

# **Faith Walk! - Sermon Discussion**

**Date** : 14 February 2021

**Sermon Title** : Nothing into Something

**Speaker** : Rev Reuben Ng

**Text** : Ezekiel 37:1-14

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The prophet Ezekiel found himself in a very discouraging circumstance as the Judahites from the Southern Kingdom of Judah turned away from God. They had continued to sin despite his constant call for them to repent. As the consequence of sin is death, God's judgment came upon them and they lost their nation, their king, Jerusalem and even the Temple. They were in a dead and hopeless situation with nothing left for them.

### **A. The valley of dry bones (Ezekiel 37:1-3)**

The Spirit of the Lord set Ezekiel in the middle of a valley full of very dry bones which depicts the situation the Judahites were in. The bones had been there for a long time and there was no moisture, hope or life in them.

- Here, God asked Ezekiel if these bones can come to life. (v.3)
- Ezekiel's response to God shows that he recognised that only God knows the answer to that question because God could do anything if it was His will. (v.3)

Nothing is impossible with God because He is all powerful; He can do anything if He chooses to.

### **B. God's will (Ezekiel 37:4-6)**

God then instructs Ezekiel to prophesy, preach, and speak to the dry bones according to His word. (v.4)

- If Ezekiel truly wants to know God's will, Ezekiel would need to trust in God's will, place his faith in God's will and then put his faith into action by aligning his actions with God's will.
- Since God has revealed His will to Ezekiel, Ezekiel has to align to God's will - to prophesy, preach and speak to the situation, according to His word.
- By God's goodness and mercy, He will:
  - make breath enter the bones so they will come to life.
  - attach tendons to them
  - make flesh come upon them
  - cover them with skin

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*For we walk by faith, not by sight. 2 Corinthians 5:7*

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- In these verses, “I will” reveals clearly God’s will. “Breath” appearing twice with the others “bones, tendons, flesh and skin” appearing once may reveal that while as humans, our concerns are always for the physical; what we can see and touch as we live in the physical world, God’s emphasis and priority is on this invisible “breath” rather than the visible.

God promises that He will bring death to life, hopelessness into hope and nothing into something!

## **C. Ezekiel puts his faith into action (Ezekiel 37:7-8)**

As Ezekiel prophesied and spoke to the bones, the bones come to life; bone to bone, followed by tendons, flesh and skin.

- It would have been easy for God who created the heavens and the earth to restore the bones to life all at once but God has His own timing.

If we truly want to trust in God we must trust in God’s timing. We need to recognize that transformation need not happen overnight and that God’s timing is always perfect.

## **D. God’s blessings for His people (Ezekiel 37:9-14)**

Even though the visible bones, tendons, flesh and skin had been restored, Ezekiel comments that there is no breath in them. The material is fixed but the immaterial is missing, the visible is done but not the invisible, the physical is done but it is still incomplete because the spiritual is still lacking. Hence God instructs Ezekiel to prophesy and speak breath so that the bones may come to life.

- Even though God wants to bless us materially, the greatest blessing is that we can know Him and have an intimate relationship with Him - the immaterial, invisible, and spiritual; that we may call Him, “Abba Father”.
- Though the situation is hopeless as the bones, God will bring nothing into something, not only in the physical for them to return to their land but for the restoration of their relationship with God, and He will give them His Spirit

What God has spoken He will do so that they will know that He has done as He has spoken.

## **Implications for today:**

### **1. God brings hope**

God has the same message for us if we are facing a hopeless situation today. God’s will is for us to have life abundant regardless of our sin and the consequences we may be facing due to it. God can and will do something about the hopeless, dead and nothing situations in our lives. Our role is to trust in His timing and believe in

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Him; to speak, preach and prophesy to the situation according to His word and allow Him to turn it around and make something out of that nothing. When that happens, we will know that He is our God and we will not be able to stop praising Him.

## **2. Be prepared for future challenges**

If we are not facing such a dead or hopeless situation at this moment, do not wait for the test to come before we scramble around for the answers. When we are faced with a test in life, what determines the result is whether we are prepared for it. We can now be prepared for such challenges when they come in the future, so we will know how to respond as a child of God in faith; to trust God in such dead and hopeless situations.

## **CONCLUSION**

God is sovereign and is able and willing to bring situations that are dead to life, hopelessness into hope and nothing into something. Let us continue to trust in His will and perfect timing by putting our faith into action so beyond physical blessings, we may receive His greatest blessing for us - an intimate relationship with Him, our Abba Father!

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As a group, spend some time to share your success and struggle in fulfilling what you/your group had committed to do at the previous meeting.

## **A. Review Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Reflect on one key takeaway.***

Appoint someone to read Ezekiel 37:1-14 twice, slowly.

1. At the end of the reading, the reader will say, 'This is the Word of the Lord.'

All to respond, "Thanks be to God." Our response reminds us that this is the Word of the Lord. Just as God had spoken to His people in the past, He is still speaking to us even today, right now."

- a. As God's word was read, which verse speaks to you the most?

- b. (i) What is the key takeaway for you from the sermon "Nothing into Something"?

- (ii) How will you align the way you live to your key takeaway?

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## **B. Relate Sermon Content**

***Purpose: Relate with the Truth and Resolve for Transformation.***

- 2a. God's will in Ezekiel 37:4-6 is to restore life to the "dry bones" situation in the lives of the Israelites who had sinned against Him. What does this tell you about:
  - (i) man?
  - (ii) God?
  
- 2b. To truly trust in God, Ezekiel has to prophesy, preach, and speak to the dry bones according to God's word and trust in God's perfect timing. (Ezekiel 37:7-8) How does knowing this better prepare you to truly trust God in challenging situations in your life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3a. Even though God wants to bless us materially, the greatest blessing is that we can know Him and have an intimate relationship with Him. Is this the greatest blessing you want from God or are you only seeking material blessings from Him?
  
- 3b. Are you going through a "dry bones" situation in your life? What is one action you need to align to God's will for God to bring life and hope to it?
  
- 3c. How can your group members encourage or help you achieve 3b in the following week(s) until your next meeting?

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## **C. Testimonies and Prayer**

***Purpose: Give glory to God and seek Him.***

4. Share your personal testimony on how God brought death to life, hopelessness into hope and nothing into something in your life, giving all glory to Him!

OR

Give thanks to God for the greatest blessing of an intimate relationship with Him, as your “Abba Father”.

5. With a prayer partner, take time to pray for the concerns in 3a, 3b and 3c. Commit to encourage each other to trust that God can give hope to the hopeless life situations that you may be facing, to turn nothing into something.

As a group, pray for one another to always be prepared to truly trust God and desire for the greatest blessing of an intimate relationship with Him.

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