

"The God Who Revives"

Ezekiel 37:1-14

- Today, we're going to travel with Ezekiel to a valley filled with dry bones
- And God will ask Ezekiel a question that we might do well to answer ourselves
- The lesson is on God's power to revive
- And this story provides a vivid mental picture
- It reminds us of God's power and encourages us to trust
- "The God Who Revives" from Ezekiel 37 today

Ezekiel 37:1-2

1 The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

2 And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry.

- We don't have a very difficult time imagining this valley
- Our mind's eye can see the bones
- We see the dryness of the place, perhaps feeling a little of the heat
- It is desolate, lifeless
- These bones are remnants - life once existed here - but no longer

- It would be very easy for us to compare this place to the world that we live in today
- All around us is desolation - no life, apart from the intervention of Christ
- He brings light to this darkness and living water to dry places

Ezekiel 37:3-4

3 And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.

4 Again he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

- God asked Ezekiel a question that can be answered in one of two ways
- According to human understanding or with eyes of faith
- Only God knows what He will do - but we know what He can do
- And because He is all-powerful, we know He can provide life
- There are no limitations on God

- Notice the life-giving power proposed: "the word of the Lord"
- We know from the New Testament the means God provides for raising the dead to life
- It is by grace we are quickened (or made alive), through faith
- And that "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"
- So, this method should be somewhat familiar to us

Ezekiel 37:5-6

5 Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live:

6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

- If God says life will come back to these bones, then it will
- And if He describes the way in which it will happen, then it will happen that way
- His word is true and right and certain
- By it, we know who He is
- The Lord, Jehovah
- The One True God
- Creator of all life
- King over all things, even the dead things, which He has authority to revive

Ezekiel 37:7-8

7 So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.

8 And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them.

- It's important to note that Ezekiel was obedient
- He did as God commanded
- He spoke the words that God told Him to speak
- And God is powerful - His word is powerful
- He has made it so that our proclamation of His words is powerful
- We see it here
- And everything is going according to plan - apart from breath entering into the bones
- Which God said would happen
- But there were more instructions...

Ezekiel 37:9-10

9 Then said he unto me, Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.

10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

- Remember, God commands all forces in the universe
- At His word, they take action
- In this case, God spoke to the wind
- Commanding it to bring breath to the slain
- And it did

- What were, moments before, dry dead bones now stood as an army
- And God goes on...

Ezekiel 37:11-12

11 Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts.

12 Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel.

- What once may have seemed like only a principle
 - That God could give these dry bones life
 - Had now been confirmed as reality in Ezekiel's sight
 - And he was provided, no doubt, with renewed hope for Israel
 - Both of a return to the land of promise, and of resurrection from the dead
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- One commentary says of this chapter...

"The Jews in Babylon were like those dead and dry bones, unlikely ever to come together, to be so much as a skeleton, less likely to be formed into a body, and least of all to be a living body. However, they lay unburied in the open valley, which encouraged the hopes of their resurrection..."

- Another said...

"There was to be a house of Israel after all. The nation seemed to be dead and buried, but God would revive and restore it."

- And also said...

"When the Jews get back to Canaan again,-as they will do,-they will then not only know that Jehovah is God, but also that Jesus Christ is the true Messiah."

- Ezekiel was learning much
- Much that he could pass along to Israel, but we are learning as well

Ezekiel 37:13-14

13 And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves,

14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.

- We must know that as God was able to raise up these dry bones
- He is able also to raise us up because of the sacrifice of Jesus
- His death, burial, and resurrection
- Which paid the price for our salvation, because we could never pay it ourselves
- Beyond a theoretical understanding that God is able to raise dead men
- We must know that His deliverance goes far beyond theory
- Raising men, dead in their trespasses and sins, to walk in newness of life

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