

Ezekiel 37:1-14(2)

1. The Fulfillment of Jesus Christ

Continuing from last week, we will look at the word of God about the restoration that has taken place within us through Ezekiel 37:1-14. God promised to recreate His people like dry bones that had been spiritually dead for a long time, anew only through His word and the Holy Spirit. After He gave them sinews and flesh and covered them with skin according to His Word, He promised to breathe life, the Holy Spirit, into them like the wind from all directions, so that they would become the living army of God and enter the land of the covenant inheritance where God dwells.

And to fulfill this promise, the Son of God, the Word, became a man at the appointed time. Jesus Christ came to seek us, hopeless sinners, to recreate His people anew in His image, and to allow us to enter His eternal kingdom, heaven. Today, we will look in more detail at how Jesus fulfilled the new creation of salvation promised in today's text in our lives, but before that, we must first listen again to what God says about the spiritual state of all sinners.

Ephesians 2:1-3, "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— 3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind."

We were spiritually dead because of our trespasses and sins. We followed the course of this world and Satan instead of God and His Word; we lived only according to the lusts of our flesh; and we were by nature the objects of God's wrath. The dry bones that Ezekiel was shown in today's text were the reality of you and me. We were hopeless, totally depraved sinners, incapable of doing good deeds that God would be pleased with. Therefore we were sinners who deserved to be cut off from God, the source of life, and were destined to live under death and eternal judgment. Moreover, no matter how splendid the world we live in may seem, it is like a graveyard for spiritually dead sinners under the judgment of God's wrath. No matter how splendidly we decorate the grave, there are only rotten bones inside. Do you recognize this? We were also such sinners.

We were rebellious sinners before God and lived as His enemies, so God should have left us in our sins and let us receive the judgment of death and infinite wrath. We should have been destroyed. However, God has mercy on us sinners and wants us to live. He sent His only Son to save you and me from death by His grace and power alone. In this valley of death, in this hopeless world like a spiritual grave full of sinful chaos, emptiness, darkness, and dry bones, the Holy Spirit, the source of life and the Word, comes. Jesus comes to restore His people to new life according to the promise in Ezekiel. And Jesus said this:

John 3:5-8, "Jesus answered, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.'"

In this passage, Jesus declares that the time has come for the restoration of God's people promised in Ezekiel 36 and 37. First, in Ezekiel 36, God promised that He would renew His people with water and the Spirit, and He declares that the time has come for that promise to be fulfilled. You must be born again of water and the Spirit to enter the kingdom of God, and that time has now come. Then, in Ezekiel 37, Jesus promised that God would pour out His life and His Spirit as if the wind were blowing from all directions, and Jesus also declared that the time has come for that promise to be fulfilled. After Jesus spoke of being

born again of water and the Spirit, He says that just as the wind blows wherever it wishes, so it is with those who are born of the Spirit. Here, too, the word “wind” is translated as breath, life, and Holy Spirit. Jesus declares that the time has come for Him to pour out His life, His Spirit, as if the wind were blowing from all directions, and raise His people with eternal life.

The time has finally come for the words of Ezekiel 36 and 37 to be fulfilled. Jesus showed us through many miracles that He had come to restore His people from death to life. He raised the dead daughter of Jairus, the dead son of the widow of Nain, and brought Lazarus back from the grave after he had been dead for four days. However, these miracles were not yet the true restoration to eternal life. Even if they had been raised from the dead, they would have had to die again. All these miracles pointed to the complete salvation that would restore His people to eternal life, where they would never die again. How was that salvation accomplished? Through the death on the cross and resurrection of Jesus.

2. The Death and Resurrection of Jesus

Jesus Christ, the Holy Son of God who is without sin and can never taste death and judgment, goes to the valley of death filled with dry bones. And just like one of us sinners, who is dead there, he receives the judgment of God’s covenant curse, is cut off from God, is destroyed, and is killed. In Luke 23:33, Jesus goes to Golgotha Hill carrying the cross. What does Golgotha mean? It means a skull. He goes to the valley of skulls, is crucified, suffers a cursed death, is cut off from God, and is buried in the grave. Jesus becomes like us sinners who are like dry bones who are dead in our transgressions and sins. Why did the Holy Son of God, who is without sin, have to undergo this death and judgment?

