

Covenant & Kingdom  
Week 13 - The Messianic Mystery  
Ezekiel 37:15-28

- The Old Covenant is designed to create in God's people an expectation of a better kingdom
  - All of it is geared towards bringing about a new and better covenant
  - This expectation began broad and then narrowed into the person of God's anointed king
    - Hope of blessedness in the present and future is tied to the king
  - When the Davidic throne failed, it shook the faith of God's people - they thought that God had abandoned them, had broken His covenant
- The people's disobedience earned judgment, yet God's gracious promises demanded fulfillment - these two realities shaped the ministry of the **prophets**
  - Prophets served as God's covenant prosecutors - Israel had broken their legal obligations, and the prophets pointed out their sin, proclaimed judgment, and called to repentance
    - This led to resentment toward God and discouragement in the covenant
  - The prophets addressed this dejected spirit by proclaiming the glorious future that remained for Israel
    - God is still their God, His promises will still be fulfilled by grace, in spite of their sin and His just judgment on them
  - The tension of the prophetic ministry of the Old Covenant was the real, just judgment against sin and the real free grace of blessing - grace/works nature of the OC
- Expectations of God's Old Covenant people included several themes
  - A righteous descendent of David to rule on the throne - Is. 9:6-7, Jer. 33:14-18
  - Return to the promised land - Ezk. 37:21-22, Jer. 33:10-11
  - Reunion of northern and southern kingdoms under one head - Ezk. 37:15-16
  - Inclusion of the nations in the covenant - Mic. 4:1-4
  - Ultimate rest and consummation in fellowship with God - Is. 60:1-5
- In these promises, God was setting the stage to do something different and better - Jer. 31:31-34
  - The New Covenant would not be like the Old - better promises
  - All the promised blessings - return to land, king, reunion, etc, pointed to greater fulfillments that Israel could not fully understand
  - Their expectations remained physical - idealized version of Davidic kingdom - but God's plan was so much greater than what they could understand