the explication and application of this vision to the Jews, (^{<3571>}Ezekiel 37:11-14), their union is signified by a sign or emblem of two sticks, which became one in the hand of the prophet, (^{<3575>}Ezekiel 37:15-17), the meaning of this is shown, (^{<3578>}Ezekiel 37:18-20), then follow promises of their return to their own land, in express words; of their being one kingdom, under one King, Christ, the antitype of David, of their sanctification; of their covenant interest in God, made manifest to them; and of his presence, and dwelling among them, (^{<3572>}Ezekiel 37:21-28).

Ver. 1. *The hand of the Lord was upon me*, &c.] The Spirit of the Lord, a powerful impulse of his upon the prophet; the Targum interprets it a spirit of prophecy; (See Gill on "^{<3103>}Ezekiel 1:3"):

and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord: out of the place where he was to another; not really, but visionally, as things appeared to him, and as they were represented to his mind by the Spirit of God:

and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones: of men, as the Targum adds: this valley, Kimchi thinks, was the same by the river Chebar, where the prophet had his visions at first. R. Jochanan says it was the valley of Dura, and these the bones of them that were slain by Nebuchadnezzar there, (^{<2703>}Daniel 3:1). Rab says these were the children of Ephraim, slain by the men of Gath, (^{<1302>}1 Chronicles 7:20,21,22). Some of the Jewish Rabbins think there was a real resurrection at this time. R. Eliezer says, the dead Ezekiel quickened stood upon their feet, sung a song, and died. R. Eliezer, the son of R. Jose the Galilean, says, they went up into the land of Israel, married wives, and begat sons and daughters. R.

Judah ben Bethira stood upon his feet, and said, I am of their children's children, and these are the "tephillim" my father's father left me^{f613}; but these are all fabulous and romantic: others of them understand the whole in a parabolical way: these bones, and the quickening of them, were an emblem of the restoration of the Jews from their captivity, who were in a helpless and hopeless condition, as appears from (²⁵⁷¹Ezekiel 37:11-14), and of the conversion of that people in the latter day, which will be as life from the dead; and of the revival of the interest and church of Christ, when the slain witnesses shall rise, and ascend to heaven; and of the resurrection of the dead at the last day; and may be applied unto and be used to illustrate the quickening of dead sinners, by the efficacious grace of the Spirit of God.

Ver. 2. *And caused me to pass by them round about, &c.]*

Round, round^{f614}; several times round, that he might take exact notice of them, of their number, situation, and condition:

and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; as the Jews were in captivity; and as they will be when they shall be converted; and as the number of Christians will be in the spiritual reign of Christ; and as the dead will be at the time of their resurrection, both of the just and unjust:

and, lo, they were very dry; through length of time they had lain there, exposed to wind and weather; the flesh being wholly consumed from off of them, and the marrow within quite dried up; so that there was no probability or hope, humanly speaking, of their being quickened: these are a fit emblem of men in a state of nature and unregeneracy, who have no spiritual life, but are dead in trespasses and sins; have no sense of sin or danger; no strength to redeem and regenerate themselves, or do anything that is spiritually good; have no spiritual motion; no inward desires after God, or affection to him; no lifting up of the heart to him, or going out of the soul in faith and love to Christ; but in themselves entirely lifeless, helpless, and hopeless.

Ver. 3. *And he said unto me, son of man, can these bones live? &c.]* Is there any probability of it? is there any reason to believe they shall live? can any ways and means be devised, or any methods taken, to cause them to live?

and I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest; the prophet does not pronounce at once that it was improbable and impossible; he knew indeed

it was not probable, or possible, that these bones should revive of themselves; and he knew that neither he nor any creature could quicken them; but he wisely refers it to an omniscient and omnipotent God, who knew what he could and what he would do: the conversion of sinners is not of themselves, nor of ministers, but of God; it is wholly owing to his will and power, (^{<B01B>}John 1:13) nothing else can make it probable, or possible.

Ver. 4. *Again he said unto me, prophesy upon these bones, &c.*] Or, “over these bones”^{f615}; or, “concerning these bones”^{f616}; foretell that they shall live; tell others of it, and them also:

and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord; the word of prophecy concerning you, as the Jews did in Babylon: so unconverted sinners may be preached unto, and their lost and miserable estate in which they are, like dry bones, may be set before them: they may be called upon to attend the external ministry of the word; and they are capable of hearing it with their bodily ears; though it is not profitable to them, for want of faith, yet faith comes hereby; and therefore it is right to attend upon the means, and hear the word.

