

A VAST ARMY OF GOD

Ezekiel 37:1-10

Key verse 37:10

“So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet – a vast army.”

We have come together for the mobilization of the next generation for global leadership. God has been working mightily in recent years through GLE Forum and Follow-Up programs, raising up next-generation missionaries and young students as self-motivated Bible teachers (SEBT), disciple-makers and global leaders. Through the GLEF program, we may experience in many ways the mission, vision and role of Christian leaders, including UBF shepherds and Bible teachers, for the spiritual revival work in this generation.

Ezekiel was one of the Jews who was carried away to Babylonian captivity. There he was called as a prophet. One day he heard the news of the final fall and destruction of Jerusalem. Now the Jews finally lost all hope and became completely desperate. Ezekiel also lived only desperately and adapted to the situation. He confessed, "We are finished." When he lost God's hope and vision for His people, he became a spiritually dead man like dry bones. How did God help Ezekiel?

1. God helped Ezekiel to take hold of faith and hope that even the dead bones would come back to life.

Let's read verse 3: "He asked me, 'Son of man, can these bones live?' I said, 'Sovereign Lord, you alone know.'" Ezekiel was in a completely hopeless desperate time and situation where he could not find any hope and perspective at all. But God helped him to grasp God's hope and see the fulfillment of His plan for the restoration of His people through faith. Therefore, he asked him, "Son of man, can these bones live?" It was a question about Ezekiel's hope and faith in God. Ezekiel's answer was amazing: "Sovereign Lord, you alone know." According to our human way of thinking, it is simply impossible for the dead to come back to life. But Ezekiel replied, "You are the Creator God, with You all things are possible according to Your counsel." When Ezekiel looked up to the living God, he was able to grasp faith and hope. The human way of thinking is rational, reasonable, but in the end hopeless. Thus, many, confronted with the adverse situation and bad

conditions, end up in hopelessness. But Ezekiel's mindset was different: "All things are possible to him who believes!"

Daniel was taken to Babylon as a teenager and found himself in a life-threatening environment. But he made a decision out of faith not to defile himself with the royal food, but to live according to his spiritual identity as a holy stump for the redemptive work of God. Then God gave him a surpassing spirit that he could not only overcome all dangers but also plant the hope of God in his people. This shows that regardless of age and situation, we may take hold of God's hope.

After World War 2, Germany was in ruins. All the cities had been destroyed by bombs. Most men had died or were in captivity. But the women did not sink into hopelessness; they worked diligently to clear the rubble. They were able to do this because they had faith and hope. Through these so called "Trümmerfrauen" (rubble women) who worked diligently with their hands, Germany was finally rebuilt. In the current situation, people have many worries. But we may take hold of God's hope and proclaim the gospel of Jesus as the true hope by raising up spiritual leaders for the revival work. God bless our brothers and sisters in Ukraine in the midst of the painful situation to take hold of God's hope for their country and being used as a royal priesthood.

When I was a bloody freshman, M. Peter saw me with God's vision and accompanied me with Luke 5:10b that these dead selfish bones would come alive and be used as a fisher of men from now on. Dr. Samuel Lee did not see the Korean students as withered useless bones from the 3rd world, but gave them the vision through God's word Mark 6:37 and 1 Peter 2:9 that they could go out into all the world with the giving spirit and be used as a kingdom of priests for the whole world. GLEF program was carried out with the vision of God to raise up the next generation as global spiritual leaders for world mission and through them to conquer the world.

Here we can see what our role and mission as UBF shepherds and Bible teachers is, namely to mobilize young people with God's hope to be used as God's people and spiritual leaders for the work of spiritual revival. We are very confident to serve this work through the GLEF program because our God Himself, with His marvelous counsel, is fulfilling this mission and making the dead bones alive through His Spirit.

2. Ezekiel's obedience to prophesy God's word

Let's read verses 4 und 5: "Then he said to me, 'Prophesy to these bones and say to them, "Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.'" Ezekiel was supposed to prophesy God's word. God's will and God's promise for His people is to give them His

breath and make them alive again. We call this a spiritual revival. Dead bones have no hope in themselves. But God's Spirit has power to make them alive again when they hear the word of the Lord. God wanted to restore all the basic functionality of the dead bones that had been lost. They were to regain tendons, flesh and skin, and the breath of God would make them fully alive. Thus, through this miraculous work of God, they would come to know that God is the Lord (6), namely the almighty sovereign Creator God.

