

- God can speak to us thru anything... convey truth. Hope. Lift our souls.

Ezekiel 37 is an example of that. And also, a testimony to God's mercy.

Background – ch. 36. Israel forgot about God. Lived in the land He gave them, but profaned the holiness of His name. They had idols, defiled what was holy. So... Israel's army was defeated, people were scattered. Consequences.

Story of the Valley of Dry Bones

Ezekiel 37 – NLT The Lord took hold of me, and I was carried away by the Spirit of the Lord to a valley filled with bones. ² He led me all around among the bones that covered the valley floor. They were scattered everywhere across the ground and were completely dried out. ³ Then he asked me, "Son of man, can these bones **become living people** again?"

"O Sovereign Lord," I replied, "you alone know the answer to that."

⁴ Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to these bones and say, 'Dry bones, listen to the word of the Lord! ⁵ This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Look! I am going to put breath into you and make you **live again!** ⁶ I will put flesh and muscles on you and cover you with skin. I will put breath into you, and you will **come to life**. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'"

⁷ So I spoke this message, just as he told me. Suddenly as I spoke, there was a rattling noise all across the valley. The bones of each body came together and attached themselves as complete skeletons. ⁸ Then as I watched, muscles & flesh formed over the bones. Then skin formed to cover their bodies, but they still had no breath in them.

⁹ Then he said to me, "Speak a prophetic message to the winds, son of man. Speak a prophetic message and say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Come, O breath, from the four winds! Breathe into these dead bodies so they may **live again.**'"

¹⁰ So I spoke the message as he commanded me, and breath came into their bodies. They all **came to life** and stood up on their feet—a great army.

¹¹ Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones represent the people of Israel. They are saying, 'We have become old, dry bones—**all hope is gone**. Our nation is finished.'

¹² Therefore, prophesy to them and say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to **rise again**. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³ When this happens, O my people, you will know that I am the Lord. ¹⁴ I will put my Spirit in you, and you will **live again** and return home to your own land. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken, and I have done what I said. Yes, the Lord has spoken!'"

VS. 1-3 - - God asks the Q: “Can these bones live?” Why?

- For us to **acknowledge** the situation. Can’t change until we do.
- It’s important to recognize our **futility**. Death all around. Dry bones.
- It looks **hopeless**. Life after death is impossible... that long!

Man’s answer – “you alone know” – it’s non-committal.

- Does acknowledge we can’t see the future... but Sovereign God does.

VS 4-6 -- God responds w/ a promise. “This is what I’m going to do.”

- God is the one taking action ... it’s not us.
- B/c it’s impossible, only God can make it happen. Nothing/impossible.

VS 7-8 - Before the promise occurs, we must do something... take action.

- **Our action precedes God’s action.** We must take a step of faith.
- **Prophecy** – speak words of faith, not defeat. Our words matter.
 - God spoke the world into existence. “He spoke, and it came into being” – **Ps. 33:9**
 - You’ll never have **greatness** while speaking words of **mediocrity**.
 - You’ll never have **victory** while speaking words of **defeat**.
 - You’ll never have **hope** while speaking **negativity**.

Bodies formed, rattling ... bones came together ... “**complete skeletons**”
But they had no life . . . not until the **breath of God**.

- Some people right now are **complete, but not truly living**.
 - They’re flesh & bones, but God isn’t in their life. Empty existence.
 - If only living for the here & now, what’s the point? Gone. Temp.
- Some are “complete” ... but **feel incomplete** b/c a person/job/position.
 - Our reason for living/worth is in who we are 2 God. Shining 4 Him
 - It’s not in our jobs/income. It’s in our words & deeds.

VS 9-14. What does He do? Puts breath into them, they **live again**.

- Notice: “**live again**” – **7x**. Means: perfection, completeness, & full.
 - God “**causes**” us to “**rise again**” – resurrect... breathe new life!

Acknowledge 2d chances. We can **rise** from the ashes, even when the **ashes** are the **bridges** we burned.

It's b/c the **breath of God** is a **creative** work. It creates & re-creates.

- Breath of God = the Spirit of God.
- Jesus breathed on disciples, said: "receive the Holy Spirit" **Jn 20:22**
- **God breathed** into the dead bodies so they could "**live again.**"
 - To be truly alive, we need God to breathe life into us.
 - In Him, we have **new life**... we **stand**... we are a **great army**.
 - They were defeated bones before God's breath.
 - They failed doing it their way. Admit – need God.

All around, people "have become old, dry bones – all **hope is gone.**"

Hopelessness looks at the **surroundings**... **HOPE** looks to God.

****** Someone tonight is struggling with hope. Seeing bones.

Rom. 8:24-25 – "hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for *it* with perseverance."

- **Persevere.** Put your **hope in God/eagerly wait** 4 Him to bring change.
- **Change** comes when we **speak words of faith...prophecy** positive words.

This year –Alive 2025.

- This story is a testimony that **God can re-create us.** We can be different ... new ... transformed. He gives **2nd chances** ... new life!
 - God was merciful not b/c the people deserved it. 2x.
 - He did it for the sake of His holy name.
 - God proved who He was: Powerful. Great. Restoring. Loving.
 - What was barren, fruitful. What was dead, **alive**.

****** God is the one who changes things... who has us "**rise again.**"

- **Isa. 26:19** – "But your dead will live, LORD; their bodies will rise— let those who dwell in the dust wake up and shout for joy—"
- Wake up! Make **God** the **focus of your life**, ask for His **Spirit to breathe**... Then you can have **hope instead of despair**. Become truly alive.