

Deeper

Jeremiah 29:13-14

¹³ You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you,” declares the LORD, “and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile.”

Unpack

Promise from God – I will be found by you and bring you back from captivity.

Condition – I’ll do this when you seek me with all of your heart.

- It’s a call to go deeper.
- We are in a season in the body of Christ where we must go DEEPER.
- Jesus is calling us to come out to the depths with him.
- Abandon the comfort and security of the shoreline and come out to the depths.

Ezekiel 37 1-10

¹ 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.’”

⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸ I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

⁹ Then he said to me, “Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.’” ¹⁰ So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

I. I will follow God and see with new vision.

God gives me vision to see.

God leads me to a place I can see.

We need God’s hand on us.

I need God's hand on me.
 I need God to show me what he sees.
 God shows me truth.
 God give us vision to see.

Ezekiel 37:1-3

¹The 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. ²He 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. ³He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?"
 I said, "Sovereign LORD, you alone know."

A. Unpack Text

1. Ezekiel was a prophet
 2. Ezekiel and Jeremiah were written at about the same time.
 3. Babylonian empire had attacked the Israelites, destroyed Jerusalem, it's walls and the temple.
 4. Taken many of them into exile in Babylon 500 miles away from their home land.
 5. Jeremiah had already told them they would come back but not for 70 years.
 6. So settled down where they were because they would be there a while.
 7. Ezekiel has a vision.
- B. The hand of the LORD was on me and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord was an explanation of what Ezekiel experienced.
1. The Lord gave him a vision. A day vision.
 2. We see God use both visions and dreams.

Acts 2:17

¹⁷ "'In the last days, God says,
 I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
 Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
 your young men will see visions,
 your old men will dream dreams.

3. In the vision God set Ezekiel in the middle of a valley.
 4. The valley was full of bones.
- C. God led Ezekiel back and forth among them.
1. God led him up close.
 2. He saw many, many bones on the ground.
 - a. Not buried.

- b. It was considered a disgrace to leave a body out in the elements.
- c. It was a horrible valley of death.
- d. Probably a battlefield where many Israeli soldiers were slaughtered.

Illustration

- The valley is a low place.
- The low place between two mountains.
- Israel had hit rock bottom.
- They were away from the original place God intended for them.
- Because of their disobedience, rebellion and hard heartedness God used Babylon to punish them.
- Sin has consequences.

Galatians 6:7-8

⁷ Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

- 3. The bones were very dry.
 - a. They had been out in the elements for a long time.
 - b. We learn that these are human bones.
 - c. No one had tended to them.
 - d. No one had come back to care for their dead.
 - e. They were left out in the open for scavengers and vultures to decimate.
 - f. This was further insult to injury.
- 4. There were a lot of bones.

Illustration

No life, old, sun bleached, dusty bones.

The point is that these bones were old.

The life that had once been in them was long gone.

Application

Do you know someone or something like this?

- D. After close examination of the bones God ask the prophet a question
 - a. Son of man... can these bones live?
 - b. Sovereign LORD you alone know.

Illustration

- Is there any hope?
- Is there any change of a miracle here?
- Is there a remote possibility of a reversal here?
- Does Ezekiel have the faith for the miracle that only God can do.
- Some things only God can do.
- Bring life to dry bones is one of them.
- Can the bones come back to life.
- There used to be life and **potential** and **purpose** and **meaning** and **joy** and **worship** and everything.
- Is there hope here?
- **Ezekiel where is your faith?**
- I want to know what I have to work with.

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Application

The gifts of the Spirit need two things in order to flow.

An operative God and a cooperative human agent.

What about you?

What do you believe?

What Ezekiel believed to be possible was important to God.

He wanted to take him DEEPER here.

He wants to take you DEEPER here.

Illustration

- God drew a line in the sand.
- This is where the situation is and this is where your power stops.

Illustration

Bullet illustration from Oceanway A/G.

Police say to me – What are you going to do about this?

- One of the big emphasis of Ezekiel is the personal responsibility we have as individuals.

Application

Daniel, Shadrach and Abednego BTW – one of the first things that was done to the three was change their name.

Babylon attempted to re-identify these three.

You are not what you were born to be you are what we want you to be.

You are not your God given potential you are going to be steered by what we say you are – we are changing your name so that we can change you.

We want you to look like, act like, sound like, think like, talk like and live like Babylon.

Sovereign LORD only you know.

Application

- Where your power stops the supernatural picks up.
- The only one who knows if these dry bones can live again is God.
- Ezekiel calls him Sovereign LORD.
- In other words Ezekiel says – LORD I believe you can do whatever you want to do.
- If you want these bones to live again then they can. If you don't then they won't.
- This one is on you.

Romans 4:17

(God)... gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Application

- That is true – only God knows but God wants to know what you think.
- God wants to use your prophetic voice in 2024.
- What dead area do you see that has God's potential?
- Many times God shows you a problem because he wants you to be involved in the solution.
- List ministry opportunities.

II. I will glorify God and speak his words.

Ezekiel 37:4-5

⁴Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! ⁵This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. ⁶I 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.'"

