

FLOURISHING IN GRAD SCHOOL
WEEK 14: IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES

EZEKIEL 37: 1 - 14

¹ The hand of the LORD was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the LORD and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. ² He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. ³ He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said, "O Sovereign LORD, you alone know." ⁴ Then he said to me, "Prophesy to these bones and say to them, 'Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!' ⁵ This is what the Sovereign LORD says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life. ⁶ I will attach tendons to you and make flesh come upon you and cover you with skin; I will put breath in you, and you will come to life. Then you will know that I am the LORD.' "

⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I was prophesying, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone. ⁸ I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them. ⁹ Then he said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, son of man, and say to it, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe into these slain, that they may live.' "

¹⁰ So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet—a vast army. ¹¹ Then he said to me: "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope is gone; we are cut off.' ¹² Therefore prophesy and say to them: "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. ¹³ Then you, my people, will know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. ¹⁴ I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the LORD have spoken, and I have done it, declares the LORD."

Read the passage out loud together. Give everyone five or so minutes on their own to review it. Invite study members to note things that stand out and add a comment or question about it on their sheet.

Discussion Questions

According to verse 11, how is the community of Israel feeling about itself? What happens to a person (or a people) when hope is gone? How is the "valley of dry bones" an appropriate image of hopelessness? Have you ever felt like that as you look at your life or the world around you?

What is the prophecy given over the bones? What happens? How does it mirror Genesis 2:7? Why might the author want to direct attention to this?

Verse 9 describes the bones as not simply dead, but slain. In verse 10, they are formed into an army. Why is military imagery being used?

To what extent do you sense the hand of the Lord upon you? How confident are you that God brought you to this particular place at this particular time to complete a particular task? What does he have for you to do? To what extent are you in a valley of dry bones?

What is the message of hope that God wants to give his people?

God wants the people of Israel to understand that he is faithful and his promises will be fulfilled. What promises of God do you sense you need to trust more fully?

Would you describe your department as a valley of dry bones? Why or why not? Do you believe that God can give life to those around you? What inhibits a stronger conviction?

Are there other things from the passage you want to comment on or ask about?

Spend a few minutes filling in the table below. When you are finished, discuss these final questions together and then pray for one another and for this group. While God is ready to enliven the bones, he chooses to do so through the words and actions of Ezekiel. In what ways do you sense that God wants to use you to bring life to those around you?

<i>In what ways do you sense that God wants to use you to bring life to those around you?</i>	<i>How will you respond?</i>