Ver. 5. *Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, &c.*] By the prophet, who was sent to prophesy over them:

behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; and none could do this but the living God, who breathed the breath of life into Adam at first, and he became a living soul; to which there seems to be an allusion here; and when the Lord puts his Spirit into men, or bestows his grace on them, then they shall live, and not till then.

Ver. 6. *And I will lay sinews upon you, and I will bring up flesh upon you, &c.*] That is, before he should cause breath to enter into them; for though it is first mentioned, it is the last done: this is the orderly process; first sinews are laid to join the bones together; then flesh is laid to cover them, and fill up all vacancies, and form muscles to make the bones capable of motion:

and cover you with skin; both bones, sinews, and flesh; for this is uppermost of all, and which makes the whole smooth and beautiful. Job expresses his formation in much such language, “thou hast clothed me with skin and flesh, and hast fenced me with bones and sinews”, (^{<B01B>}Job 10:11):

and put breath in you, and ye shall live; which is repeated for the confirmation of it:

and ye shall know that I am the Lord; the Lord God omnipotent, the Lord gracious and merciful, and your Lord and God: so men, when they are called by grace, know the Lord, they did not before; having an experience of his powerful and efficacious grace upon their hearts, they know him to be theirs and own and acknowledge him, and profess him before men.

Ver. 7. *So I prophesied as I was commanded*, &c.] The prophet was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; he was right to observe the orders and instructions given, whatever were the issue and success of them; that he was to leave with the Lord, and did. So Gospel ministers prophesy or preach according to the commission given them, and leave their work with the Lord: this was the first prophesying; for there is another after mentioned: these two are carefully to be observed and distinguished, different effects following the one and the other: this was a prophesying to the dry bones, upon them, over them, and concerning them; and what is next related was the consequence of it;

and as I prophesied, there was a noise; or, “a voice”^{f617}; this, in the literal sense, was the proclamation by Cyrus, giving the Jews leave to return to their own land, (^{<500>}Ezra 1:1-3), at the revival of the interest of Christ, a great voice will be heard from heaven, saying to the witnesses, come up hither, (^{<6112>}Revelation 11:12), and at the descent of Christ to raise his dead first, there will be the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, (^{<3046>}1 Thessalonians 4:16), and, as while the prophet was prophesying, there was not only his voice heard, but the voice of God, perhaps a thunder clap: so in the ministry of the Gospel there is a voice heard, which, at first, is only externally heard; men hear a noise, a voice, but it is a confused one; they do not know what to make of it, and yet it has some effect upon them; it causes a noise in them, an outcry about sin, and hell, and damnation; and yet, at present, no spiritual life or breath is in them:

and behold a shaking; of the bones; a rattling among them, as may be conceived must be where there is, as here, a tumbling of dry bones one over another, to get to their proper bone: so in the first effect of the word upon the conscience of a sinner, which works wrath there, there is a shaking and trembling through fear of damnation; which in some issues in real conversion, as in Saul and the jailer, (^{<406>}Acts 9:6 16:29), but in others it goes off again, and comes to nothing, as in Felix, (^{<4025>}Acts 24:25):

and the bones came together, bone to his bone: so the Jews scattered up and down in the provinces of Babylon gathered together upon the proclamation of Cyrus, and went up in a body to their own land; as they will do also at the time of their conversion, (³⁰¹¹Hosea 1:11), thus, when persons are only under slight convictions, they may gather together, and have their religious meetings and societies, and yet be only a parcel of dry bones, without any spiritual life and breath in them.

Ver. 8. *And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them,* &c.] And they began to look like men, in the shape of men, and were a body of them, as the Jews did when gathered together:

and the skin covered them above; and so looked comely and beautiful, as in the proper form of men; as did the Jews enriched and protected by Cyrus: and this may be an image of such persons so far wrought upon under the word as to look like Christians; to have the form of godliness, and appear outwardly righteous before men, submitting to ordinances, and performing the duties of religion; and yet no principle of spiritual life in them; but, like Adam's body, of the earth, earthly, and breathless, before the breath of life was breathed into it; so here, but there was no breath in them; no spirit in the Jews to return to their land, though they had liberty, till the Lord stirred up their spirits, (⁴⁵⁰⁶Ezra 1:5), all this, in a spiritual sense, shows how far persons may go under temporary convictions by the word, and yet not be living Christians.

