

Dead Bones Made Alive
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When we study the **37th chapter of Ezekiel**, we know that it is literally a prophecy about the restoration of Israel. What Ezekiel prophesied about we are seeing the first signs of today. One hundred years ago, the Lord's people did not have any evidence of the beginnings of God's restoration of Israel as a nation. But, today, she is a nation, and we can imagine a day when the Lord will reveal Himself to that nation and make her to live spiritually again. The latter part of this chapter is about that.

But, even though we recognize the literal message in this chapter, we also recognize that, as with many other writings of the O.T., this prophecy of Ezekiel has multiple messages in it. In fact, preachers in the past and present have used the verses in this chapter to preach about a number of spiritual things. The verses here have been used to represent the conversion of lost people, their resurrection to newness of life through the new birth. They have also been used to convey messages about the final resurrection. Then, they have been used to preach about God stirring a slumbering, seemingly dead church or generation of Christians to new vigor. All these subjects can be seen in type in this chapter, especially in the first 10 verses. There is also another message to be seen in these verses. That message is what I want us to consider today. That message is about the people of God...really about our church...in the midst of a dead and dying world, and our own role as we interact with the lost.

I. Ezekiel 37:1-2 “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.”

- It takes the Lord's intervention in our lives to get our attention about the spiritual death that is all around us
- It is the Spirit of the Lord that will move us away from where we are when we get settled in unconcern
- This valley of dry bones was there all the time...but Ezekiel not only had not been brought to think about it, so, not being drawn to focus on it, he had no interest in it.

II. Ezekiel 37:3 “And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest.”

- Today, when we are faced with the relative deadness of spiritual vigor in the saints of God, and with the deadness of an unregenerate society that is obsessed with worldly- mindedness and earthly pursuits, we really seem to have lost our bearings regarding the power and ability of God. In one way or another, we often speculate about spiritual power, and we tend to say, like Ezekiel, “O Lord God, thou knowest.”
- ▶ Should our testimony rather be: **2Cor. 4:13** We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; **we also believe, and therefore speak;**
- We acknowledge that who we worship is Lord, but we are weak in faith when it comes to the thought of God saving somebody
- We acknowledge that who we worship is God, but how well do we relate the power that He has with the work of conversion?

III. **Ezekiel 37:4** Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

- Our responsibility toward lost people is to the Lord (He said unto me)
- But, the actions we take **MUST** be toward the spiritually dead (if there is no prophesying, there is no movement of the bones).
- ▶ Note here that there is no promise from God to Ezekiel that these bones are going to live
- So, God’s one statement to him is that he prophesy upon those bones
- ▶ Notice how use of the Word of God among the dead is a very personal..even intimate...act : “prophesy **upon** these bones.”
- ▶ See **1Cor. 2:1-4** - get a glimpse of how personal Paul’s gospel preaching to the Corinthians was

IV. **Ezekiel 37:4-5** - “...Say unto them, O ye dry bones hear the word of the Lord **5** Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones;”

- The message witnessed or preached is from by the Lord and the Lord’s message (not ours).
- Probably our greatest failing when witnessing to the spiritually dead is that we forget that it really is the Lord giving the message (thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones)

V. **Ezekiel 37:5** (last phrase), & **6** - “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.”

- Note that part of our message to the lost is to remind them that they too are created and given life by the Lord
- We also need to be reminded that God’s human creations KNOW that He is Lord whether they confess it or not (“...ye shall know that I am the Lord).

VI. **Ezekiel 37:7-8** - “So I prophesied as I was commanded”

- Notice this great faith feature of Ezekiel (as I was commanded).
- There’s no need to go beyond the message Christ has commanded us to deliver
- “...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.”
 - ▶ The Word of God faithfully witnessed can start something in a man that is not yet a spiritual awakening, yet is a movement begun by the Lord
 - ▶ **2Kings 13:21** - Elisha is buried; some men are burying another man and a Moabite raiding party comes. They throw the corpse into Elisha’s sepulcher and when his body hits Elisha’s bones he revives and stands up.
 - ▶ Our faithful witness to lost people will be used by the Lord to stir the creature awareness
 - ▶ A caution: In dragging our feet about dispensing the Word of God, we testify that we have no confidence in the power of that Word as far as what it will do among lost people.

VII. **Ezekiel 37:9-10** - “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.”

- ▶ Understanding the authority given to us by the Lord will help us to preach a message that is Holy Spirit empowered.
- ▶ We should treat a witnessing session as us being the instruments of God to transfer the Holy Spirit awakening to people we are preaching to
- ▶ This kind of witnessing will lead to the conversion of souls