A. Dry bones hear the word of the Lord.

1. This is what the sovereign Lord says to these bones.
 - a. Speak on behalf of God.

- b. In other words Ezekiel I want you to say to these dead bones what I am saying.
- c. Speak my words over them.
- d. Say to them what I am saying about them.

Illustration

- We must amplify HIS message.
- We cannot back down because in the natural the situation looks hopeless.
- The enemy wants to intimidate you into being quiet.
- The enemy wants to get you to shut your mouth and not speak up.
- The enemy wants you to get so consumed with the condition of the bones that your faith is eliminated from the equation.

B. To the bones.

1. I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.
2. I will attach tendons to you
3. and make flesh come upon you
4. and cover you with skin;
5. I will put breath in you,
6. and you will come to life.

C. Ezekiel is preaching the Gospel.

1. God tells Ezekiel to prophesy to the bones.
 - a. Speak to the dead bones.
 - b. Specifically prophesy to them.
2. God has a word for these dry bones.
3. God speaks to dead things.
4. God has a word for the dead things – come alive.

D. God will make breath enter you.

1. This breath will enter into the bones.
2. Ruach?
3. This lifegiving breath will enter into the bones.
4. Once the breath enters into the bones they will come to life.
5. Once the lifegiving breath of God enters into the dead bones a transformation takes place.
6. The breath brings transformation.
7. There is life in the breath.
8. The problem with the bones is they had no life giving breath in them.

E. Vs. 6 describes the process of verse 5.

1. In addition to the breath Ezekiel says God will attach tendons to the bones.
 - a. Tendons attach muscles to bones.
 - b. These tendons will be attached to the bones then God will send the flesh.
 - c. Now the bones have something to attach themselves to.

Illustration

- Muscles move the bones.
- Bones without muscle are no good.
- Muscle without bones are no good.
- But when bones attach to muscle movement is possible.
- God will send the substance required for the bones and muscles to work together so that these bones start to move.

- d. After the flesh comes the skin. The skin will cover the whole body.
- e. Then comes the breath and with the breath comes life.

Illustration

- You can have structure and content and movement but without the breath of God none of it will be productive.
- It won't produce fruit that remains.
- Once the whole thing comes together then you will know that I am the LORD.

Application

- Ezekiel says then you will know that I am the LORD 65 times with variations in his book.
- He uses the phrase "the glory of the LORD" 19 times.
- For Ezekiel the revelation of God and his glory is paramount.
- When you talk about prophesy the big picture is the revelation of God and his glory.

Question

- when will "You know that I am the LORD"? - when I bring this thing full circle.

Illustration

- God speaks to the bones through Ezekiel's voice.
- God wants to speak to a dead generation and he wants to use you.
- He wants to use you to do it.
- God wants to use you to speak to dead things, dead generation, dead places, dead systems, dead marriages, dead workplaces, dead classrooms, dead family trees.
- In the natural it is dead, dead, dead.
- However, in the spirit it is possible for life to come.

Proverbs 18:21

The tongue has the power of life and death,
and those who love it will eat its fruit.

Colossians 4:6

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Hebrews 1:3

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

III. I will obey God and trust Him to do the rest.**Ezekiel 37:7-10**

⁷So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them.

A. Notice what Ezekiel said in verse 7.

1. Then I prophesied as I was commanded.
2. Vs. 7 Ezekiel follows the instructions of the LORD
3. He obeyed God.
4. He did as he was told.
5. He followed the directions God had given him.
6. He said yes to God.
7. I prophesied as I was commanded.

B. Notice that God didn't suggest that Ezekiel prophesy.

1. God commanded him to do so.
2. We cannot act as if obedience is optional.
3. Once Ezekiel obeyed God and stepped out in faith that is when the bones started to rattle.
4. Commotion started
5. Rattling started
6. Noise started after Ezekiel obeyed and opened his mouth.

Application

- Be bold

C. Vs. 8 The bones come together, connected, covered with skin, but there was something missing... Breath was missing.

⁹Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come, breath, from the four winds and breathe into these slain, that they may live.'" ¹⁰So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army.

1. Vs. 9 God tells Ezekiel to complete the process.
2. Now there are bones connected and skin but no breath.
3. From the outside everything that was needed appeared to be there but what was missing was the invisible.
4. There was no breath.
5. The bones had no life without breath.
6. The bodies were lifeless.
7. Life is in the breath.

D. Vs. 9 God tells Ezekiel to prophecy to the breath.

1. God calls him Son of man for second time.
2. God says breathe into these slain, that they may live.
3. He calls breath from the four winds...? What does this mean.

E. Vs. 10 E prophesied as commanded and it worked.

1. Breath entered them, they came to life and stood up on their feet
2. The former dead bones were a vast army.

Isaiah 55:11

so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Jeremiah 1:10-12

¹⁰Today I give you authority over nations and kingdoms to uproot and to pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

¹¹The LORD asked me, "Jeremiah, what do you see?"

I answered, "A branch of an almond tree."

¹²"You are right," the LORD said, "and I am watching to see that my words come true."

Application

- Obedience –
- What is God asking you to do in 2024?

Conclusion

I will follow God and see with new vision.

I will glorify God and speak his words.

I will obey God and trust Him to do the rest.