Ver. 9. *Then said he unto me, prophesy unto the wind,* &c.] Before he had been prophesying to the bones, and over them; and something was done, but not to purpose, breath being wanting; wherefore he is bid to prophesy a second time, and that not to bones, but to the "wind", afterwards rendered "breath"; and may allude to the soul or breath of man reentering the body, as at a resurrection, which causes it to live: it signifies the "spirit"⁶¹⁸, for the same word is used for the wind, for breath, and for the spirit; and in the mystical sense may be applied to the Spirit of God: and if ever ministers prophesy or preach to purpose, it must be with a view to the Spirit of God, both to assist them in their work, and to make their ministrations effectual; without which, how many formal professors soever may be made, not one dead sinner will be quickened. The Syriac and Arabic versions render it, "concerning the Spirit": and to discourse concerning the person, operations, and grace of the Spirit, is one part of the Gospel ministry, and a means of the conversion of sinners.

Prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind; ministers must not only preach, but they must pray for the Spirit to accompany the word with his power, and make it the savour of life unto life:

thus saith the Lord, come from the four winds, O breath; or “spirit”: because the Jews were to be brought from each of the parts where they were, as they will be at their conversion in the latter day; and so the Lord has a people in each of the parts of the world, that lie dead in sin, and must be quickened by the Spirit:

and breathe upon these slain, that they may live; though not slain with the sword, yet being as dead men, who are slain by death, are so called: so in a spiritual sense men are slain by sin, and are slain by the words of the Lord’s mouth; killed with the law, the killing letter; and it is only the Spirit of God that can give them life; and the breath or spirit here is applied to the Spirit of the Messiah by the ancient Jews^{f619}.

Ver. 10. *So I prophesied as he commanded me*, &c.] The second time he prophesied to the wind, as he had done to the bones, as he was ordered: and the issue of it was,

and breath came into them; or, “the spirit”; a spirit of courage in the Jews, to go up to their own land; the Spirit of life from Christ, which will enter into the witnesses slain, and revive them; and into the Jews in the latter day, and convert them; and which enters into dead sinners, and quickens them; and this he does while ministers are preaching the Gospel to them; (see ~~6111~~ Revelation 11:11 ~~4404~~ Acts 10:44):

and then lived; as men do spiritually, when the Spirit of God has produced a principle of spiritual life in them; they live by faith on Christ, in union and fellowship with him; they live in newness of life, and a holy life and conversation; and shall live and reign with Christ upon the first resurrection, and for evermore:

and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army; as the Jews did when they returned from the Babylonish captivity; they were many, and in a posture of defence; and as they will be in the latter day, when converted, (~~2010~~ Hosea 1:10), and as the number of the saints will be upon the first resurrection, (~~600~~ Revelation 7:9), so when men are quickened by the Spirit of God, “they stand upon their feet”; they stand in the grace of God, and on the foundation Christ; they stand by faith in him, and in the doctrine of faith, and in the house of God; and they stand firm against all their enemies:

they are an “army”; they are in a military state; fighting against sin, Satan, and the world; and though few in comparison of others, yet considered by themselves are very numerous; and as they will appear when the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; and especially when they will be all gathered together at the coming of Christ.

Ver. 11. *Then he said unto me, son of man, &c.*] Here follow the explication and application of the above vision:

these bones are the whole house of Israel; an emblem of them, of their state and condition in the Babylonish captivity, and of them in their present state; and of the whole Israel of God, while in a state of unregeneracy: this phrase takes in the ten tribes, as well as the two tribes of Benjamin and Judah, which returned from Babylon; and shows that respect is had to something more than that restoration barely:

behold, they say, our bones are dried; the house of Israel say we are like dry bones indeed; we have no spirit, nor strength, nor courage, nor life in us:

and our hope is lost; of being delivered from the present captivity; or of the Messiah’s coming; or of ever enjoying their own land, and of the promises of those things made unto them:

we are cut off for our parts; from the land of Israel, and have no hope of possessing it again, whatever others have; indeed they are cut off from the olive tree, and are cut down like a tree, both as to their civil and church state. The Targum is,

“and we are perished;”

it is all over with us; we are lost and undone; all the expressions show the desperate and despairing condition they were in.

