

Daily Devotional, July 2, 2021 Our Hope for God's Restoration

He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "Sovereign Lord, you alone know." Then he said to me, "Prophesy 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.'" Ezekiel 37:3-6 (NIV)

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

In the midst of losing everything, Ezekiel experiences a moment where he is seemingly transported by God to a valley filled with dried up bones. It is a sad picture, filled with the specter of death. Ezekiel walks all around and all he finds are more and more dry bones, everywhere. As he surveys the valley, God questions Ezekiel, "Son of man, can these bones live?" Ezekiel replies, "Sovereign Lord, you alone know." It was an acknowledgement that in the midst of hopelessness and destruction, our ability to see a positive future is nearly impossible. The vision of death everywhere, coupled with the absence of life, was overwhelming to Ezekiel, and even though he stood in the presence of God, the supreme giver of life, he could not see the possibility that the dry bones could come to life.

God then commanded Ezekiel to prophesy to the bones, using the Word of God. And the Lord makes breath enter into those bones, bringing them back to life in full human form, complete with muscles, tendons, flesh, and skin.

This was a proclamation of hope. It was an acknowledgement of God's presence with His beloved people. God had not abandoned Judah. God would once again breathe life into the nation. These are the closing words of this powerful passage, "My people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. 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." Ezekiel 37:12-14)

As we read the powerful 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. God sustains. 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 now face, we face this life with a powerful hope: the hope of complete restoration.

Prayer: Father, we have seen the damage that storms can cause in our lives. We ask today for Your help and care in our lives. We pray for the restoration of our lives by Your process. That process may not look like what we would think or plan, but we know that because You see all that is, was, and is to come...that ultimately, You will do what is most compassionate and best. Father, today we ask for Your restoration in our lives. We submit ourselves to Your ever-loving Will and kindness throughout. In Jesus' name, Amen