

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

**Ezekiel 37:13**

## Store In My Heart

### Colossians 1:13-14

For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

The world is a domain filled with darkness. Wickedness is all around us. Christ is the way out of the darkness of sin. His kingdom is where we can find redemption and forgiveness. Obedience to His Gospel will change your life. Sometimes we get caught up in the wicked things that are around us. But from the depths of darkness you can be lifted to the heights of glory. If you will enter into the light of the kingdom of Christ.

Many seek to hide in the darkness, but the light of Christ is the only way to find peace. It is the only path to eternal life. Though God has provided the way, we must willingly submit to follow if we want life.



# The Valley of Dry Bones

## Matthew W. Bassford

We all know the song. In fact, many people who aren't religious know the song. It is easily the most familiar concept from the book of Ezekiel, even though I think most people don't know that the content of the song comes from the book. Stripped of its context and meaning, the core idea is still striking. Dem bones, dem bones gonna walk around!

In context, though, **Ezekiel 37** is profound. The valley of dry bones isn't merely a geographical curiosity. Instead, it represents the nation of God's people, which is D-E-A-D dead.

After all, Ezekiel, though a member of the priesthood, is writing from exile in Babylon, many hundreds of miles from Jerusalem. Jerusalem itself has been conquered by Babylon, along with all the rest of Judah. The temple has been burned; the people have been carried away captive.

Nor is this disaster the result of chance. Instead, it has occurred because God's people broke their covenant with Him and rebelled against Him. Through idolatry, oppression of the poor, and every kind of wickedness, they provoked the Lord into fighting against them rather than protecting them. As God warned in **Jeremiah 37:10**, even if the men of Judah had succeeded in badly wounding every Babylonian, the wounded men still would have risen up and burned the city. Truly, there is no strength and no understanding and no counsel against the Lord!

From here, the rest of the story would have been brutally obvious to everyone. There was no way for the Jews to defeat Babylon, no way to get out from under the boot of

the oppressor. The people were going to remain in exile indefinitely until they became indistinguishable from the nations around them. The great work that God had begun at Sinai had failed.

However, God has other ideas. As He restores life to the bones in Ezekiel's vision, so too He is going to restore life to the dead nation of Israel. Indeed, He does. Mere decades after Ezekiel writes, Babylon is conquered by the Medo-Persians, and the Persian king Cyrus allows the people to return. Against all odds, God's people continue dwelling in the land, and God's work continues until its culmination in Christ.

Today, American Christians like to wring their hands over the wickedness of the United States and its downward moral trajectory. Generation Z is the least religious generation that our country has seen since before the Second Great Awakening. Many of our own congregations increasingly resemble AARP chapter meetings.

We are doomed, I tell you! Doomed!

I am not worried, not about the future of the church, at least. We serve a God who can give life to a valley of dry bones. The devil has never been able to destroy His people or defeat His will, and he's not going to succeed this time either.

I don't know how this is going to play out. Maybe this nation will see a Third Great Awakening. Maybe the truth will be extinguished here but continue to shine in places like the Philippines and Mozambique. Maybe their descendants will send preachers to evangelize ours.

I don't know, but I am confident that God does. Don't lose sleep over the future. It belongs to Him.

## Contact Us

We want opportunities to speak with others about the Lord.

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## For Our Information

Ruben & Brenda Keisler have covid. Ruben is doing better.

Betty Ragsdale has a follow-up appointment later this week. She is doing better but still has stability problems.

Vickie McNees' granddaughter had her baby last Thursday.

Adene Gray wasn't feeling well this past week.

Sue Soliday was not feeling well this past week.

Bill Venable is traveling in the central west this week. He may return by the end of the week.

Merrill and Cyndi Berryhill are in New York this weekend.

The Simpson family is in Camden this weekend

Sunday Evening - **Daniel 5**. Wednesday Evening - **1Peter 2:11**.

Keep one another in your prayers each day.

We seek only to serve God according to His Will!