Ver. 12. *Therefore prophesy, and say unto them, &c.*] For their comfort, in order to revive their hope, and encourage their faith, in these distressed circumstances:

thus saith the Lord, behold, O my people: they were his people still, and he had a covenant interest in them, and they in him, though in such a low estate; and which was the ground of his care of them, and concern for them, and of doing all the good things to them after mentioned; all proceeded from his covenant, and the grace of it, and their relation to him:

I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves; the cities and prisons in Chaldea and other places; where they were confined and held captives, and out of which they could no more deliver themselves than a dead man of himself can rise up out of his grave: this is both an emblem of the resurrection of the dead at the last day^{f620}, when they shall come forth out of their graves at the voice of Christ, some to the resurrection of life, and others to the resurrection of damnation; and of dead sinners, raised out of the graves of sin by the power and efficacy of the grace of God; (see ~~3825~~John 5:25,28,29):

and bring you into the land of Israel; to dwell in it, and abide there, and be no more dispossessed of it; as they will not, any more, when once settled in it, upon their conversion in the latter day.

Ver. 13. *And ye shall know that I am the Lord, &c.]* (See Gill on “~~3506~~Ezekiel 37:6”):

when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves; which is doing that for them which none but the omnipotent God could do; and they seeing his hand and power, his grace and mercy in it, will know, own, and acknowledge him.

Ver. 14. *And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, &c.]* Not only a spirit of courage to go up into their own land, and live a civil and comfortable life there; but the Spirit of God, as a spirit of grace and supplication, of truth and holiness, of faith and adoption; and as a spirit of life, having produced a principle of life in them, and so should live spiritually and soberly, righteously and godly; (see ~~3827~~Ezekiel 36:27):

and I shall place you in your own land; settle them there in peace and quietness, in safety and security and in enjoyment of all mercies and privileges, temporal and spiritual:

then shall ye know that I the Lord have spoken it, and performed it, saith the Lord; that all this was a promise of his, foretold by him, notified to them by his prophets, and now fully accomplished exactly; which they would observe with wonder and thankfulness, and give him the glory of it.

Ver. 15. *The word of the Lord came unto me again, &c.]* Immediately or quickly after he had the above vision of the dry bones, and the explanation of it:

saying: as follows:

Ver. 16. *Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, &c.]* Or “wood”^{f621}; a stick of wood; or table, as the Targum; a board or plank. The Septuagint version renders it a “rod”; and so the Arabic; an emblem of a kingdom or government, as this was:

and write upon it; the following words:

for Judah, and the children of Israel his companions; for the tribe of Judah, and the tribe of Benjamin, which adhered together, and as many of the other tribes which joined them; the godly and religious of the rest of the tribes, who could not give into the idolatry of Jeroboam:

then take another stick; like the former:

and write upon it; these words:

for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions; for the tribe of Ephraim, and the other nine tribes, which together made up one kingdom. It should be observed, that in the times of Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, there was a division in the kingdom of Israel; ten tribes revolted from him, and only the two whole tribes of Judah and Benjamin continued with him; and from that time to the captivity, and even during that, as it seems, there were continual animosities and bickerings between the two kingdoms, on account both of their political and religious affairs, especially the latter; and an union between them this emblem is designed to signify, as will hereafter appear. Jeroboam, the first king of the ten tribes, was of the tribe of Ephraim; and Samaria, the metropolis of the kingdom, was in that tribe; hence Ephraim often stands for all the ten tribes, for the kingdom of Israel, as distinct from that of Judah. Writing words on sticks or rods seems to be in allusion to what was done (^{Q117D}Numbers 17:2).

Ver. 17. *And join them one to another into one stick, &c.]* Clap the sticks, planks, boards, or tables, to one another; glue them together, or set them so close to one another, that they may seem as one stick, plank, board, or table:

and they shall become one in thine hand; they shall look as if they were one. R. Joseph Kimchi, the father of David, thinks they really became one,

by means of a miracle wrought; but there is no need to suppose this; it is enough that they appeared to be so.

Ver. 18. *And when the children of thy people shall speak unto thee, saying, &c.]* The children of Israel and Judah in captivity, of which people Ezekiel was and to whom he was sent as a prophet; who seeing him take two sticks, and write on them, and then join them together, would naturally put such a question to him:

wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these? for they concluded he had some meaning in it, and that it was not a mere childish diversion and amusement; and therefore would desire that he would let them know what it was: whether they would ask this seriously or in banter, out of curiosity or in contempt, as they sometimes did; it matters not, he was to give them an answer, as follows; though, by the manner of their putting the question, it looks as if they were doubtful whether he would or not; since they had treated him in a sneering way on such like occasions before.