It is said in Isaiah 53, which we are familiar with. “But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” Jesus took our transgressions and sins and went to the cross. Jesus was pierced so that our transgressions could be covered, and our sins could be forgiven so that we, who were dead in sin and transgression, could be saved from death and gain life again. Jesus, who is life, went to our death, and we, who were dead, came to Jesus’ life. But it did not end there.

In today’s text, the dry bones did not remain in the valley of death like the grave, but rose again and came out of the grave and entered the land where God dwells, and what it pointed to was also fulfilled in our Jesus. Jesus also did not remain in death and the grave, but rose again and came out of the grave. He was resurrected by the power of the Holy Spirit. He did not simply die and come back to life, but he lived again with the eternal life of heaven.

Ezekiel 37:12-13, “Therefore prophesy, 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. 13 And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and raise you from your graves, O my people.”

John 20:1, “Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.”

According to the promise in Ezekiel, God opens Jesus’ tomb and brings Him out. Jesus, who rose from the dead with resurrection life, comes out of the tomb and ascends to heaven. At that time, even we sinners, who were like dry bones, had sinews, flesh, and skin, and we were born again with the same resurrection life as Jesus and entered heaven. In other words, through Jesus’ death and resurrection, we

were recreated from death to eternal life. The Apostle Paul speaks of this grace of salvation that we have received as follows:

Ephesians 2:4-6, "But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— 6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"

Paul says that because of God's great mercy and love, He made us sinners who died in our sins and trespasses live again in Jesus, and He also raised us with Jesus and made us sit together in heaven, on the heavenly throne with Jesus. What happened to Jesus also happened to us. Jesus was our covenant representative, and we were completely united with Jesus so that everything Jesus accomplished became ours.

Colossians 2:12, "having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead."

The reality that our baptism signifies and seals is also in union with Jesus. It is dying with Jesus and rising again with him. We were raised from the dead. Who is the one who has made us completely united with Jesus? It is the Holy Spirit who was poured on us as our breath, life, and wind. We are completely united with Jesus by receiving the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, participating in Jesus' death and resurrection, and living again with eternal life in heaven. This is the salvation we have received and the reality of the new creation. Jesus accomplished all of this new creation of salvation, and so it is entirely the grace of Jesus. That is why, when we look at the Gospel, the first thing Jesus did when he came to his disciples after dying on the cross and rising again was to pour out the Holy Spirit.

John 20:22, "And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."

After Jesus accomplished the new creation of salvation through his death and resurrection, he met his disciples and breathed on them, telling them to receive the Holy Spirit. In today's text, just as God breathed life into the people he recreated, Jesus also pours the Holy Spirit into the disciples he saved. First of all, he pours the Holy Spirit to unite them with Jesus and to enjoy all that Jesus accomplished by grace alone. Then, he sends the disciples and gives them the mission of spreading the gospel of forgiveness of sins that the Lord has given them. Just as he established the people he brought back to life in today's text as God's army, he also established the disciples as Christ's army to fulfill the mission he had given them. Therefore, when God tells us the reality of our salvation in today's text, we need to pay attention again to the fact that he restored all of God's people and established them as Christ's great army. Here, he tells us that there is a mission given to the saints he has saved until we enter the eternal kingdom where God is.

If we look back at the previous Exodus event, the Israelites who were saved from slavery in Egypt were called God's church and lived as God's people worshiping Him until they entered the land of Canaan, but they also had to live as God's army and fulfill the mission given by God. During their journey through the wilderness, before reaching the land of Canaan, they met numerous enemies and had to fight wars as God's army. And when they entered the land of Canaan, God made them fight a war of destruction as God's army. In other words, through a war that executed God's judgment, they defeated the enemies, conquered the land of Canaan, established God's kingdom, and lived together with God. Now, in the Book of Ezekiel, God promised that after 70 years of Babylonian captivity, God would restore God's people, establish them as God's army, return to the land of Israel, conquer the land again, and establish God's kingdom, and He would fulfill that promise.

