

## **Ezekiel 37:1–28 – When God Brings Dead Things Back to Life**

Ezekiel 37 is one of the most vivid pictures in all of Scripture of how God restores what looks completely beyond hope. Israel was scattered, crushed, and convinced their story with God was over. Into that despair, God gave Ezekiel two powerful visions:

1. A valley full of dry bones coming back to life
2. Two sticks becoming one in God's hand

Both pictures point to God's power to restore His people and His faithfulness to His promises. And through the lens of the cross and resurrection, we can see how this speaks not only of Israel's national restoration, but also of the way God brings spiritual life to people who feel dead inside.

### **1. The Valley of Dry Bones – God's Word to the Hopeless (Ezekiel 37:1–14)**

Ezekiel says:

*"The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones. Then He caused me to pass by them all around, and behold, there were very many in the open valley; and indeed they were very dry." (Ezekiel 37:1–2)*

This is not a valley of recently fallen soldiers. These bones are "very dry." Long dead. No trace of life left. God then asks Ezekiel:

*"Son of man, can these bones live?" (Ezekiel 37:3, NKJV)*

Ezekiel gives the only sensible answer:

*"O Lord God, You know." (Ezekiel 37:3, NKJV)*

From his perspective, there is no way. From God's perspective, nothing is impossible.

### **Prophesying to the Bones**

God tells Ezekiel:

*"Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live.'" (Ezekiel 37:4–5, NKJV)*

Ezekiel obeys:

*"So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and suddenly a rattling; and the bones came together, bone to bone. Indeed, as I looked, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them over; but there was no breath in them." (Ezekiel 37:7–8, NKJV)*

The bones become bodies, but they are still lifeless. Structure without breath.

Then God commands him again:

*“Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, son of man, and say to the breath, ‘Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live.’”*  
(Ezekiel 37:9, NKJV)

Ezekiel obeys:

*“And breath came into them, and they lived, and stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army.”*  
(Ezekiel 37:10, NKJV)

### What the Dry Bones Mean

God explains the vision:

*“Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They indeed say, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!’”* (Ezekiel 37:11, NKJV)

That sentence—*“Our hope is lost”*—may be the most honest summary of how they felt in exile. Cut off from the land, from the temple, from each other. Nationally dead.

God responds with a promise:

*“Thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, O My people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord... I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it,’ says the Lord.”* (Ezekiel 37:12–14, NKJV)

God is saying:

- I will raise you from national “death.”
- I will bring you back to the land.
- I will put My Spirit in you, and you will live.

The God who judges also restores. The God who scattered them is the God who promises to regather and revive them.

### Practical Application

This vision speaks powerfully to anyone who feels like those bones:

- “My heart is dry.”
- “My hope is gone.”
- “I feel cut off and finished.”

God’s question still stands: “Can these bones live?”

On your own, no. But with Him, yes.

- His **Word** speaks to dead situations.
- His **Spirit** brings real life where there was none.

Maybe your marriage feels like dry bones. Maybe your spiritual life feels like a skeleton of routines with no breath in it. Maybe you look at your past and think, “Nothing good can come out of this.”

God is not asking you if you can fix it. He is asking if you will trust Him to move, speak, and breathe into what seems hopeless.

## **2. Two Sticks, One People – God’s Power to Heal Division (Ezekiel 37:15–23)**

Next, God gives Ezekiel another symbolic act:

*“Again the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘As for you, son of man, take a stick for yourself and write on it: “For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions.” Then take another stick and write on it: “For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel, his companions.” Then join them one to another for yourself into one stick, and they will become one in your hand.’”*  
(Ezekiel 37:15–17, NKJV)

The kingdom of Israel had been divided for centuries—Judah in the south, Israel (Ephraim) in the north. God is saying, “When I restore you, you will not come back as two rival kingdoms, but as one people.”

God explains:

*“Surely I will take the children of Israel from among the nations, wherever they have gone, and will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel... They shall no longer be two nations, nor shall they ever be divided into two kingdoms again.”* (Ezekiel 37:21–22, NKJV)

And He promises something deeper than political unity:

*“Then they shall not defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. Then they shall be My people, and I will be their God.”* (Ezekiel 37:23, NKJV)

This is about a people cleansed, united, and restored to God Himself.

### **Practical Application**

God not only restores life; He heals division.

- In Israel’s case, He promised to reunite a split nation.
- In our lives, He often has to reunite what sin has shattered: families, friendships, churches.

We live in a deeply divided world—politically, racially, socially, even within the body of Christ. It is easy to talk about unity; it is much harder to walk in it.