Ver. 19. *Say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* Here follows the explanation of the sign or emblem:

behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows: that is, the kingdom of Israel, consisting of the ten tribes, of which Ephraim was the chief:

and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah; with the kingdom of Judah:

and make them one stick; these two kingdoms one kingdom:

and they shall be one in my hand: in Christ, the hand and arm of the Lord; one under his care, government, and protection, as after explained: this had in part, and as a shadow of what was to come, its fulfilment upon the Jews' return from Babylon; when many of the ten tribes, as well as the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin, came from thence, and became one nation and kingdom under one prince, until the coming of Christ; and it had a further accomplishment in the union of converted Jews and Gentiles in one body: but this is chiefly designed as an emblem of the union of the Jews one to another, when they shall be converted in the latter day; when they shall join together in seeking the Lord, and David, their King, the Messiah; who shall be the one King over them, as is afterwards said; and when all animosities shall cease, both among them, and among all the spiritual Israel of God in

general; (see ^{<28113>}Isaiah 11:13 ^{<28104>}Jeremiah 50:4 ^{<28111>}Hosea 1:11 3:5
^{<28119>}Zephaniah 3:9)

Ver. 20. *And the sticks whereon thou writest, &c.]* Or art about to write the above things, according to order and direction:

shall be in thine hand before their eyes; shall be held up to them to look at for some time, and observe the cement of the two sticks; and learn and lay up in their minds what is meant by this emblem; and be assured that what is hereafter said as a further explication of it shall certainly be fulfilled.

Ver. 21. *And say unto them, thus saith the Lord God, &c.]* Or, as the Targum,

“thou shalt prophesy to them;”

for what follows is a prophecy of what shall be in the latter day:

behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the Heathen, whither they be gone, or, “from among the Gentiles”^{f622}; not only the Chaldeans, where they were carried captives; but from among the nations where they are now dispersed, and among whom they go freely of their own accord from place to place, for the sake of traffic: and this phrase, “whither they be gone”, or “are going”^{f623}, travelling about from one country to another, better describes the present Jews, and their state, than those in the Babylonian captivity:

and will gather them on every side, or, “round about”^{f624}; from the several parts of the world where they are:

and bring them into their own land; the land of Canaan, given by the Lord to their fathers, and to them their posterity, for an inheritance; though now in the possession of others, who, it seems, are not the right owners.

Ver. 22. *And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel, &c;]* As they were in the times of David and Solomon, who were both types of the Messiah; and to whose times is referred this prophecy by the ancient Jews^{f625}, as then to have its accomplishment:

and one king shall be king to them all, not Zerubbabel, nor Nehemiah, nor Judas Maccabaeus; for these were neither of them kings; and much less such as reigned for ever, as it is said this king shall, (^{<28175>}Ezekiel 37:25),

besides, he is expressly said to be David, that is, the Messiah the son of David; and this clause is by a modern Jewish^{f626} writer applied to him:

and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all; which is the very thing the two sticks made one were an emblem of.

Ver. 23. *Neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, &c.]*

With their dung, or dunghill gods^{f627}; either with the idols of the Gentiles, or their own: after their return from the Babylonish captivity, the Jews were no more addicted to idolatry; and the image worship of the Papists is an abhorrence to them at this day, and a stumblingblock to them in their embracing Christianity: and when they are effectually called and converted to Christ; they will no more have respect to the idols, the works of their own hands; or to the idol of their own righteousness, which they have set up, and have gone about to establish, and to make to stand; they will then see it to be as filthy rags, defiling to them, instead of justifying of them; and therefore shall reject it, and no more defile themselves with it; but seek the righteousness of Christ, which justifies from all sin, and renders pure and spotless in the sight of God,

nor with their detestable things; or “abominations”^{f628}; the traditions of the elders, which they have preferred to the word of God, and made the rule of their faith, worship, and conversation; which has made them detestable unto God:

nor with any of their transgressions; particularly their disbelief of Christ and their blasphemy against him; nor shall they indulge themselves in those sins which now prevail among them, as pride, covetousness, uncleanness, fraud, and tricking in their trade and commerce:

but I will save them out of all their dwelling places, wherein they have sinned; as wherever they dwell they do; they are notorious for their wickedness; but God will bring them out of all these places, where they have lived in sin, and been the occasion of it to some, as well as followed the example of others:

and will cleanse them; by sprinkling clean water upon them; by applying the blood of Christ to them, which cleanses from all sin (see ^{36:25} Ezekiel 36:25):

so they shall be my people, and will be their God; the “loammi” will be taken off, and the covenant of grace shall be renewed with them, and made manifest to them; and the blessings and promises shall be applied to them, and particularly this; (see ^{<3801>}Jeremiah 31:1 ^{<5125>}Romans 11:25,26).