What these events pointed to was also fulfilled by the coming of Jesus. Jesus also came to this earth as God's army and as the commander of the army. He came to conquer Satan, to save God's people who were servants of Satan, to call them to the kingdom of God, and to establish Christ's church to the ends of the earth. And Jesus fought this battle as a loyal soldier of God until his death and won. And now, until the day we, the saints whom He has saved, enter heaven, He calls us soldiers of Jesus while we live on this earth, and He calls us Jesus' army to fight a war of conquest to defeat the evil enemy and establish the kingdom of God. Now, He lets us do it with the gospel, just as Jesus did. The church on this earth can be said to be God's army, where God's soldiers gather, and it must testify to the gospel and fulfill the mission given by Christ until the day we enter heaven, until the day Jesus comes again.

2 Timothy 2:3-4, "Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him."

2 Timothy 4:7-8, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing."

Acts 1:8, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Here is our calling as Christians. Now we too have been resurrected to eternal life in Jesus and have been established as soldiers of Christ, or soldiers like Christ. He has made us fight to fulfill the mission He has given us until the day we enter heaven. Above all, He has told us to hold on to the gospel of the cross and fight the good fight of faith until death. We must persevere in the hope of heaven until the end and keep faith, worship, and fellowship with Jesus and the saints, and then enter heaven where Jesus is. And He has made us become an army of Christ with the saved saints, and now we do not fight with spears and swords, but with the Holy Spirit and the Word of the gospel, executing God's judgment and fighting a war of conquest, and calling the saints He has saved among the sinners to establish the kingdom of God.

Now, just like Jesus, we preach the pure gospel and save God's chosen people who are living in sin as captives of Satan, from the hands of Satan, according to the power and grace of the Holy Spirit, and establish the kingdom of God, that is, the church. Here, Jesus, our commander-in-chief, promised to be with us until the end of the world. Therefore, in the Book of Acts, the church is established with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and the mission of being a witness of Jesus is given, and the church continues to preach the gospel to the ends of the earth and establish the church.

This is the war that the soldiers of Christ must fight with the gospel. Jesus also fought this war until he shed blood and died on this earth, and he won and reached the glory of heaven. Therefore, we participate in Jesus' war and victory, become the army of Christ, preach the gospel, call God's people, establish the church and the church establish another church to continue to establish the kingdom of God to the ends of the earth. This is our mission as soldiers of Christ and as the army of Christ. We must live fulfilling this mission until the Lord comes again. Please do not forget this call.

Just as God recreated the dry bones through the prophet Ezekiel in today's text, He now allows us to participate in the ministry of the new creation that Jesus has accomplished. God also tells us to speak His Word. Although all sinners living in this world are spiritually dead like dry bones and have no hope, God will recreate His people from the dead and let them hear the gospel and restore them through the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our calling is to preach the gospel as it is until the end. The ministry of the new creation is accomplished by the Holy Spirit through that Word. Therefore, we must believe in the sovereign power and grace of the Holy Spirit and boldly and faithfully preach only the gospel. In this way,

we must gather the saved people and establish the Lord's church. Until when? The Book of Revelation says this.

Revelation 11:10-12, "and those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them and make merry and exchange presents, because these two prophets had been a torment to those who dwell on the earth. 11 But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood up on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them. 12 Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And they went up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies watched them."

The two prophets represent the church of Jesus and the saints as His army. They preach the gospel and eventually perish and die in the world, so we must preach the gospel and build the church of the Lord until we perish and die. After that, God will give us life, make us live again in three days, and call us to heaven. In heaven, we will enjoy eternal rest in the arms of the Lord. In other words, our calling is to follow the path that Jesus walked until the end. The Bible tells us that we participate in the death and resurrection of Jesus and preach only the Word correctly until the end, build the church, and fulfill the mission given to us. All of these missions are given to those who are alive again. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." The Apostle Paul also says,

Romans 8:11, "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you."

Dear saints, as those who are alive again in Jesus and as those who will live again, I hope that you will overcome the fear of this world and death and live joyfully as soldiers of Jesus and as His army, fulfilling the mission the Lord has given you.