



## *Repentance Tabernacle Church*

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### **Restoration in the Valley!**

**Scripture:** Ezekiel 37:1-14

Restoration is defined by theology, the final recovery of all men from sin and alienation from God, to a state of happiness; universal salvation.

Like taking dilapidated pieces of real estate and beginning restoration, so God works on us. He can step in and patch things up that we have left unattended or ignored, like forgiveness and spiritual disciplines. He is frequently tugging at our hearts to maintain the condition of our souls. However, there are times we get ourselves in such a mess that we need a complete overhaul. The fixer upper process sometimes requires a complete demolition and reconstruction. Jesus said, *"Behold, I make all things new"* (Revelation 21:5). We are more than a fixer upper; God can make us brand new.

God told Ezekiel the dry bones represented Israel, a nation who felt they were without hope (Ezekiel 37:11). Invading armies and national captivity had crushed Israel's spirit. They believed they could not rise from the ruins. Solomon notes, *"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones"* (Proverbs 17:22). Few things are more depressing than a broken spirit. When the spirit is broken, hope dries up. For Israel, and even for Ezekiel, believing their situation would improve seemed like foolishness. This truly was a valley without hope.

It was God who brought Ezekiel to the valley in the first place. God did not attempt to sugarcoat the situation; He gave Ezekiel a full tour of the valley before asking, *"Can these bones live?"* (Ezekiel 37:3). Ezekiel had surveyed the skeletons and took note that *"lo, they were very dry"* (Ezekiel 37:2). Their condition caused Ezekiel to question. His voice undoubtedly was tinged with hesitation when he responded, *"O Lord GOD, thou knowest"* (Ezekiel 37:3). Ezekiel prophesied as he was commanded to the dry bone and the bones came together, but they were still dead. Then he prophesied unto the wind and the breath came upon them and they stood up and became a great army.

Every believer faces similar battles with doubts and questions. Sometimes things appear to be hopeless. Sometimes our feelings of doubt are so overwhelming that we can barely muster the faith to whisper, **"Lord God, thou knowest."**

So, will we obey God and speak His Word over our hopeless situations, or will we allow despair to silence our prayers? The thief desires to steal the faith from our hearts and God's Word from our lips, effectively annihilating any hope of restoration. But when we declare what God has said, all things become possible.

The dry bones also represent the people's spiritually dead condition. Just as God promised to restore His nation, He can restore us, no matter how dry or dead we might feel. Rather than give up, pray for renewal, for God can restore you. The hope and prayer of every Holy Ghost filled person should be that God will restore the backsliders and bring the unsaved to the knowledge of salvation.

Ezekiel's vision of a valley of dry bones still speaks to us today because we can relate to Israel's situation and their resulting emotions. Hopelessness. Despair. Shattered dreams. Despondency. They overwhelm us. Thankfully, the Savior does keep His promises. He says, *"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"* (John 10:10). Jesus promises to restore the hopes and dreams the thief has stolen. He promises abundant life through the power of His Holy Spirit.

We cannot quit. We must keep praying. We must continue speaking the promises of God. We must position ourselves in a place where we can hear God's Word proclaimed, because His Word restores. **The miracle is underway!**