The same God who joined two sticks in Ezekiel’s hand is able to reconcile hearts today:

- But that requires humility, repentance, and a willingness to lay down pride.
- It means letting God deal with our idols, our stubbornness, and our anger.

We cannot claim to follow the God of reconciliation while clinging to bitterness and contempt.

### 3. One King, One Shepherd, Forever (Ezekiel 37:24–28)

The vision then lifts our eyes further:

*“David My servant shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd... They shall dwell in the land that I have given to Jacob My servant, where your fathers dwelt; and they shall dwell there, they, their children, and their children’s children, forever; and My servant David shall be their prince forever.”* (Ezekiel 37:24–25, NKJV)

David had been dead for centuries when Ezekiel wrote this. God is pointing forward to the true Son of David—the Messiah—who would rule as King and Shepherd forever.

We know Him by name: Jesus Christ.

- He is the promised descendant of David according to the flesh.
- He is the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for the sheep.
- He is the risen Lord whose kingdom has no end.

God goes on:

*“Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them... I will set My sanctuary in their midst forevermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; indeed I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”* (Ezekiel 37:26–27, NKJV)

God’s end goal is not simply to fix their politics or rebuild their cities. His purpose is to dwell among His people in peace and righteousness.

Ultimately, this finds its deepest fulfillment in Jesus, who:

- Shed His blood on the cross to bring us into a new and better covenant
- Rose from the dead, declaring that He is God, Savior, and Lord
- Pours out the Holy Spirit to dwell in and among His people
- God’s heart is still the same: “I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

### Challenge for Believers

Ezekiel 37 calls every follower of Jesus to respond in some very specific ways.

#### 1. Do you believe God can bring life into what looks hopeless?

- Where have you quietly decided, “This will never change”?
- A person you have stopped praying for?
- A sin pattern you assume you will always be stuck in?  
God may not do things on your timetable or in the way you imagine, but this chapter reminds us: dry bones can live when God speaks and breathes.

**2. Are you willing to obey even when it looks pointless?**

- Ezekiel was told to preach to bones. Humanly speaking, it made no sense, but he obeyed.
- Sometimes God calls you to speak, pray, or step out in faith when you see no sign of life. Obedience comes before the rattling of bones.

**3. Are you cooperating with God's work of cleansing and uniting?**

- God promised to cleanse His people from their idols and their sins.
- Is there something He is putting His finger on in your life right now—an idol, a habit, a hidden compromise?
- Are you willing to let Him deal with division in your heart—toward another believer, a family member, or even a whole group of people?

**4. Are you living under the rule of the One King and One Shepherd?**

- Jesus is not just a religious figure; He is the rightful King.
- His death on the cross and His resurrection are not just doctrines; they are the foundation of His authority over our lives.
- Are there areas where you still insist on being your own ruler?

Let this chapter push you to deeper trust, deeper surrender, and deeper hope in what God can do.

**Invitation to Those Who Have Not Yet Given Their Life to Jesus**

Ezekiel saw a valley of bones turned into a living army. That is a powerful picture of what God still does in individual hearts.

The Bible describes us, apart from Christ, as spiritually dead in our sins—not sick, not just confused, but dead. No amount of self-effort can change that. We need God's Word and God's Spirit to bring us to life.

Here is the good news:

- Jesus saved us when He shed His blood on the cross. He took our sins and our judgment upon Himself.
- He rose from the dead, and His resurrection declares that He is God, Savior, and Lord.
- He offers forgiveness, a new heart, and His Spirit to all who turn to Him.

Maybe you feel like those dry bones—empty, tired, guilty, or far from God. If so, the Lord is not pushing you away; He is calling you.

The Bible says:

*“For ‘whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.’”* (Romans 10:13, NKJV)

You can respond to Him right now. There is no magic formula, but if this reflects the desire of your heart, you might pray something like this:

*“Lord Jesus, I know that I have sinned and that I cannot give myself life. I believe that You shed Your blood on the cross to save me, and that You rose from the dead, showing that You are God, Savior, and Lord. I turn from my sin and I surrender my life to You. Please forgive me, make me new, and put Your Spirit within me. Make these dry bones live. I want to belong to You. In Jesus’ name, amen.”*

If you truly turn to Him, He will not turn you away.

Next steps:

- Tell another believer you have trusted Christ.
- Begin reading the Bible (the Gospel of John is a good place to start; the NKJV is a solid translation).
- Ask God to lead you into a Bible study group where His Word is taught and His love is lived out.

The God who brought life to a valley of bones has not changed. He still raises the dead—nations, churches, families, and individual hearts—through Jesus Christ.