



SUNDAY SCHOOL JUNE 8, 2025

Prayer:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Old Testament2

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1-10 2

 The Valley of Dry Bones..... 2

 Overview 2

 Biblical Context..... 2

 Historical / Non-Biblical / Political Context 2

 Historical Timeline / Biblical Timeframe..... 3

 Scholarly Metaphorical Interpretation With Modern-Day Context 3

 Summary 3

Gospel.....4

John 14:8-17, 25-27 4

 The Promise of the Holy Spirit..... 4

 Overview 4

 Biblical Context..... 4

 Historical / Non-Biblical / Political Context 5

 Historical Timeline / Biblical Timeframe..... 5

 Scholarly Metaphorical Interpretation With Modern-Day Context 5

 Summary 5



Old Testament

Scripture: Ezekiel 37:1-10

THE VALLEY OF DRY BONES

The hand of the Lord came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry.

He said to me, “Mortal, can these bones live?”

I answered, “O Lord God, you know.”

Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus says the Lord God to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay sinews on you and will cause flesh to come upon you and cover you with skin and put breath in you, and you shall live, and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

So I prophesied as I had been commanded, and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them, but there was no breath in them.

Then he said to me, “Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”

I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

OVERVIEW

Ezekiel 37:1–10 presents the prophet Ezekiel’s vision of a valley full of dry bones that are miraculously reassembled and brought back to life. This symbolic vision emphasizes God's power to restore life, hope, and purpose to what appears lifeless and beyond redemption. The imagery speaks to both personal and communal renewal.

BIBLICAL CONTEXT

- **Book of Ezekiel:** Ezekiel was a priest and prophet who ministered to the Israelites during the Babylonian exile (early 6th century BCE). The book is divided into prophecies of judgment and restoration.
- **Chapter 37:** This chapter is part of a broader section (chapters 33–39) where Ezekiel delivers messages of **hope and restoration** after the judgment-oriented earlier chapters.
- **Specific Passage (vv. 1–10):** The vision of the valley of dry bones symbolically precedes God’s promise in verses 11–14, where it is clarified that the bones represent *the whole house of Israel*, exiled and despairing.

HISTORICAL / NON-BIBLICAL / POLITICAL CONTEXT

- **Exile in Babylon (c. 597–586 BCE):** The people of Judah were conquered and deported by Babylon. The destruction of Jerusalem (586 BCE) left the Israelites scattered, demoralized, and feeling cut off from God's promises.
- **Political Despair:** Without land, temple, or king, the exiles believed their national identity and covenant relationship with God had ended.
- **Prophetic Role:** Ezekiel, among the exiles, was tasked with delivering difficult truths but also offering hope of national revival, even under foreign domination.



HISTORICAL TIMELINE / BIBLICAL TIMEFRAME

- **597 BCE:** First wave of exile; Ezekiel taken to Babylon.
- **586 BCE:** Jerusalem and the First Temple destroyed.
- **Ezekiel 37 likely dates to around 585–570 BCE**, after the destruction of the Temple, when hope was at its lowest.

SCHOLARLY METAPHORICAL INTERPRETATION WITH MODERN-DAY CONTEXT

Scholarly Metaphorical Interpretation

Scholars often read this passage metaphorically as a vision of **collective restoration**, not literal resurrection:

- **Bones = Nation of Israel:** Symbol of utter despair, lifelessness, and disconnection.
- **Breath = Spirit/Wind/Life:** Divine force that revives what was dead; God's Spirit as the agent of transformation.
- **Progressive Restoration:** First bones reassemble, then the tough fiber, flesh, and finally breath—symbolizing *a step-by-step renewal* of the community.
- **Prophetic Voice:** Ezekiel prophesying to the bones represents the role of preaching truth and hope even when it seems useless.

Modern Day Contextualization

- **For Individuals:** Many people today experience "dry bone" seasons—feeling spiritually dead, emotionally exhausted, or disconnected. This passage affirms that *no situation is beyond God's ability to restore*.
- **For Communities:** Broken communities—plagued by violence, injustice, or despair—can be revived when truth, hope, and Spirit-infused leadership return.
- **For Churches:** Congregations that feel irrelevant or dying can find new life not by programmatic fixes alone, but through prayer, spiritual reawakening, and prophetic courage.
- **For Nations:** Societies facing cultural collapse, moral decay, or division may interpret this as a call to communal repentance and trust in divine renewal beyond political solutions.

SUMMARY

Ezekiel 37:1–10 is a vivid prophetic vision where God brings life back to a valley of dry bones, symbolizing Israel's hopeless state in exile. Through Ezekiel, God commands the bones to come together and receive breath—His Spirit—restoring them to life. This symbolizes that God can restore even the most lifeless and scattered situations. It's a powerful message of hope, rebirth, and transformation, calling both ancient Israel and modern audiences to trust in God's power to renew what seems beyond saving.

