

THE VISION IN THE VALLEY

EZEKIEL 37:1-4

Intro: In one of the most familiar visions of the Bible, Ezekiel is transported to a dark valley, the valley of the shadow of death. This valley is a scene of total devastation. It is filled with bones, lots of bones, bones that are very dry. Obviously this is no ordinary valley! But, this valley would have been of special significance to Ezekiel and the Israelites. If we jump to the middle of this vision we learn the meaning of these bones – they represent the current condition of Israel. Because of Israel’s idolatry, evilness, and bloodshed God’s wrath has been poured out on them. The Jewish people find themselves in Babylonian exile and they are convinced that all hope is lost – and based on the opening scene of this vision, a valley filled with “very dry” bones. Today, when we look at this vision, this prophecy, we have to be careful not to misinterpret its meaning. God makes it very clear what we are dealing with. In verse 11 God tells Ezekiel that the bones represent Israel and her current condition as exiles. God then makes it very clear that the revival of the bones represents the gathering of the Jews back to their homeland and their restoration. Ezekiel’s vision is not the only time God had explained His plan. The weeping prophet Jeremiah had warned the Jews that they were going to be punished for their wickedness by being carried away into captivity in Babylon. Jeremiah had also told them that eventually Babylon would fall and after 70 years of exile they would be allowed to return to their home. Now some of you are probably already asking, if this vision is about Israel around 600BC, almost 3,000 years ago, what does it have for me today? Good question! Now, let me ask you a question...have your bones ever felt dry? Have you ever felt like your situation was hopeless? Then, I believe that by looking at this vision will help you to see that with God there is always hope.

I. The pathetic condition v.1-2

Ezekiel is first sat down in the middle of a valley full of bones, then in verse two he is carried around the valley and given the overall view. In verse one, he says that he sees a lot of bones, after he gets the full view he writes in verse two that they are “very dry bones.” There is NO life to be found – the situation is totally hopeless. These are not corpses, these are very dry skeletal remains.

II. The prophet’s confidence v.3

“Lord, you know what you are doing.”

III. The promise conferred v.4-6

IV. The power conveyed v.7-14

Conc: As a man walking a tight rope over a river doesn't look down at the water, but fixes his eyes on the other side. The Christian, going through troublesome times of life, doesn't look at the trouble, but sets his eyes on God.