

Daily Devotional, September 4, 2020 Hope For Our Future

The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ² He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. ³ He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "Sovereign Lord, you alone know."

⁴ Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!' ⁵ This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. ⁶ I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'" "I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord.'" Ezekial 37:1-6, 14

One of the most dramatic and powerful moments in the Bible involves the prophet Ezekiel. In the book of Ezekiel, readers of this book encounter the mighty visions of the prophet as the people of Judah experience banishment from Jerusalem after it falls to the powerful Babylonians. It was a time when all of their hope was lost, and no one knew what the future would hold for God's people, for each of their families, or even for their own lives.

In the midst of losing everything, Ezekiel experiences a moment in which he is apparently transported by God to a valley filled with bones. It is a depressing picture, filled with death. Ezekiel walks all around this valley of death, and all he finds is dry bones, everywhere. As he studies the valley, God questions Ezekiel, "Son of Man, can these bones live?" Ezekiel replies, "Sovereign Lord, you alone know." It was an admission that in the midst of hopelessness and destruction, our ability to see a positive future is almost impossible. This vision of death, revealing the absence of life, was overwhelming to Ezekiel and even though he stood before the very presence of God, the only giver of life, he could not see the possibility that the dry bones could come to life.

God then spoke clearly to Ezekiel: "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'"

This was a proclamation of hope. It was an admission of God's presence with His beloved people. God had not abandoned Judah. God would once again breathe life into His nation. These are the closing words of this powerful scene, "I will put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord, have spoken and I have done it, declares the Lord."

As we ruminate over these compelling words found in the book of Ezekiel, we are reminded of the character of God. God does not leave us. God does not forget us. God is faithful. God is the creator of all things. God also sustains us. When hopelessness, destruction and death are all around us, God is the source of hope, resurrection and a future filled with abundant life. The powerful story found in Ezekiel is a reminder to us today that, even in the midst of the new normal that we face, we face this life with a powerful hope.

Prayer: Thank You, Lord, that in this world of instability and change, You are the same yesterday, today and for eternity. Thank You, that You are with me in all the changing events and situations of my life, and thank You that You are coming back soon, to take all who trust in Your name to be with You forever. I cling to You Lord, for my hope and my future is in You alone. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.