

# Breath into Dry Bones

## The Promise of New Life

### Word of God

#### **Ezekiel 37:1–14**

The hand of the Lord brought Ezekiel out in the Spirit and set him in the middle of a valley full of bones. They were very dry. The Lord said, “Son of man, can these bones live?” Ezekiel answered, “O Lord God, You know.” God commanded him to prophesy over the bones. As he spoke, there was a rattling, and the bones came together. Flesh and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. God said, “Prophesy to the breath,” and breath came into them; they lived and stood on their feet. God said: “These bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, ‘Our hope is lost.’ But I will open your graves and bring you home. I will put My Spirit within you, and you shall live.”

#### **Psalms 130**

Out of the depths I cry to You, O Lord. Lord, hear my voice. If You kept a record of sins, who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness. I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in His word I hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning. O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord is steadfast love and plentiful redemption. He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

#### **Romans 8:1–11**

There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. The Spirit has set us free from the law of sin and death. God did what the law could not do by sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. Those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. If the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He will give life to

your mortal bodies.

### **John 11:1–45**

Lazarus was sick. Jesus waited two days longer before going to him. When He arrived, Lazarus had been in the tomb four days. Martha said, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.” Jesus said, “Your brother will rise again.” He told her, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Jesus wept. At the tomb, He commanded, “Take away the stone,” then cried, “Lazarus, come out!” The man who had died came out, still bound. Jesus said, “Unbind him, and let him go.”

### **Reflection in the Field**

There are days in the barn when a horse’s spirit feels tired — not from work, but from the weight of old wounds or long exhaustion. A skilled horseman notices the dull eye, the hesitant step, the weary breath. Yet when calm presence stands beside her, something softens. Her breathing deepens. Her eyes brighten. Her body remembers life again.

Ezekiel stands in a valley of bones — brittle, long dead, seemingly beyond hope. Yet God speaks and breath enters what was lost. In the barn, we glimpse this quiet miracle: spirit returning where spirit had faded.

Jesus stands before the tomb of Lazarus with tears in His eyes. He does not deny grief — He enters it. He speaks life into it. He refuses to let death or despair have the final word. Lent brings us to our own valleys of dry bones. But Christ meets us there, breathes His Spirit into us, and calls us into new life.

### **Lutheran Reflection**

“When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die — and through that death, He brings him into new life.”

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (1937)

## Reflection Prompts

1. What part of your life feels like “dry bones” right now?
2. Where have you prayed, like Martha, “Lord, if You had been here...”?
3. How have you seen a horse’s spirit return after weariness?
4. What would it look like for Christ to “unbind” you in one area of fear or sorrow?

## Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Breathe into the dry places of my life. Speak hope into what feels lost.  
Call me out of whatever binds me, and make me alive in Your Spirit.  
Restore my soul as gently as a weary horse finds new strength  
in the presence of one who loves her.

Amen.

*The Lord bless you and keep you;  
the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.  
(Numbers 6:24–26, ESV)*