What did Ezekiel see?

□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□-□□□ □□□□□□ □□□□□ □□□□□□
□□□□□□□-□□□ ,□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ ;□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□
□□□□□□□□□□

□"□ □□□□□□

This is a very symbolic week, a week that represents the transition between two completely opposite historical milestones that affected the Jewish people more than any other historical event. On the one hand, this past Tuesday we cried and mourned on Yom HaShoah, the Holocaust Remembrance Day. On the other hand, this coming Tuesday night, we will celebrate Yom ha'Atzmaut, the day of Independence of the State of Israel. Jews have suffered countless persecutions, massacres, and pogroms everywhere and at all times. However, we have never suffered as in the Shoah. Both in absolute and relative terms, there has never been such a devastating massacre as the Shoah. The Jewish people were never so close to being exterminated. At one point in 1944 or 1945, when the Nazis murdered half a million Hungarian Jews in just six months, when no one dared to oppose the Third Reich, or when Rommel was preparing the gas chambers in Tunisia to transport and gas there, the Jews of North Africa, Palestine, Syria, Iran, and Iraq. At such times we lost all our hopes. We felt we were doomed to die or we were already dead. We were buried. It was the end.

But then the greatest miracle, promised so long ago by our prophets, happened. In a span of just three years, which in the context of the history of our people is less than the blink of an eye, the Kibbuts Galuyot, the return to our land, began. HaShem took us out of our graves, lifted us, and brought us back to Israel. And from the ashes, we, the Jewish people, began to revive. More than 2500 years ago, Ezekiel

(Yehezqel) had a very special prophetic vision (nebua). In this vision (Chapter 37), HaShem transported him to a valley. In that valley, there were bones. Many bones. Human bones. Probably millions of bones. Dry bones. There is nothing more dead than a dry bone. Ezekiel saw it and said nothing. And then HaShem told Ezekiel: “Son of man: Do you believe that these bones will ever come alive? And Ezekiel, in a combination of humility and surprise, replied: “HaShem, God, You would know that.”

And then, there was a deafening noise. The bones began to move, came together and formed skeletons. Veins and nerves covered the skeletons and, finally, flesh and skin. Now, they were no longer bones but bodies; dead human bodies, corpses. Then, HaShem said to Ezekiel, “Prophesy to these bodies to insufflate into them a breath of life, and let the spirit of life enter into these bodies and let them live again.” And so it was. A breath of life entered the bodies, and they stood up. It was a great army, very large. HaShem told the prophet Ezekiel, “Son of man, these bones are the house of Israel. They say, ‘Our bones dried up, we lost our hope, we have been sentenced to disappear.’ So, I prophesy and say to them [Israel]: *Thus said HaShem, God: behold, I will open your graves, and I will raise up from your graves, and I will bring you to the land of Israel. And it will be known that I am HaShem when I open your graves and bring you from them, My people. I will grant you a spirit of life, and you will live again. And I will lead you into your land. And you will know that I am HaShem. I have promised, and I delivered.”*

It is impossible not to connect this prophecy with 1945 and 1948. In 1945, we were doomed to disappear. We were dry bones or, perhaps worse: ashes. And then, when so many Goyim thought that we had disappeared, that we would never again become a people, that all those promising prophecies would never be fulfilled, the greatest miracle occurred, just like Ezekiel saw in the valley of the dry bones. HaShem opened our graves,

lifted us, and brought us back to Israel. HaShem promised, and He delivered.