

Ezekiel 39:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands, and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations;

Analysis

When I have brought them again from the people, and gathered them out of their enemies' lands—the double verb construction *shuv* (שׁוּב, "brought again") and *qavats* (קָבַץ, "gathered") emphasizes comprehensive restoration. God will actively retrieve His scattered people from worldwide dispersion, not merely permit return. This gathering reverses the scattering threatened in Deuteronomy 28:64.

And am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations—the Niphal form *niqdashti* (נִקְדַּשְׁתִּי, "am sanctified") is passive: God shows Himself holy, or His holiness is vindicated. Israel's restoration doesn't sanctify God (as if He needed purification), but demonstrates His holiness before watching nations. Their exile had profaned His name (36:20); their miraculous restoration sanctifies it.

The phrase **"in the sight of many nations"** (le'ene ha-goyim rabbim, לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם רַבִּים) indicates God's concern for universal recognition. His dealings with Israel serve pedagogical purposes for all humanity. This anticipates the Great Commission—God's redemptive work with one people ultimately blesses all nations (Genesis 12:3, Galatians 3:8). Israel's restoration previews and prepares for global redemption in Christ.

Historical Context

The prophecy envisioned return from "their enemies' lands" (plural), not just Babylon. While 538 BC brought partial return under Cyrus, Jewish diaspora continued throughout the ancient world (Egypt, Persia, Greece, Rome). Ezekiel's vision exceeded the modest post-exilic return, pointing to eschatological regathering.

Paul applies this gathering theology to the church, comprised of Jews and Gentiles united in Christ (Ephesians 2:11-22). The "sanctifying" of God's name occurs as the gospel spreads to all nations, vindicating His wisdom and power through the multi-ethnic body of Christ. The ultimate fulfillment awaits Christ's return, when "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14).

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does God's commitment to sanctify His name among the nations shape your understanding of evangelism and missions?
2. In what ways might your life serve to sanctify or profane God's name before watching unbelievers?

Interlinear Text

בְּשׁוּבָם י'	אֹתָם	מִן	הָ עַם יִם	וְקִבַּצְתִּי י'
When I have brought them again	H853	H4480	from the people	and gathered
H7725			H5971	H6908
אֶת הָ	מְאָרְצָם	אֶיְבֹיָם	וְנִקְדַּשְׁתִּי	בָּם
H853	' lands	them out of their enemies	and am sanctified	H0
	H776	H341	H6942	
לְעֵינֵי י'	רַבִּים:	הַגּוֹיִם		
in them in the sight	nations	of many		
H5869	H1471	H7227		

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 38:23 (Parallel theme): Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD.

Ezekiel 38:16 (Holy): And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes.

Isaiah 5:16 (Holy): But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

Ezekiel 39:25 (Holy): Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Now will I bring again the captivity of Jacob, and have mercy upon the whole house of Israel, and will be jealous for my holy name;

Ezekiel 37:21 (Parallel theme): And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land:

Leviticus 10:3 (Holy): Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified. And Aaron held his peace.

