

Questions God Asks

Study 7 – Can These Bones Live?

Group Discussion. What symbolizes death for you? What symbolizes life?

Personal Reflection. When has God changed an apparently hopeless situation into a hopeful one for you?

1. What series of remarkable events took place in verses 1-2?
2. What might have been Ezekiel's impressions and reactions to what he was shown in verses 1-2?
3. When the Lord asked, "Son of man, can these bones live?" Ezekiel gave a rather indirect answer (v. 3). Why do you think he answered in that way?
4. The Lord gave Ezekiel a startling assignment in verses 4-6. What were the promised results?
5. Ezekiel obeyed the Lord and spoke to the bones and then to the breath. What happened in the two stages of his prophesying (vv. 7-10)?
6. What do you think the events of verses 7-10 looked and sounded like?
7. Read Ezekiel 37:11-14. How did the Lord interpret for Ezekiel what he had just seen?
8. Right then, how and why did Israel's situation seem as hopeless as a valley of dry bones?
9. The Lord quoted Israel's pessimistic view of the future (v. 11). How was Ezekiel instructed to inject hope into their pessimism (vv. 12-14)?
10. How did the Lord answer his own question ("Can these bones live?")? Not just that he answered yes, but how did he go about answering?
11. This Scripture's application to our own lives is tricky because we don't know for sure which situations we should see as hopeful (the Lord intends to breathe new life into them) and which are not in his purposes for us (either they're bad ideas or just not in his timing now). In any case, what personal connection do you feel with Ezekiel's experience?

12. In what areas do you need wisdom to know whether to hope for specific change or to back off from pushing for change?

13. What hopeful action will you take this week to place your hope in the Lord rather than in circumstances? Whether or not specific outcomes are in the Lord's plan for us, we can have hope in him and in his good purposes. Pray for an attitude of expectancy to be always on the lookout for God's good work in your life.

NOW OR LATER

Study John 5:16-30, in which Jesus says that a time is coming when the dead will hear his voice and will be raised to life, whether to eternal life or to condemnation, and that he has been given this authority by the Father.

Study Romans 8:18-27, in which Paul expresses the tension between ultimate hope and present suffering.