

“Dry Bones Baking in the Sun”

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Sunday, May 2, 2021

Introduction: This morning I want to begin my sermon by having some fun. I want to give you a Bible test.

1. How many books are in the Bible?
 - There are 66 books in the Bible.
 - There are 39 O.T books.
 - There are 27 N.T. books
2. What is the first book in the Bible?
3. What are the first 5 books in the O.T.?
4. What are the first 4 books in the N.T.?
5. What is the last book in the Bible?
6. If I asked you does the book of Amos come before the book of Jonah or the book of Jonah before the book of Amos most of us would have to think about that.

This morning I am going to ask you to open your Bible to the book of Ezekiel. It is not as easy to find as Genesis or Revelation.

The book of Ezekiel is not the book in the Bible that you would tell a new Christian to read first. It is filled with visions, prophecies. signs and symbols that are strange to us.

Context of the book of Ezekiel:

1. In 605 B.C the Babylonians, led by King Nebuchadnezzar, began the conquest of Jerusalem and the deportation of captives. They only took the best of the Jewish people. They left behind what was called “people of the land.”
 - In 598 B.C. a second deportation took place that involved 10,000 Jewish people including 25-year-old Ezekiel.
 - The final destruction of Jerusalem and deportation was in 586 B.C.
 - Five years later, at age 30, God called Ezekiel to be one of His prophets.

- The Jews are in Babylon and have no hope of ever returning to their homeland.
- With visions, prophecies, parables, signs, and symbols God used Ezekiel to communicate hope to the Jewish exiles.

T.S. One of Ezekiel's visions is a vision of hope.

Text: Ezekiel chapter 37

- The first eight words in chapter 37 are underlined in my Bible.
- "The hand of the LORD came upon me" (37:1). The word "hand" in Scripture is often used as a metaphor for power.
- There are only two other people in the Bible this is said of.
 1. Elijah (1 Kings 18:46)
 2. Elisha (2 Kings 3:15)

A personal word: The word "hand" in Scripture is often used as a metaphor for power. The yearning of my heart is that in my ministry the hand of the LORD would come upon me.

Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 37:1-14

- Verse 11 tells what the Jewish people felt.
 1. Bones dry
 2. Hope lost
 3. Cut off
- Understandability—we would have felt the same.

T.S. The "bones" in Ezekiel 37 were the bones of the whole house of Israel (37:11). The message God gave Ezekiel to give them applies to us when we lose hope, feel cut off, and like dry bones.

1. When you feel like you are losing hope, or feel you have lost hope, you need a word from God (37:4).

- God saw that His people in Babylonian exile had lost their hope of ever seeing their homeland again (37:11).
- God knew they needed a word from Him, and He gave them a word through His prophet Ezekiel (37:4-6).

- As Ezekiel was giving them a word from God things began to happen (37:7-8).

Application: God speaks to His children today primarily through the Bible. The Bible is the voice of God in print.

1. The Bible reveals things we could not know any other way.
2. The Bible tells us what is right, what is not right, how to get right, and how to stay right (2 Timothy 3:16).

Application: The Bible is the voice of God in print. Nothing will give you hope as much as the Bible.

Illustration: May 2, 2019 story about Dottie and Lymphoma. To hear the story, listen to the sermon on the church web page.

T.S. When you feel like you are losing hope, or have lost hope, you not only need a word from God you need the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. When you feel like you are losing hope, or have lost hope, rely on the full power of God's Spirit (37:14).

- God told the Jewish exiles that He would put the Holy Spirit in them, and His plan would be fulfilled (37:14).
- Through the prophet Jeremiah, God had promised the Babylonian exiles they would return to their homeland in seventy years (Jeremiah 29:10). Just as God promised they returned to their homeland.
- God's reputation was at stake. His plan had not changed.
- They needed the full power of the Holy Spirit to experience God's plan.

Application: When you face hard things in life, you need complete trust in God's promises and the "four winds" to blow.

Invitation: The hymn writer said it well. "My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness. That hymn goes on to say, "On Christ the solid rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand."