

**Sermon Title: "God Did"**  
**Ezekiel 37: 1-14**  
**Rev. Chelsea D. Waite**  
**Date: August 27, 2023**

## **The Valley of Dry Bones**

37 The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. 2 He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. 3 He said to me, "Mortal, can these bones live?" I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." 4 Then he said to me, "Prophecy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. 5 Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath<sup>[a]</sup> to enter you, and you shall live. 6 I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath<sup>[b]</sup> in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the LORD."

7 So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. 8 I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them. 9 Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath:<sup>[c]</sup> Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath,<sup>[d]</sup> and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." 10 I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

11 Then he said to me, "Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.' 12 Therefore prophesy and say to them: Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people, and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. 13 And you shall know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up from your graves, O my people. 14 I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD."

## **Sermon Summary**

This very familiar passage of scripture is typically the source of dramatic preaching moments focused on the part of the scripture where the bones come back together. However, this sermon focuses on what happened prior to the bones coming back together, when Ezekiel sat amidst dry bones wondering if there was any life left. The earlier portion of the passage begs the question, "How do you hope against hope?":

1. **Navigate the valley moment.** God placed Ezekiel in the low place with the dry bones so he could appreciate the high place. God's presence is with us in the valley moments. Knowing that God is with us helps us to remain hopeful even in "dry" situations.
2. **Concentrate on God's instructions.** God gave Ezekiel very specific instructions about what he needed to do to emerge from the valley, to revive the bones. When we are in a dry place, we too need to focus on what God is telling us to do, what God is teaching us.
3. **Activate Your Power.** After God gave Ezekiel instructions, Ezekiel used his own God-given power to bring life to the dead situation. It was God's spirit within Ezekiel. God did it!

### **Reflection Questions**

1. How do you typically respond to the valley (low) moments in life?
2. Are you more aware of God's activity during the high or low moments in your life?
3. What is happening in the world or in your own life that gives you a sense of hopelessness at the moment? What gives you hope that these dry places will breathe life again?
4. Describe a time in your life when you were clear that "God did it."