

**Title:** The Power of God

**Passage:** Ezekiel 37:1-14

**Introduction:**

"Case for Christ" - Lee Strobel

- story of death by young person
- when workers tried to relocate burial, found body was missing. Perhaps her tombstone was misplaced. But no-one suggested she had otherwise resurrected.
- death: universal understanding of its finality
- Question: Is there life and hope after death? Yes!

**Context of Passage (Ezekiel)**

- Ezekiel - author was prophet, whose name means "may God strengthen"
- Timeframe: 593 B.C. - 570 B.C.
- Israel was already taken captive by Babylon; destroyed Jerusalem and scattered people
- Ezekiel 1-24 (judgment against Israel)
- Ezekiel 25-33 (judgment against nations)
- Ezekiel 34 -48 (glimpses of hope and restoration)

***The Valley of Dry Bones***

Ezekiel 37:1-2

The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry.

***Who are the bones representing?***

- whole house of Israel

Ezekiel 37:11

Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.'

***Why were bones used as a metaphor?***

- bones always connected with emotional state of hopelessness

Job 7:5-6

My flesh is clothed with worms and dirt;

my skin hardens, then breaks out afresh.

My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle

and come to their end without hope.

Proverbs 13:12

Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life.

- also see Deuteronomy 28 (perception of God turning His back)

Proverbs 17:22

A joyful heart is good medicine,

but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

***What does God do?***

- Resurrection of the bones. (As bones symbolize the destruction of Israel, God brings restoration)

***How does God revive the bones?***

***1) Prophecy (preaching God's Word)***

Ezekiel 37:4

Then he said to me, "Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Ezekiel 37:4

Then he said to me, "Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

## **2) Through God's Spirit**

Ezekiel 37:9

Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, 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."

- breathe = same word as "wind, spirit"

- See [Genesis 1:2](#)

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.)

## **Why? For His Name/Glory**

Ezekiel 36:22-23

"Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations to which you came. And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the Lord God, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes.

## **Was this resurrection of Israel fulfilled?**

- Yes and No

- Yes: Israelites in exile in Babylon were allowed to return.

- No: Not everyone was brought back nor did they have complete knowledge of God, which will happen at End of Times.

- But there is a glimpse to Christ

Ezekiel 37:9

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- four winds = encompass the whole earth.

- How can the whole world truly be affected?

- points to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ

1 Corinthians 15:54b-57

"Death is swallowed up in victory."

"O death, where is your victory?"

O death, where is your sting?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

- death was an executioner but now death is merely a gardener (one who puts things in the ground).

## **Passage points to your resurrection in Christ**

- all will be risen to face judgment and accountability

Daniel 12:2

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

John 5:28-29

Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

Revelation 20:11-15 (Judgment Before the Great White Throne)

Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 22:4-5 (resurrection of righteous ones)

They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

### ***Application Points***

If you are depressed:

- in the midst of trials, God is with you and is still in control.

Psalms 23:4

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Romans 8:28

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

- be encouraged and be in fellowship with other believers.

If you are not a believer who feels like dry bones (dry, brittle):

- hope exists in the Gospel through faith in Jesus Christ.

Matthew 11:28-30

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Psalms 23:3

He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.