

DRY BONES LIVE - part 2

Ezekiel the prophet was faced with a dilemma. God showed him a strange vision, a valley of dry bones. And God asked him, can these bones live? Ezekiel confessed that only God knows. Then God said, *"prophesy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord."* What would you do? Ezekiel trusted and obeyed God. We read about it in Ezekiel chapter 37.

5- GOD'S WORDS - Bringing something dead to life is something only God can do. So Ezekiel obeyed, and prophesied the words of God: *"thus says the LORD God to these bones: behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD."*

Can God do this? If you agree, do you obey Him? Or do you just sit back and wait for dry bones to come to life? God says trust and obey. He says prophesy to these dry bones. For us, this means to speak the truth of God's Word into every situation, even to dead dry bones, because God is our only hope.

How did Erwin Lutzer of Moody Church teach aspiring preachers? In a graveyard. He made them preach to gravestones. Absurd? That's what you do every time you share the gospel. You may think someone is too far gone, don't bother. But that's where you were when someone shared God's good news with you. Ephesians 2 explains, *"you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked. But God, being rich in mercy, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ - by grace you have been saved."* God's Word goes out to dry bones all the time! So be obedient, like Ezekiel.

6- SPIRITUAL LIFE - Ezekiel says, *"so I prophesied as I was commanded, and there was a sound, and behold a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And behold, there were sinews on them and flesh had come upon them and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them."* Notice the progression. Likewise, your life or your church can have all its structure and purpose and resources, but without the breath of God, there is no life. It is still a graveyard of corpses.

Ezekiel continues, *"then He said to me, prophesy son of man, and say: thus says the LORD God, come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army."* God's Word had remarkable effect. The dry bones lived! It wasn't Ezekiel's effort or obedience, though in God's providence these were essential. It was God's Word, the breath of God's mouth that brought LIFE to dead dry bones. The Hebrew word *ruach* means breath, wind, spirit. As in Genesis 2:7 God breathed into Adam's lifeless form the breath of life. God spoke the entire universe into existence!

But what of your life today? You may rarely miss church. You may often read a devotion. You may have professed faith in Christ long ago. But are you a walking corpse today? Does God hear words from your lips in church? praising Him? praying? encouraging others? giving testimony to His new life in you, doing great things? Are you telling others about Jesus? Living, full of the Holy Spirit? Or good as dead?

What if Ezekiel had not trusted and obeyed? What if he had not spoken the truth of God's Word? What if you do not respond today, to trust and obey God's Word? Colin Smith notes, "never underestimate what God can do, when His Word is preached and His people pray. If the breath of the Spirit of God blows, even on a situation that is completely dead, a remarkable transformation will take place."

7- FOREVER LIFE - In Ezekiel 37:11 the people said, *"our bones are dried up, our hope is lost."* But God said speak the Word of God. Then, *"I will put My spirit within you, and you shall live, and I shall place you in your own land. I have spoken and I will do it, declares the LORD."* This was not the end. They were going back to the promised land of Israel. God gave them hope in their darkest hour. In coming weeks we will explore how it happened, through Ezra and Nehemiah. Because God keeps His promises.

But there's more. This promise of the Holy Spirit was affirming what God said in Ezekiel 36 (and Jeremiah 31 and elsewhere). It's all part of the New Covenant, ultimately fulfilled over 500 years later in the Lord Jesus Christ. Without Christ, you are dead in your sins. Jesus said you must be born again from above by the Holy Spirit (John 1:12 and 3:3). The breath of God breathes new spiritual life into dead souls. The moment you receive this spiritual life, new eternal life is yours, now and forever. It's all in Romans 8.

But there's more! Colin Smith observes, "At the end of the Bible story, God has one more thing to do involving dry bones. God has set a day for gathering the bones of His people. Believers who have died are taken immediately and consciously into the presence of Christ, but there is still a final miracle of grace that will not be given to any believers until it is given to all believers together."

8- RESURRECTION - Hallelujah! The blessed sure hope, promised by God, and authenticated by the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1Corinthians 15:9, 1Thessalonians 4:15-18). If the Spirit of Christ is in you, then one day God will make your dry bones in a miraculous transformation into a glorified heavenly body like Christ's. By the power of the breath of God. Are you telling others this good news? Speaking the Word of God? Like Ezekiel, like John, like Paul, trust and obey, today and every day! ☐