Ver. 24. *And David my servant shall be king over them*, &c.] The King Messiah, as Kimchi interprets it; and so Abarbinel^{f629} and others; being of the seed of David, and of whom David was an eminent type; and who, as Mediator, is the Lord’s servant, and as man appeared in the form of one: this shows that this prophecy looks further than the times of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity:

and they all shall have one shepherd: or king, the same as before: kings are called shepherds; (see ^{<3823>}Ezekiel 34:23 ^{<8106>}John 10:16):

and they shall also walk in my judgments, and keep my statutes, and do them; not the statutes and ordinances of the ceremonial law, which are abolished; and which the Jews, when converted, shall have no regard unto; but rather the precepts of the moral law, and chiefly the evangelic ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s supper; which ordinances they shall walk in, and attend unto with constancy and pleasure; and which statutes they shall keep, as they have been delivered, impartially, without delay, in faith and love, and with a view to the glory of God; (see ^{<3827>}Ezekiel 36:27).

Ver. 25. *And they shall dwell in the land which I have given to Jacob my servant*, &c.] Abraham and Isaac are not mentioned, as Kimchi observes, because they had other children, who did not inherit the land; only Jacob, because the land was given to him, and his seed alter him:

wherein your fathers have dwelt; and so the more desirable to them; and whose inhabitation and possession of it were a pledge of theirs:

and they shall dwell therein, even they and their children, and their children’s children for ever; unto the end of the world, or personal coming of Christ: and so everything after promised them is said to be for ever: this shows that this prophecy had not its accomplishment in the return of the Jews from Babylon to their own land; since they have been dispossessed of that again, in which state they now are; but that it refers to time to come, when, being converted to Christ, they shall possess their land again, and dwell in it, as long as the sun and moon endure:

and my servant David shall be their prince for ever; or their king, as the Targum; and which cannot be understood of any temporal prince, but of the King Messiah, whose throne is for ever and ever; whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; and who shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever, (¹⁹⁸¹⁶Psalm 45:6 ²⁷⁰²⁴Daniel 2:44 ⁴⁰¹²²Luke 2:32,33) and to whom it is applied by several Jewish writers^{f630}.

Ver. 26. *Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, &c.]* So the covenant of grace is called, (²⁵⁴⁰Isaiah 54:10), one principal article of which is peace and reconciliation made between God and his people by the blood of Christ, agreed on in that covenant, from whence it has its name: now here it signifies that this covenant should be made known to the converted Jews, and their interest in it; in virtue of which they shall see that peace is made for them by the blood of Christ; and shall have a true conscience peace in themselves, through that blood of the covenant being sprinkled on them; and be at peace with converted Gentiles, and even with their worst enemies, enjoying all kind of prosperity, temporal and spiritual:

it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; it shall not wax old, and vanish away, as the former covenant did; under which they were before the coming of Christ, which was exhibited in types and shadows, legal sacrifices and carnal ordinances; and besides, God will always have a covenant people among them from this time to the end of the world; so that a “loammi” shall no more be written upon them:

and I will place them, and multiply them; that is, place them in their own land, and increase their number there: or, “I will give them”^{f631}; a place in their land, and every blessing temporal and spiritual: so the Targum,

“I will bless them, and multiply them:”

and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore; not any material temple, but his word and ordinances; in which he will grant his spiritual presence with them, and which shall continue to the end of the world.

Ver. 27. *My tabernacle also shall be with them, &c.]* The symbol of his presence: the meaning is, that he shall dwell in them by his Spirit and grace; and everyone of them shall be the temple of the living God, in whom he will walk and dwell:

yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people; which is repeated for the confirmation of it; (see ⁴⁵⁷²³Ezekiel 37:23).

Ver. 28. *And the Heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel,* &c.] Or the Gentiles, the converted Gentiles, shall observe and take notice of the gracious dealings of God with his people the Jews; that he calls them with an holy calling; implants principles of grace and holiness in them; separates and consecrates them for his service, and enables them to walk holily, soberly, and righteously:

when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore; when his worship shall be set up among them; his Gospel shall be preached unto them, and received by them; and his ordinances administered unto them; and which shall continue till the second coming of Christ.