



Sermon Discussion on Ezekiel 37:1-14 (7 Jan 2024)

Rather than having a specific study each week, we will try to use a fixed template. The aim is that we spend more time on application and sharing and less on understanding, as that happened on Sunday.

Preparation/Tips

- Make sure you listen to the sermon, are clear on the message, spend time in prayer for yourself and your group, and can share something for every question.
- It is usually good to send the questions to your group and ask them to think and pray through the questions beforehand (so they will have to catch up on the sermon too). However, with some groups this can take away from discussion.
- Maybe think of a relevant icebreaker that connects with the theme of the sermon.
- Try to spend at least 60% of your time on application (questions 3-4, 6-7). For question 2, don't spend too much time on questions about details that have little consequence for the meaning and application of the text.

Sermon Discussion Questions

- (*Understanding*) What was the sermon about this week? What was the Big Idea and what were the main points?
- (*Understanding*) Do you have any questions about the passage or things you didn't understand? Spend a short time trying to find an answer together.
- (*Application*) What part of the sermon was most impactful to you personally, and why?
- (*Application*) Where in the sermon/passage were you convicted of sin, or feel the need to repent?
- (*Application*) What from the sermon/passage do you want to rejoice in? How does it motivate you to respond?
- *What does this passage tell you about the world and God's love for the lost? How would it speak to those outside the church?*
- (*Application*) What is God calling you to do in the light of this message?



Ezekiel 37:1-14

This sermon from 7 January was our Vision sermon for the coming year, reminding us of what God is doing and how he wants us to live in the light of it.

In this famous vision God shows the prophet Ezekiel a valley full of dry bones. I.e. not just corpses but completely dried-out, long-dead bones. A tragic picture of utter hopelessness. And this is a picture of God's people (v11), in their hopelessness in exile in Babylon, after being sent out of the promised land for their sin.

But amazingly, in this vision God raises his people back to life, through his Word (v4-8) and his Spirit (v9-10). It seems to be greater than just returning to the land and has a spiritual dimension. This should be our vision of what God will do in 2024 - God is reviving people, bringing them from death to life, whether that is waking up those who are already in the church or saving those outside the church. Such amazing grace to sinful people under judgement - **we should be those that cherish the gospel.**

But the interesting thing is that Ezekiel is not just a passive observer like in his other visions. He is actually personally involved as God's agent in the reviving, and that teaches us what God wants us to be doing this year. We should be a community...

- **... of Word and Spirit.** The new life comes from the Word, as Ezekiel preaches (v4-5, "say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD..."). So we should be devoted to reading, hearing and speaking God's Word, and to the Spirit making it come alive. And hence:
- **... of prayer.** If we want the Spirit to come we should pray. This is what Ezekiel does - he is to "*prophesy to the breath/spirit (same word)... 'Come from the four winds, O breath...'*". Let's ask the Spirit to do a deep work in Watermark this year.
- **... that hates sin.** We love God's amazing grace here, but we shouldn't forget that the reason we were dead bones is sin, and we should hate sin and what it does.
- **... that loves those who don't know Christ.** God is bringing new life to the dead, and that includes those around us in HK who are without hope and without God. God loves them and so should we. And that should be love in action: speaking God's Word and prayer, just like Ezekiel does here.

Let's pray all these things for Watermark for 2024, that many dry bones might be revived this year!