

**Weekly Devotional - Hear the WORD of the LORD / All Dried Up (Message inspired by Min. Gloria Fleming) 9-15-21**

**Scripture - 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; and it was full of bones. HE caused me to pass all around them, and behold, there were very many [human bones] in the open valley; and lo, they were very dry. And HE said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O LORD GOD, You know." Again HE said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.' [Ezekiel 37:1-4]**

**In 2020, when the Corona-virus outbreak hit, everybody was wearing masks, social distancing and washing their hands with sanitizers multiple times a day.**

**Everything dried up. Schools and businesses shut down; churches were emptied, and hundreds of thousands of people were dying. The carnage was so terrible that bodies were being kept in ice trucks. Funeral homes, normally welcoming of the dead, were overwhelmed so much that they could not keep up. Bodies were all over the place. And like the Old Testament prophet Ezekiel, we found ourselves asking the question "Can these bones live?"**

**Ezekiel's name means "GOD will strengthen". He was a Hebrew prophet of the 6th century B.C.. GOD gave Ezekiel several visions; the first vision was of GOD'S throne and included the four living creatures and whirling wheels. Ezekiel also had detailed visions of a new Temple [Ezekiel 40-42], a restored Jerusalem [Ezekiel 48:30-35], the millennium [chapter 44], and the land in which GOD'S people will reside [Ezekiel 47:13-23]. Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones [Ezekiel 37:1-14] came to him after GOD had directed him to prophesy the rebirth of Israel in chapter**

**36. However, this promise seemed impossible considering Israel's present condition. She was "dead" as a nation, deprived of her land, her king, and her temple. She had been divided and dispersed for so long that unification and restoration seemed impossible. So GOD gave Ezekiel the vision of the dry bones as a sign.**

**GOD transported Ezekiel, in a vision, to a valley full of dry bones. Ezekiel was directed to speak to the bones. Ezekiel was to tell the bones that GOD would make breath enter the bones and they would come to life, just as in the creation of man when HE breathed life into Adam [Genesis 2:7]. Ezekiel obeyed, the bones came together, flesh developed, skin covered the flesh, breath entered the bodies, and they stood up in a vast army. This vision symbolized the whole house of Israel that was then in captivity. Like unburied skeletons, the people were in a state of living death, pining away with no end to their judgment in sight. They thought their hope was gone and they were cut off forever.**

**The reviving of the dry bones signified GOD'S plan for Israel's future national restoration. The vision also, and most importantly, showed that Israel's new life depended on GOD'S power and not the circumstances of the people. Putting "breath" by GOD'S SPIRIT into the bones showed that GOD would not only restore them physically but also spiritually. The Israelites residing in the Holy Land today are not the fulfillment of this prophecy. It will be fulfilled when GOD re-gathers believing Israelites to the land [Jer. 31:33; 33:14-16] and CHRIST returns to establish HIS Millennial Kingdom [Matthew 24:30-31]. Ezekiel shows all Christians that we are to be obedient to GOD'S call on our lives. Judgment is coming and will surely take place, declares the Sovereign LORD! We, too, can warn others and share with them the good news of salvation in JESUS CHRIST.**

**May we always have a mind through which CHRIST thinks; a heart through which CHRIST loves; a voice through which CHRIST speaks; a hand through which CHRIST helps; and be a vessel through which CHRIST lives!**

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