Let us read verses 7 and 8: "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. I looked, and tendons and flesh appeared on them and skin covered them, but there was no breath in them." Everything happened just as God had said it would. Tendons grew and restored the connections between the bones. Flesh and muscles allowed the bones to move again. And when they were covered with skin, it gave them a beautiful, human appearance. But something important was still missing, and that was the breath of God. Once again Ezekiel was to prophesy, this time to the breath (9). To prophesy to the breath means prayer.

Here we learn about the life-giving power that comes from the Word of God. Dowson Trotman was just a laborer in a lumberyard. But he helped many sailors study the Word of God in the Bible and follow Jesus one by one. As he shared the Word of God on a daily basis, God worked mightily through it. Many followed his example by passing on God's word through one-to-one Bible study.

One young man was making strange noises like the withered bones. But a servant of God helped him write a 20-page thesis on Hebrews 5:8,9. Then he heard God's word, repented of his rebellion, and learned the obedience of faith from Jesus. He not only became a best student, but also lives by the obedience of faith by serving the work of God devotedly despite the challenging study.

When a young man personally accepted Hebrews 4:11, the spiritual desire came alive in him to make every effort to enter the rest of God. His dead bones began to move every morning, so he stood on his feet and comes to the Daily Bread. Every Wednesday at the Bible Seminar, he shares his testimony with great joy. It is also very encouraging that a young woman who was very introverted recognized and testified to the value of living together.

Our God works through intensive Bible study. Let us hear and accept the Word of God personally at this forum so that our dry bones may become fully alive, we may fight victoriously as Christ's warriors for this generation. Let us preach God's word through one-on-one Bible study to the young people that they will be spiritually awakened to be used as Bible teachers for the revival work.

3. God's Spirit makes the dead bones alive

Let's look at verse 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." When Ezekiel boldly prophesied through the obedience of faith, as God had commanded him, the breath came into them and the formerly dead and completely withered bones became fully alive. They no longer lay motionless and dead, but stood on their feet. They were now fighting as an "exceedingly great army" of God for the fulfillment of God's redemptive work because they had received the power of the Holy Spirit and obeyed God's direction for the world mission.

At their baptism 2 years ago, five young people heard 1 Peter 4:13: "But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed." They learned 8 lessons on baptism and made a decision for Jesus to joyfully cooperate for the work of God. Now God uses them to make the young people in this generation spiritually alive.

I often tried to understand and accept the helpless situation of people, but I remained spiritually paralyzed and could not help them to be awakened and mobilized as disciples of Jesus. With this humanistic attitude, I could not advance a single inch. God wants me to prophesy the Word of God, no matter what the cost, just like Dr. Paul Chung. Through one-on-one Bible study and through life fellowship, I may prophesy God's word to Lucas, to Sarah, to Ezra, that they may take hold of God's hope as influential Bible teachers and learn obedience of faith. Last week, God raised Peter Joseph as a preacher because He has a great hope for him to be used as a rock of faith and great salvation. We have also seen God's hope for our Josiah team, who have been studying God's Word from the five books of Moses intensively during their vacation time, and are growing into excellent Bible teachers.

God helped one person Ezekiel to be revived with the hope of God and prophesy the word of God through the obedience of faith. God saw through the revival of this one person that all His people would come alive and be restored as God's army. Raising one person is the same as raising a whole people.

In the 19th century, God awakened one person Hudson Taylor, who received God's heart and vision for the millions of people in China. He did not remain as an English gentleman, but dressed like the Chinese, wore a Chinese braid and brought the good news of Jesus to the interior of China. Through this one person the foundation for the ever-growing church in China was laid.

GLEF 2022 is the expression of God's hope for each of us to look up to Jesus and fight the good spiritual battle of faith. He sees us as an exceedingly great army of God through which Europe, America, Russia and Turkey will be spiritually awakened. He sees that each one of us has already formed 10,000 Bible study teams and raised up and sent out 100,000 missionaries for the world mission.

Let's read lead verse 10 again together, "So I prophesied as he commanded me, and breath entered them; they came to life and stood up on their feet – a vast army." Like Ezekiel, let us take hold of God's hope and the obedience of faith, and prophesy the Word of God to young people that they become spiritually alive, standing on their feet as a great army of spiritual leaders. God use GLEF 2022 to raise up many Ezekiels among the Next Generation, that they may again form a great army of God for the World Mission, namely for the spiritual revival in Europe, in America, in Russia, all the way to the M-world.