

RAISING DRY BONES – IS IT POSSIBLE

Ezek. 37:3

Intro: A dry bone is proof of an extinct life. Bones are made only for living organisms. Israel, as a nation, was once a living organism, full of life for God. But Israel sinned, and then came decay and degeneration. Now, at this particular point, Israel is nothing more than a huge valley of dry bones. Man, created in the image of God was once a living organism filled with the life of God, but man sinned, and then came decay and disintegration which has made the world a valley of dry bones. Now there is no process known to man where a mere dry bone can suddenly be changed into a living organism. When God asked Ezekiel, "Can these bones live?", Ezekiel was compelled to refer the question back to God for an answer. "O Lord God, thou art knowest." And God proceeds to tell us if these bones are made to live, and all dry bones of all ages can be made to live. Let's notice in our messages some things:

I. THE PROPHET'S PREPARATION!

A. In the first place, those commissioned to raise dry bones must have a special preparation. This preparation is twofold:

1. He must see a vision of God. (Ezek. 1).

- a. Ezekiel saw wings with human hands under them. Divinity and humanity
- b. Through out Scripture, wings symbolize divinity and the hand symbolizes humanity.
- c. This is a picture of God in control of humanity, notice that the wings moved the hands
- d. Ezekiel saw winged creatures with the face of a man symbolizing intelligence the face of a lion symbolizing courage; the face of an ox symbolizing patience; and the face of an eagle symbolizing aspiration.
- e. All of these were under the control of the wings.
- f. The need of every prophet commissioned to raise dry bones must be linked to God so that his intelligence, courage, patience, and aspirations are completely controlled by Him.

2. Every commissioned prophet must feel the touch of God. Ezek said, "The hand of the Lord was upon me."

- a. "the hand of the Lord symbolizes Divine power and authority.
- b. The Holy Spirit of God is in every Christian for life, but every Christ is not under God's hand for power.
- c. Ezekiel responds to the touch of God and goes wherever He leads, "The hand of the Lord was upon me and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones."
- d. Ezekiel was willing to be led by the Lord's hand into the valley of dry bones, but the temptation for us today is to seek the garden with its flowers, beauty and comfort rather than the valley with its dry bones.
- e. Thank God for the ones who gladly respond to the hand of God leading them into the most sinful and hopeless "dry bone valleys"

B. Next notice the prophet's test of faith. (37:2).

1. The bones were very many.

- a. The whole valley was white with all the many bones.
- b. It was impossible for the prophet to reach all of them, but he did not

despair, his eyes were fixed on God. He believed that God was equal to the task. No task is too great for God.

2. The bones were very dry. No sign of life anywhere.

a. How many have we seen that to us were totally hopeless. Yet there is no mountain that God cannot move. No stone He cannot crush.

3. Then Ezekiel was told to do a very foolish thing: "prophecy to the bones".

a. How foolish is it to speak to a deaf man?

b. How much more foolish is it to speak to a dead man?

c. But the highest order of foolishness is to speak to a bone.

d. But Ezekiel was willing to appear foolish to the worldly wise!

e. Does not the Bible say that "it is by the foolishness of preaching that men are to be saved. (I Cor. 1:18).

C. Next, notice the means used!

1. The man of God spoke the Word of God, by the Spirit of God, in the power of God.

a. Ezekiel was a man of God in that he was right with God and completely under God's control.

b. It is great to be a man of learning, a man of position, a man of means, a man of eloquence, but it is a thousand times greater to be a man of God.

c. The Word of God must be spoken by the man of God, and Ezekiel spoke unto the bones exactly what God told him to speak.

d. The Word of God is the power of God unto salvation. (II Tim. 3:16,17- "All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for rebuke, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

2. The man of God must be a man of prayer.

a. He must depend upon the Spirit of God to use the Word.

b. Ezekiel was commanded to call upon the breath of God to breathe upon the valley of bones, while he spoke God's Word.

c. When he did, God's invisible power moved and things began to happen.

d. Every worker in the valley of dry bones needs three things: He must be a man of God, he must be a man of the Bible, He must be a man of prayer

II. NOW, NOTICE THE PROPHET'S PROCESS!

A. He spoke directly to the bones (verse 7). In their face, so to speak.

B. There was no manipulation, no preparing the bones to receive God's Word.

C. Then Ezekiel says, "there was a great noise, and a shaking".

a. It was bone noise, the noise of death and not life.

b. When a person gets under conviction, things begin to happen.

c. They get mean, they get sad, they get happy, they get moved.

d. When God breathes on a person's heart, he begins to rattle.

D. What was the purpose of the vision? Look at verse 6, and 13: "So that ye shall know that I am the Lord". One live Lazarus is worth forty dead Israelites. Let not the number nor the dryness of the bones deter us. With the vision of God before us and the touch of God upon us, let us speak to the valley of dry bones around us. Let us speak the word of God directly to them while we trust Him to give them life, and we shall not be disappointed!

Umbel

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