# Ezekiel - Commentaries by Gordon Henry Hayhoe

Chicago Conference: 1971, Remedy for Dry Bones

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I'd like to look at a portion, brethren, in the 37th chapter of Ezekiel. 37th chapter of Ezekiel. The hand of the Lord was upon me and carried me out, and the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them roundabouts. And behold, there were very many in the open valley, and although they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, Oh Lord God, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live, and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up. Upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live, and ye shall know that I am the Lord. So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied there was a noise, and behold, a shaking. And the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld lo, the seniors in the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, prophecy unto that wind. Son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God, come from the four winds old breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet an exceeding great army. Then said He unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole House of Israel. Behold, they say, our bones are dried. And our hope is lost, we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophecy and say unto them. Thus saith the Lord God, Behold all my people, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord when I have opened her graves, O my people, and brought you up. Out of your graves, and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land. Then shall he know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it, saith the Lord. The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man. Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it for Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions. Then take another stick and write upon it for Joseph the stick of Ephraim, and for all the House of Israel his companions. And join them on to another into one stick, and they shall become one in thine hand. 20th Verse. And the sticks were on thou right, as shall be in mine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whether they be gone. And will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land. And I will make them one nation in the land from the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all, and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms anymore at all. Neither shall they defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with all their transgressions, but I will save them out of all their dwelling places wherein they have sinned and will cleanse them. So shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my king shall be king over them, and they shall all have. They also have one shepherd. And they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. 27th verse. My Tabernacle also shall be with them. Yeah, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I, the Lord, do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them forevermore. Well, I didn't intend, brethren to looking at this to speak of it in a prophetic way. I'm sure we're all aware of the fact that this tells us of the time when God will work with the nation of Israel and when He will bring them back into blessing and bless them in their land. What a wonderful day is ahead for that nation, that nation that.

Once guilty, crucified their Messiah, but he's going to fulfill all his promises. Goodness and grace to that nation. But I believe, brethren, that there's a moral lesson for us. In this and something that can be with profit to us even in this very day in which we live. Our brother was speaking to us in the young people's meeting. But how God began to work in a place that was waste and empty, and how he made everything beautiful from his own hand and pronounced it very good. Placed man at the head of it. But we know the 1St man failed. We know that death came in. And so in this chapter we have a scene of death. We see the sad results of sin. And not so much in connection with the world at large, but. Here we have among those who are the privileged people of God, because it tells us in this 11Th verse, These bones are the whole House of Israel. These were the ones who were specially privileged of God, says in the word, What advantage then hath the Jew? What prophet? Is there a circumcision? Much every way, chiefly because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. They were especially favored people. But Ezekiel had to prophecy in a very sad day of their history. The book of Ezekiel begins where the captives down by the river Chibar. Begins with a very sad state among those who were so beloved. Of the Father. And so here we find that Ezekiel is brought to this place where he is called upon to pass through this valley full of dry bones. Surely it was a dismal thing, wasn't it? Just think of having to go through a valley full of dry bones. Most discouraging. And doesn't that remind you? Of this world today, doesn't it remind us, too, of how? We, as the children of God, have utterly failed to be a testimony. To what we should be here in this earth. Why? How wonderful a fact that when the Lord Jesus went away. He appointed his own to be witnesses into the uttermost parts of the earth. But here we find a valley of dry bones, and it tells us that the people were saying our bones are dried, our hope is lost. And surely as we see the run of that that has come in through the failure of the Church, we might well look over and say. Our bones are dried, our hope is lost. Possibility of anything being cleared up. Is there any possibility of anything being straightened out in a day of such weakness and declension and failure? And so here was the position of the Prophet. He saw all the ruin, and as he looked upon those bones, was it possible to put them together? Much less was it possible to give life to these bones. Was it possible that these bones would live? Surely the idea of being able to put the bones together seemed impossible enough without the thought of giving life by those our brother was speaking about. The dinosaurs and those men who try and assemble these things take ever so long to try and take bone for bone and put them together and assemble them correctly. You know how many times there are difficulties, there are tangles and we might say. Who can ever straighten it out? Who can put things together, Who can make them as they should be? And so the Lord said to Ezekiel, son of man, and these bones live well. He didn't say, I don't know what can be done. Isn't it lovely and sweet? His answer? He said, Oh Lord, God, thou knowest, isn't that lovely? Oh Lord God, thou knowest instead of saying it's an impossibility. Nothing can be done. Who could ever take bones and put them together or give life to them? His answer was well I know that's impossible with man, but it's not impossible with God. God can do something that man can't do. That God could come into this scene of confusion with all these bones scattered at the graves mouth as we're told in the 42nd chapter, 42nd Psalm.

