



# Lesson 151

## Ezekiel and the Valley of Dry Bones

### Story Elements

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Text:</b> Ezekiel 37:1-14</li> <li>• <b>Setting:</b> circa 570 BC, in southern Babylon</li> <li>• <b>Main Characters:</b> God and Ezekiel</li> <li>• <b>Plot:</b> Ezekiel receives a prophetic vision of dried corpses brought to life.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Key word(s):</b> “can these bones _____?” (37:3)</li> <li>• <b>Climax:</b> <i>Ezekiel 37:7 ...as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.</i></li> </ul> |
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### Biographical Sketch

1. (1:1) Ezekiel was one of the 10,000 captives taken from Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 597 BC. (2 Ki. 24:11-18) He was 25 years old at the time; at age 30, he became a \_\_\_\_\_. As a priest, Ezekiel's 30th year would have been the year he began his priestly service, but instead of serving in the temple, he prophesied to Jewish captives.
2. Ezekiel lived with other captives in Tel-Abib, near the Chebar River (a major canal off the Euphrates) 50 miles southeast of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. One of the major themes of Ezekiel's book is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Israel. The vision of the valley of dry bones pictures new life given to God's people.

### The Vision

4. (37:1) Ezekiel said “*the hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the LORD*” indicating that what he experiences next was not real, but a prophetic \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (a) (37:1-2) Ezekiel saw a valley full of bones, and the bones were very dry, meaning, the bones were bleached white in the sun and were bare of any \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (b) (37:3) God asks Ezekiel, “*Son of man, can these bones live?*” to which the prophet responded, “*Thou knowest,*” meaning that, “*humanly speaking, they could not; but faith leaves the question of possibility to rest with God, with whom nothing is \_\_\_\_\_.*”<sup>1</sup> (De. 32:39)
  - (c) (37:4-6) God commands Ezekiel to prophesy upon the bones, or, proclaim God's quickening word to the bones, saying, “*Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; 'Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall \_\_\_\_\_; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.'*”
  - (d) (37:7-8) As Ezekiel prophesied, the bones came together to their respective places, and then sinew and muscle on top, followed by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - (e) (37:9-10) As the lifeless bodies stood before the prophet, one thing was needful: \_\_\_\_\_. So Ezekiel was commanded to prophesy to the wind, saying, “*Thus saith the Lord GOD; 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.'*” And as he

<sup>1</sup> Jamieson, Robert, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown. *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*. Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997. Print.

*prophesied, the wind blew upon the lifeless bodies, filling them with life, and they stood before the prophet "an exceeding great army."*

5. (37:11-13) The meaning of the vision is simple:
  - (a) The valley is emblematic of the places of \_\_\_\_\_ for the Jews.
  - (b) The bones represent the people cut off from the land and suffering under the \_\_\_\_\_ hand of God. (vv 11-13)
  
6. (37:14) The vision ends with a divine promise: "[I] shall put my \_\_\_\_\_ in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD."

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## Application

7. The vision refers to the restoration of the Jews to the Promised Land, but it also shows that, more than relocation, what the Hebrews needed was \_\_\_\_\_. The lifeless bodies were restored, but not revived. The Spirit of God is needed.

*Ezekiel 37:14 And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.*

8. The valley of dry bones also demonstrates the life-giving power of God's \_\_\_\_\_. Even when coming from the mouths of mere men, God's quickening word has power to make alive that which was dead.

*Psalm 119:25 My soul cleaveth unto the dust: Quicken thou me according to thy word.*

9. When Christ was resurrected, the graves of many were opened and the dead came to life and appeared to many in Jerusalem (Matt. 27:52-53). This was a partial fulfillment of the promise made in Eze. 37:14, and it emphasized that Israel's full restoration would be accomplished with the \_\_\_\_\_ of the resurrected Messiah.

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Answer Key:** Key word(s): "live" • 1. prophet • 2. Babylon • 3. Restoration • 4. vision a) soft tissue; b) impossible; c) live; d) skin; e) breath • 5. a) captivity; b) punishing • 6. spirit • 7. regeneration • 8. word • 9. Gospel

**How to use this worksheet for personal Bible study:** (1) Read the Bible passage given in the **Story Elements** section. (2) Read through the worksheet and try to fill in the blanks without looking at the **Answer Key**. (3) Check your answers with the key and make the necessary corrections. Keep in mind that some answers are a matter of opinion, and often more than one answer is correct. (4) Write down your own thoughts, applications, and questions for further study in the **Notes** section.