

Raised Up From Our Graves

Promise: God's Word can raise and give new life to the dead

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Ezekiel 37:1-14; Ps 130; Romans 8:1-11; John 11:17-27, 38-53

(Fifth Sunday in Lent, 3/26/23)

And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. – v. 14

Lead In – Ezekiel's vision of the Valley of Dry Bones is a favorite of many. It inspired the spiritual, 'Dem Bones', written and composed by James and Rosamond Johnson and first performed in 1928. ... Although the immediate context of Ezekiel's vision is the restoration of Israel from Babylonian Captivity, the ultimate meaning of the vision is the realization of the New Jerusalem with a literal, general bodily resurrection of the dead with the redeemed inheriting the Kingdom...

I. All Three Lessons and Psalmody Have in Common

- A. The power of God's Word to call forth from death...
- B. Death of a people, depths of despair, law of sin & ...
- C. A resuscitation, sisters' joy, but what about Lazarus?

II. The Reluctance to Accept Gospel of Restoration

- A. Ezekiel had deflated the pride of the people...
- B. "Our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off..." v. 11
- C. The bones "were very dry!"... v. 2

III. The Composite of Both Body and Soul

- A. From the ground, grave, from the dust...
- B. But there was no breath in them... man's animation...
- C. We will be raised body and soul to life eternal...

Parting Shot – Ezekiel was given a magnificent vision, beyond almost anything previously revealed to our ancestors in the faith. All this pointed to Jesus, who in our Gospel Lesson says of Himself, "I am the Resurrection and the Life." Jesus on three occasions raised the dead to indicate an even more glorious resurrection of the dead to come. But then He did one better than that. He Himself went to the grave, and on the third day He rose triumphant, bodily. But I get ahead of myself, Easter is three weeks away...

1st Stanza: Toe bone connected to the foot bone / Foot bone connected to the heel bone / Heel bone connected to the ankle bone / Ankle bone connected to the leg bone / Leg bone connected to the knee bone / Knee bone connected to the thigh bone / ... / Hear the word of the Lord.

Ps 130:1, 7-8 Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord! ...⁷ O Israel, hope in the Lord! For with the Lord there is steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption. ⁸And he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities.

Ro 1:1-2 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ²For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.

Jn 11:43-44 [Jesus] cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out." ⁴⁴The man who had died came out, his hands and feet bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

Ez 36:16-19 The word of the Lord came to me: ¹⁷"Son of man, when the house of Israel lived in their own land, they defiled it by

Ezekiel 37:1-14 ESV

The Valley of Dry Bones

¹The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out in the Spirit of the Lord and set me down in the middle of the valley; it was full of bones. ²And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. ³And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord God, you know." ⁴Then he said to me, "Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord. ⁵Thus says the Lord God to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. ⁶And I will lay sinews upon 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."

⁷So I prophesied as I was commanded. And as I prophesied, there was a sound, and behold, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. ⁸And I looked, and behold, there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them. But there was no breath in them. ⁹Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath, Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live." ¹⁰So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army.

¹¹Then he said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. Behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are indeed cut off.' ¹²Therefore prophecy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I will open your graves and raise you from your graves, O my people. And I will bring you into the land of Israel. ¹³And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people. ¹⁴And I will put my Spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I am the Lord; I have spoken, and I will do it, declares the Lord."

their ways and their deeds. ... ¹⁸So I poured out my wrath upon them for the blood that they had shed in the land, for the idols with which they had defiled it. ¹⁹I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed through the countries. In accordance with their ways and their deeds I judged them.

Ge 2:7 Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Ge 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.