And he could put those bones together. And so the first thing that we noticed here is that he acknowledged that only the Lord knew the answer to this difficult and impossible problem. Oh Lord God, thou knowest, he said. Then the Lord said. Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones. Hear the word of the Lord. Here we have the importance of the Word of God. Not human wisdom here, but the word of God. Not the word of God. Could do in a situation like this. And he brings the word of God into this situation and how lovely it is to see the action of the word of God upon these dry bones. And perhaps there are those here and you say, well, there's so many difficulties. Our own little assembly has so many problems, although there was only somebody that could straighten these problems out of the Lord is the only one. And we rely upon His precious word, His word that is ever suited to every present need, every difficulty that may arise. And so He was told that prophecy upon these bones. And when he prophesied, it says those bones came together, bone to bone. Isn't this remarkable? Think of it. A valley full of dry bones. And to watch those bones coming together. No wonder he could look on and see with wonder and surprise what God was doing. This was God who was coming in and was setting right a situation where it just looked absolutely impossible. But he saw this. He witnessed it. Then he saw more. He saw a flash coming up upon these bones. And he saw this whole company stand up before him. Now it looked as if everything was straightened out. All the bones had come together. The people were standing there, but there was no life in them. There was no life in them. So shall I put it this way? It's not just a matter of setting things right. There has to be the action of divine life. There has to be the work of the Spirit of God. And this, I think, is most interesting to see. And perhaps we think all if this could just be straightened out, or if that difficulty could just be straightened out, or there may be some young people saying, well, if this could just be straightened out. In my life, even if all those things were straightened out, even if all the bones came together and everything was in the right place and everything was just as you think it should be. There they were, a lifeless group of people. All bone to bone, sinew upon them, flesh was upon them, but there was no life in them. There was no life in them. And brother, it isn't just a matter of having things set light. What I believe and what was on my heart is it's the action of the Spirit of God. It is the divine life operative of that really is the necessary and important. And saw here he was told to prophecy again. And he claws upon the wind, and the wind comes. And blows upon those slain, and now there is life in them. There is life, and isn't this blessed? All Brethren, everyone of us who are really saved in this room this afternoon possess a new life. We possess a new life. We have the life of Christ. It says when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. And as Paul writes in the second Corinthians chapter four, he says we have this treasure in earthen vessels that.

The life of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal bodies. God has put a treasure in the earthen vessel, and when self is put in the place of death, and that new life is seen by them, it's manifested, it displays itself. And so here He not only saw bone to bone, he not only saw a flash upon the sinew, but he saw an army with life. And this is what is necessary, brethren, are you and I. Acting in the power of that new life that God has given to us. In a trouble that came up many years ago among the Saints of God. One leading brother said. He said 5 minutes grace would have settled it. 5 minutes grace, the manifestation of the life of Jesus, would have settled the problem. But there wasn't the manifestation of the life, even though things were considered and as much as possible, bone to bone put in its place the life of Jesus. Was not manifested, all brethren, doesn't this speak to your heart and mind? How much are we displaying the life of Christ with our brethren? How much are we manifesting the life of Jesus in our mortal bodies? Each one of us have contributed to the failure. There was no bone to look at the other and say, well, I'm in a better position than you. Every one of them have been scattered and everyone had been brought together by the power of God. The life had been given. And here was this exceeding great army. And it's lovely to look into the faces of our brethren here and know that many we trust most in this room. Really. No, the Lord Jesus really possessed that divine life. But how often we act in the flesh. And the hindrance says, as it tells us in 2nd Corinthians 4, We which live are all we delivered unto death for Jesus sake. That the life also of Jesus. Might be made manifest in our mortal flesh, and again always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. That the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. What is the trouble all we have them put the sentence of death upon self. There's so much unjust pride in us. There's so much self willingness now that we find it hard to say I'm I'm sorry I shouldn't have said or done this and our poor hearts. Are so prone to display the old man that God has given us a new life. And as our brother remarked in the young people's In a certain sense God sets before us a perfect object. He sets before us the one who is perfect in all things. And he says, I have given you his life. You possess all the power. God giveth not his spirit. By measure, every believer has an equal supply of the Spirit of God. But are we manifesting it? What is the hindrance? Each one of us, we can look at the other person. We can say, well if that other person would only display the life of Jesus, but it says. And we which live are all we delivered unto death, always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. That's for myself. I need to put self in the place of death. There's enough flesh in me to spoil any meeting, any one of us. If we allow that horrible thing to act in us, it will display itself in the scene that will only make a valley of dry bones. That will only ruin everything. But all, isn't this lovely? All that the prophet did here was to bring the word of God in. And by the power of the Spirit of God, bone was brought to bone, life was given. And then how beautiful to see this discouraged group of people who were saying our bones are dried, our hope is lost, we are cut off from our parts. Well that. Everything is in Rule and there is no hope. Here are these people standing and exceeding great army. And then it says in the 12Th verse, therefore prophecy and saying to them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold all my people, isn't this lovely? All my people? He didn't disown them, He loved them, and it tells us having loved His own.

