06

EZEKIEL 37:1-14

LIVING HOPE

THIS WEEK'S focus

Sometimes difficult or sad things happen to us and to the people we love. This is part of what it means to live in a world that is broken by sin. Everyone has different experiences, but all of us will walk through hard situations. It is okay to feel angry, sad, or frustrated when those things happen, but in the midst of it all, God wants us to always remember the living hope we have in Him. We will never be able to repair all the brokenness we see and experience. But we always have hope in God, who can restore those parts of our lives that feel broken. He can turn any hard thing into something used for our good and His glory. Not even death gets the final say, because God alone can bring life from death.

CENTRAL truth

God alone can bring life from death.

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE EZEKIEL 37:13

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING

What does this passage say?

What does this passage tell us about God?

What did this passage mean to its original audience?

How does this passage change the way I relate to people?

What does this passage tell us about man?

How does this passage prompt me to pray?

What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

EZEKIEL 37:1-3

DWELL

In a vision, God brought Ezekiel to a valley filled with human bones, bones that had been there a long time. The flesh on the bones was gone—probably picked clean by animals long ago. Could God turn bones back into a body full of life? Ezekiel may have felt doubtful, but he trusted God when he answered, "Only you know, God." In our own lives, we may think that certain situations are too bad for God to redeem and turn around for good. But even when all we see around us seems broken, God has already provided hope of restoration through Jesus.

↑ **Why do you think God asked Ezekiel if the bones could live again? Didn't He already know the answer?**

→ **Think about a situation in your life that is discouraging or even seems hopeless. How can you grow in faith that God is working in the midst of even that?**

MEMORIZE

Use a phone or computer to record yourself reading Ezekiel 37:13 aloud. Listen to this recording throughout the week.

PRAY

Pray that God would bring you peace and comfort when you feel doubtful about His power to bring healing and new life.

day 2

EZEKIEL 37:4-10

DWELL

God could have spoken a word and brought the bones back to life in an instant. Instead, He commanded Ezekiel to prophesy—to speak God's words—to the bones. Ezekiel did exactly as God had commanded him, and his obedience had immediate results: before Ezekiel was even done speaking, he heard the noise of the bones rattling back together. Muscles, tendons, and skin grew back around the bones, and after Ezekiel prophesied a second time, their breath returned to their bodies. The power at work was God's, but Ezekiel was the one who carried the message.

← **Ezekiel was used to prophesying to living people. Why did God command him to prophesy to dead, dry bones in this vision?**

→ **How have you seen God include you in His redemptive and life-giving work?**

MEMORIZE

Write Ezekiel 37:13 on a note card and place it in a folder or binder where you will see it frequently. Read it to yourself each time you see it this week.

PRAY

Pray that God would breathe His life-giving power into you as you follow Him.

day 3

EZEKIEL 37:11-14

DWELL

God didn't bring the dry bones back to life just to demonstrate how powerful He was—He did it to make a point to Ezekiel about the people he was prophesying to, and what God was prepared to do for them. Things may have been bleak, but their God had words of hope and restoration for them. The exiles were living far away from their home, forced out of Israel by their enemies. Hope seemed as far away as the hope of old bones being brought back to life. But God would lead them back and restore their nation to its former glory. We, too, can trust that God will work to restore the parts of us that have grown dry and lifeless, and breathe new life into them by His Spirit.

← **What did God mean by, "I am going to open up your graves" (v. 12)?**

↔ **Have you experienced the kind of spiritual life mentioned in verse 14? How does it influence the way you act and speak?**

MEMORIZE

Break Ezekiel 37:13 into 3–5 smaller parts and try to recite a different part to yourself from memory throughout each day.

PRAY

Thank God that all His promises are sure—when He speaks, we know He will act.

day 4

EPHESIANS 2:1-5

DWELL

Sin is a powerful force in the world—so powerful that without Jesus, we have no hope of escaping it. Sure, we may do our best to make good decisions that honor God, but we are also constantly surrounded by temptations to disobey His commands. Each of us will sometimes make the wrong choice. Even people like David, Moses, and Solomon strayed far from His word at times. This is what makes Jesus truly good news. We could never restore our relationship with God on our own, because we can never live up to His standard of perfect obedience. But Jesus, God's perfect Son, took the blame for all our disobedience so that we could be alive with Him instead of spiritually dead in sin.

What are the two different ways of living that these verses describe?

How could following Jesus change how you respond to temptation?

MEMORIZE

Draw Ezekiel 37:13 on a piece of paper using colored pencils or markers, using a different color for the most important words and phrases. Hang it in your room or locker.

PRAY

Thank God that through His Son, we have been brought from death into life.

day 5

JOHN 11:38-44

DWELL

Jesus had come to the place where Lazarus was buried. In verse 23, He told Martha that her brother would live again, but she misunderstood, assuming that Jesus meant the resurrection at the end of time (vv. 23-24). She didn't understand that Jesus intended to return Lazarus to life that very day. Even as Jesus told them to open the tomb, she protested. "Are you sure you want to do that? Don't you know how bad it's going to smell in there, Jesus?!" Sometimes we doubt that Jesus really has the power He claims. "Surely He can't fix *that* area of my life!" But there is no part of your life that is too far gone for Him to restore. Like Martha, all you need to do is obey and then believe that He will do the rest.

How did Mary respond when Jesus instructed them to open the tomb? What does this teach us about her?

How have you responded to Jesus with doubt instead of faith? How might you practice obedience instead?

MEMORIZE

Practice reciting Ezekiel 37:13 aloud from memory with a friend or family member. They can prompt you with the next word if you need help remembering.

PRAY

Thank God that He can restore even the parts of our lives that feel hopeless.