

“CAN THESE BONES LIVE? [Part 3]” (Ezekiel 37:1-14)

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REVIEW/INTRO: The dry bones represent the people of God who are dry, hopeless and disconnected (v. 11). These bones did live, stood upon their feet, an exceedingly great army (v. 10)! This morning we’re going to begin looking at the five phases the dry bones went through to become this great army (an apostolic and prophetic process – Eph. 2:19-20).

I. The Bones Coming Together – Becoming Rightly Connected (Ezek. 37:7).

- A. The bones supernaturally came together (v. 7), which solves the problem of disconnection (v. 11).
- B. God has a place for each one of us to be joined and rightly connected (1Cor. 12:18)!
- C. God’s people are called to belong to a community [army, body, church].
- D. Bones have no function apart from connection with other bones (Heb. 10:24-25)!
 - 1. In order for the bones to provide support and mobility, they must be properly assembled, not just gathered!
“Some assembly required!”
 - 2. Disconnected people aren’t part of an exceedingly great army and are vulnerable (1Pet. 5:8).
 - a. Zebra and hot coal illustrations.

II. The Sinews Coming Upon the Bones – Becoming Rightly Related (Ezek. 37:6a, 8a).

- A. Next, the sinews came upon the bones.
- B. Sinews are tendons or ligaments that connect muscle and bone, enabling them to work together, and can represent loving relationships in the church (Col. 3:14).
- C. We must be rightly related to others for the church/army to reach its full potential.
 - 1. You can’t be rightly related while being isolated or disconnected (Acts 2:42).
 - 2. Sinews are strong (empowering) and flexible (long-suffering) - characteristics of being rightly related.
- D. Being rightly related requires us to walk in love, peace and unity – the **“glue”** that binds us together (Eph. 4:1-3, 15-16; Rom. 12:18; Col. 3:14-15).

III. The Bones Being Covered with Flesh – Becoming Fully Functioning Ezek. 37:6b, 8b)

- A. Next, the flesh covered the bones.
- B. The flesh is not the skin but the muscle tissue (Jn. 6:55a KJV).
 - 1. Webster’s Dictionary defines flesh as – soft bodily tissue, esp. skeletal muscle.
- C. The purpose of the muscle is to empower the joined bones to function together.
 - 1. Without muscle, even connected bones have no function.
- D. The flesh covering the bones represents God’s people (the bones) fully functioning in the body of Christ – each one using their gifts to serve one another (Jn. 4:34; 1Pet. 4:10; Eph. 4:11-12, 16).
- E. Battles train us for war (Judges 3:1-2)!
- F. Don’t break rank (Gal. 6:9-10; 2Thess. 3:13; 1Cor. 15:58; 1Chron. 12:33, 38; Joel 2:7-11)!

CONCLUSION: To rise up and become part of an exceedingly great army - become rightly connected, become rightly related, and become fully functioning! Don’t break rank! Next Sunday we will look at the final two phases of becoming an exceedingly great army.