

# SERMON SERIES

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

## STORY OF FAITH: WEEK 10

*Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. (Ezekiel 37:5)*

The ultimate goal through the Story of Faith is the fulfillment of God's promise to crush the head of the serpent through the seed of the woman (Genesis 3). But to do this, God must defeat sin and death. Through the substitutionary sacrifice of the suffering servant (from Isaiah 53), the sin debt of God's people would be paid. God's Messiah would be the final and complete sacrifice. So far, we have seen the covenants God established with Adam, Abraham, Judah, and David. Yet there is one more covenant in the Old Testament that we need to examine briefly in the Book of Jeremiah. God spoke to Jeremiah during a very dark time in Israel's history and said, "Behold, the days are coming... when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah" (see Jeremiah 31:31-34).

In the new covenant, God promised to forgive all of His people and put His law within them by writing it "on their hearts." Sin would be defeated through the servant's sacrifice, and once that happened, death's power would die with it. Death would no longer hold people captive because God had a plan to bring new life.

God's plan was to send his Spirit to give life to His people. It stands to reason that He would do this by first giving life to the suffering servant who died for the people. So, the promise of Ezekiel's Valley of Dry Bones (Ezekiel 37) is that once sin was removed and death was defeated, God's Spirit would have free reign to give life to all those who receive forgiveness from sin. Through Ezekiel's vision of dry bones coming back to life, God was promising a new creation!

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## EZEKIEL 37:1-14 ESV

*1 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.*

*2 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.*

*3 And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord God, you know."*

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

*5 Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live.*

*6 And I will lay sinews upon you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord."*

*7 So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone.*

*8 And I looked, and behold, 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, "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."*

*10 So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.*

*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.'*

*12 Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel.*

*13 And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people.*

*14 And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the Lord."*

## DISCUSSION GUIDE QUESTIONS

on your own, with family, or with your small group

Try to put yourself in Ezekiel's mindset during the exile. Have you ever been, or are you currently, in something that feels impossible or hopeless? If so, describe it here.

How does the imagery of the valley of dry bones in Ezekiel 37 reflect the spiritual condition of Israel at that time? What are some of the signs of spiritual dryness in our country today? List them.

What are signs of spiritual dryness in a believer's life? Brainstorm and list a few obvious (or not-so-obvious) signs here.

What is the significance of God bringing the bones back to life? And what does it say about God's power to restore hope?

Was God testing Ezekiel with His question in verse 3? Why even ask that? And what do we learn from Ezekiel's response?

Are you going through a spiritual dry-spell in your life right now? Or marriage? Or job? How does Ezekiel 37 challenge us to examine our own attitudes towards the power of God to bring life to seemingly dead situations in our lives?