Completing Ezekiel's Message - 37:11–14

God tells Ezekiel that the bones represent the *whole house of Israel* — currently in exile, feeling cut off and hopeless. God promises to open their graves (a metaphor for exile), bring them back to the land of Israel, and restore them by putting His Spirit within them.

In this powerful conclusion, God explains that the dry bones represent the people of Israel in exile—feeling dead, abandoned, and without hope. But God promises to open their graves, return them to their land, and place His Spirit within them so that they may live. This isn't just a physical return to Israel, but a *spiritual resurrection*. God's restoration is complete: land, life, and Spirit. The passage ends with the assurance, *"I have spoken, and I will do it."*



Gospel

John 14:8-17, 25-27

THE PROMISE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied."

Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, but if you do not, then believe because of the works themselves. Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him because he abides with you, and he will be in you.

"I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

OVERVIEW

This passage is part of Jesus' Farewell Discourse (John 13–17), delivered to His disciples shortly before His arrest. In John 14:8–17 and 25–27, Jesus responds to Philip's request to see the Father and continues teaching about His divine nature, the coming of the Holy Spirit (the Advocate), and the peace that He leaves with His followers. These verses are rich in Trinitarian theology, comfort, and promise.

Trinitarian theology is a Christian doctrine that affirms that God exists as one being in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit. These three are co-equal, co-eternal, and equally divine. It's a central tenet of mainstream Christianity, differentiating it from other Abrahamic faiths.

BIBLICAL CONTEXT

- **Placement in Scripture:** Gospel of John, written to present Jesus as the Son of God and to inspire belief in Him (John 20:31).
- **Immediate Literary Context:** The disciples are anxious. Jesus has foretold His departure (John 13:33), and now He reassures them with the promise of continued presence through the Spirit.
- **Characters:**
 - **Jesus** – Revealing His unity with the Father and promising the Holy Spirit.
 - **Philip** – Asks to see the Father.
 - **The Advocate (Holy Spirit/Paraclete)** – Promised helper and teacher for the disciples after Jesus' departure.

Theological Themes:

- **Unity of the Trinity** – "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (v.9).



- **Indwelling Presence** – The Holy Spirit will be in the believers (v.17).
- **Divine Peace** – Not worldly, but Christ’s own peace (v.27).
- **Love and Obedience** – Love for Christ is shown through obedience (v.15).

HISTORICAL / NON-BIBLICAL / POLITICAL CONTEXT

- **Roman-occupied Judea:** The disciples were expecting a political Messiah to overthrow Roman rule. Jesus instead speaks of spiritual presence and inner peace.
- **Religious leadership tensions:** Jesus’ claims of unity with the Father would be considered blasphemous to many Jewish leaders, risking His life.
- **Greek philosophical influence:** In Hellenistic culture, ideas of divine immanence and soul/spirit would be familiar, but Jesus redefines these through personal, relational terms—**“He lives with you and will be in you.”**
- **Community of John’s Gospel:** Likely written around 90–100 CE, addressing a Christian community wrestling with the absence of Jesus’ physical presence and ongoing persecution from both Roman authorities and Jewish synagogues.

HISTORICAL TIMELINE / BIBLICAL TIMEFRAME

- **Setting of the events:** Around 30–33 CE, during the Last Supper in Jerusalem, just before Jesus’ crucifixion.
- **Date of Gospel Composition:** Likely 90–100 CE.
- **Post-Resurrection Context:** Jesus’ promises here are fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2), when the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples.

SCHOLARLY METAPHORICAL INTERPRETATION WITH MODERN-DAY CONTEXT

Metaphor: Jesus uses the metaphor of **presence without physical sight**—an unseen companion, helper, and teacher—to redefine divine nearness. He moves the disciples away from needing visible signs toward an **internal, relational faith**.

Modern-Day Parallel: In a world saturated with anxiety, loss, and confusion, Jesus’ promise of the Holy Spirit becomes deeply relevant. Just as the disciples were entering a time of uncertainty, today’s believers also face transitions, grief, and unanswered questions. The “Advocate” or “Comforter” is metaphorically understood as the **still, guiding voice of conscience, wisdom, and divine support** amidst chaos.

****Peace—not as the world gives—****invites modern readers to consider how Christian peace is not dependent on circumstances but on a **spiritual alignment with God’s enduring presence**. It’s a countercultural peace, rooted not in power or control but in trust and assurance.

Love and obedience are not merely commands but relationships of trust—today, that could look like faithful living in confusing times, or courageous kindness in divisive environments.

SUMMARY

In **John 14:8–17, 25–27**, Jesus reassures His disciples that although He is physically leaving them, they are not being abandoned. Philip’s request to see the Father prompts Jesus to reveal the deep unity between Himself and the Father: to see Jesus is to see God. Jesus then promises the coming of the Holy Spirit—the Advocate—who will teach, guide, and dwell within believers. He concludes by bestowing His peace, a peace unlike the world’s temporary calm, rooted instead in divine trust and spiritual presence. The passage comforts and challenges, urging love, obedience, and faith in God’s abiding closeness.