Which were in the world. He loved them under the end. We need to realize that they're dear to God. You know, my father made a comment to me many years ago. In connection with Elijah, it says that Elijah made intercession to God against Israel. And he said that's the only failure of an Old Testament St. recorded in the New Testament. God speaks of many Old Testament Saints in the New Testament, but he only records the failure of one, and the one was the man that thought he was better than his brother. What a sad thing He made intercession against Israel and brother and I say this, let's never make intercession against our brethren. They need our prayers. I need your prayers. But God would have us to realize that they're his people. All my people, he said. And he said I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, and the 14th version shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land, and you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it. Isn't this lovely? The Lord did it, and He tells us just what this meant, what it meant for Israel, and what it will mean for us. In our different assemblies, in our different problems. If there was that display that manifestation of the Spirit of God. And let each one of us apply this to our own hearts, if the Lord leaves us here to return. To our own assemblies, oh, wouldn't it be lovely if each one of us said, well, may the Lord give me grace to manifest the Spirit of Christ in any given situation that may arise. So this was what the Lord said. And then there's a second thing brought in in this chapter. And this is very interesting. 1St we see God bringing order and life out of this confusion, and then in the second part of the chapter we see that that which divided the people of God into two camps is repaired. It's settled, it's cleared up, and I think there's a beautiful moral order in this chapter. Oh, we say, if this thing could only be cleared up, but God, first of all, had to. To let us see the awful ruin, the bones, the valley of dry bones. That it was the word of the Lord, a new life and a manifestation of that new life. And then we have the prophet, and he has two sticks in his hand. On one is the stick of Judah, the other is the stick of Joseph, and the name is written on each stick. Oh, what a what a sad thing this was. God's people were divided. God's people were divided. And we know that animosity was very strong. When the Lord

Jesus was here and talked to that woman of Samaria. Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. She said, I belong to the stick of Ephraim. And she said, You were the stick of Judah. Oh, what a what a sad thing to see this. And you might say, well, I am on this side, and somebody else I'm on the other side. But here the prophet holds the two sticks, and now the Lord has put them together. Put them together. Isn't this beautiful? When the life was restored, there was number problem to the sticks getting together and they were made one in his hand they were made one. To know how simple it was it looked impossible begins with a scene of ruin, begins with that which looked absolutely impossible, and ends with the happiest time of blessing for the restored people of God. That we can think of for that nation of Israel. And the prophet just took them. And then the people said, well, what do you mean by this? What do you mean? And so he tells them, 18th person, when the children of Israel shall speak unto these, saying, Wilt thou not show us what thou meanest by these?

Say unto them Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, the tribe of Israel, his fellows, and will put them with him, even with a stick of Judah. And make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And so the people looked on and saw those sticks now just put together, but made one, made one. And it's not what God has done. And He made US1 He says in his Word, by 1 Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free. And if the. Jesus was manifested in every believer. What a testimony there would be to this world. That's the way it was in the early church. It says the multitude of the disciples were of one heart and one soul. They were all with one accord together, and they bore testimony unitedly. Why? Well, because the Spirit of God had his way. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost. They were. Manifesting the life of Jesus. And the people in Jerusalem, although they didn't want to be associated with such a testimony, they had to magnify them. They had to see that this was a real work of God. And so here we find that he tells them that this is going to take place in their history. God is going to bring them together. Now he goes on farther in the 21St verse, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whether they be gone. And we'll gather them on every side and bring them into their own land, and I will make them one nation in the land of Israel, and one king shall be king to them all, and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms anymore at all. Well, this is what is ahead for Israel. This is the glorious future that is had for the Church too. When is our little hymn expresses it thou shalt to wandering worlds display. That we with the are one all there's going to be a display. Just think when the Lord Jesus comes out of heaven with his bride and displays his bride to the world as one as though he would say it's long since you've ever seen a display like this. But here. The Saints come down, and it says, Ye shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them. Believe not inside to be admired in all them believe. What a future. Oh, can there be some measure of this? Now, brethren, I say, in the measure in which we keep self in the place of death, and that the Lord Jesus. Has his rightful place in Philippians chapter 3. The apostle is standing before us. The Lord is an object. Christ is the object before the soul. And so in this lovely chapter he says, And if in anything he be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. But that is, he longed to speak, our differences being dissolved by believers, making Christ and Christ only the object of their hearts. And so it says in the 23rd verse, Neither shall they defile themselves anymore with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with all any of their transgressions, but I will save them out of all their dwelling places wherein they have sinned and will cleanse them. So shall they be my people, and I will be their God. All we mourn as we see the coldness that comes in, and how the world gets hold of our hearts. How we find its effect upon us, as the Lord Jesus said, because iniquity shall abound. The love of many shall wax cold. Don't let any of us raise our heads and say, Well, I'm not affected by the spirit of the age. We are more than we think. It rubs off upon us. It has its effect upon us, brethren, young and old, and we become more than we realize, taken up with it. But what is the cure for it? Laying down laws. Laying down rules.

Oh no, when the Lord Jesus has his rightful place. When he's acknowledged a supreme when he's acknowledged as Lord of all, then how beautifully everything is cleared. We find that the stick is made one his hands. He find they find that the idols and be castable things. They're all set aside total purist of the idols brethren want to deliver us from this world. Our brothers said in the young people's meeting, the world is a waste and empty. Why do we want it? Why do we want it? Because we're not enjoying anything better. Because we're not enjoying anything better. Let any young person or older one in this room really get the enjoyment of Christ in your soul, and those things won't seem like anything. You'll wonder, you'll say, like Ephraim says in Hosea, what have I any more to do with idols? Why? Because in the absolute he condemned the idols. Well, partially, but because he had seen the one who was infinitely better than the hymn writer has put it like this. I have seen the face of Jesus. Tell me now of not beside. I have seen the face of Jesus, and my soul is satisfied. All brethren, may we apply these things to ourselves. We mourn. Almost the indifference, the warnings that have had to be given. We mourn these things and where is it going to begin? If there's going to be a change, it begins with me. It begins with us individually. When Israel were in a low state, it began with Jonathan and Jonathan said. The Lord can save by many or by few, and he and his armor bearer went out to meet a situation looked absolutely impossible. Paul, wouldn't it be lovely, each one of us this afternoon, daughter heads and our hearts in the Lord's presence and said to him a reason for all our difficulties and problems is that Christ has not had his rightful place in our lives. We haven't acknowledged him as the one king who is king over all, the one shepherd that his people are one. We have allowed other things to creep in because. Our hearts were empty and we were not enjoying the Lord like we should. And so the detestable things, the idols, the transgressions, the dwelling places that were places of sin and all this had come in. And why? Because. They were not walking as God's people should. And David, my servant, shall be king over them. And they all shall have one shepherd. They shall also walk in my judgments and observe my statutes. And do them. Why? Well, because God would put His laws into their hearts, and in their minds. He would write them, and their sins and iniquities. He would remember no more. Is there any passing over of sin here? Is there any looking lightly on sin? Not at all. But it's because there was something so much better that they could look upon these things as detestable things. And then who gets the greatest joy? Out of all this, brethren, who gets the greatest joy? We're inclined to be selfish and thankful what we're going to get out of it. But I want you to notice here were some verses I didn't read. I'll read from the 25th verse on. And they shall dwell in the land which I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your father's have dwelled. And they shall dwell, or in even they and their children, and their children's children forever. And my servant David shall be their Prince forever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them. It shall be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them and set my sanctuary in the midst of them forevermore. My Tabernacle also shall be with them. Yeah, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. I say, who gets the greatest joy in this?

The one who wants to bless. The heart that wants to bless. And whose heart is that? The heart of God, The heart of God, His is the heart that wants to bless. He looks down upon us. A little company gathered in this room this afternoon. And brethren, if we only knew how much He wanted to bless us. And what is the hindrance? The hindrances ourselves. Miserable self that we allow. And we defend that. We stand up for it. And if we just got before the Lord and sought to be before Him, asking him for grace to put it where he would have us put it, the life of Jesus would be seen and all the blessing that was in his heart would begin to flow. I know I'm not speaking as it were as an idealist. I'm not saying that we ever expect to see perfection down here, but I do. Say that God will never be satisfied until all his own are fully blessed, and he wants

us to enjoy more and more of it down here. He wants it to be our present portion. Brethren, the Lords coming is near his soon. He's soon going to come and take us to be with himself. May he grant that while we wait that day, there may be more. How this enjoyment of himself, this enjoyment of his love, this divine character manifested? And saw that is even the world looks on and it says the heathen would say that God was sanctified in the midst of his people and the world of the con and say, well, those people have something they're enjoying something that we're not enjoying. Oh, May God grant that we may see that he is still sufficient in 1971. For every situation that has arisen or will arise, if we'll look to him and count upon him. And manifest the life of Jesus in our mortal bodies.

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