

All Family in Mission 2025

The Dry Bones of Mission and Renewal

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Introduction

Beloved in Christ, I bring you greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Today, we stand at the precipice of a mighty calling. The Word of God speaks to us through Ezekiel 37, a profound vision of dry bones coming to life under the divine power of God's breath. As we reflect on this passage and prepare for 2025, the theme, adopted by the Inter American Division of SDA "All Family in Mission," calls us to a renewed sense of purpose: every family working to bring Christ to at least two non-Adventist families—bringing the dry bones of spiritual despair into the vibrant army of God's kingdom.

This passage from Ezekiel teaches us about the power of God's Spirit to bring life to what is lifeless, to breathe vitality into what is fragmented, and to unite what is scattered. As we examine the dry bones, we uncover deep truths about their symbolic role, their physical significance, and the importance of their restoration. In Ezekiel's vision, we find a metaphor that speaks directly into the mission God is calling each of us to in the year 2025—a mission of renewal, spiritual revival, and divine transformation of families.

Let us journey together through these sacred lines of Scripture. May this Word awaken us from spiritual slumber, renew our mission, and shift us from being scattered individuals to becoming a unified army in His service.

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I. The Vision of the Dry Bones

Ezekiel 37:1–14 is a narrative that begins in a hopeless setting—The prophet Ezekiel, living in exile, was given a vision by God. The Spirit of the Lord carried him to a valley full of dry, lifeless and scattered bones. These bones were not merely dead—they were exceedingly dry, bleached white under the Mediterranean sun, represent not just physical death, but a deeper spiritual condition that resonates with our contemporary circumstances, symbolizing utter hopelessness and desolation. They represented the house of Israel, a people who had been broken, scattered, and seemingly abandoned due to their rebellion and sin.

These bones were many, scattered, and lifeless. When the Lord asked, "Son of man, can these bones live?" Ezekiel answered, "Sovereign Lord, You alone know" (Ezekiel 37:3). It might seem impossible from every human perspective, yet our Almighty God answers with incomparable power and grace. Under God's instruction, Ezekiel prophesied, and the bones began to rattle and come together, flesh

came upon them, and breath entered them—they came alive as a vast army. The story unfolds the boundless power of God to transform what appears utterly lifeless into a dynamic testimony of His glory. It also reminds us that, in God’s hands, nothing is beyond redemption.

This vision is profound. It illustrates the state of spiritual death and hopelessness in the people of Israel during their exile, but this vision is also a prophecy of revival and restoration. Just as God promised to raise Israel back to life, He promises to breathe life into us today, no matter how dry or scattered we feel.

II. The Symbolism and Function of Bones

To fully grasp the message of Ezekiel 37, we need to delve deeper into the significance of bones. In Hebrew, the term commonly translated as “bones” is ‘etsem’. This word refers to the physical structure that gives shape and stability to a being. Bones serve numerous critical functions in the human body: they provide structure and framework, protect vital organs, store essential nutrients, and enable movement.

III. Roles and Functions of Bones in the Human Body

Physiologically, bones perform several critical functions:

- **Structural Support:** Bones form the skeleton, giving shape and support to the body.
- **Protection:** They safeguard vital organs—for example, the skull protects the brain, and the ribcage shelters the heart and lungs.
- **Movement:** Bones, in conjunction with muscles, facilitate movement and mobility.
- **Mineral Storage:** Bones store essential minerals like calcium and phosphorus, releasing them into the bloodstream as needed.
- **Hematopoiesis:** The marrow within bones produces blood cells, vital for oxygen transport and immune function.

In the same way, spiritually "dry bones" represent a lack of life, vitality, and cohesion in a person's faith and connection to God.

Our "bones" must be strong and healthy to support our mission and purpose in God's grand design. Bones are the very framework of the human form—they provide support, structure, and strength. Without bones, the body collapses into formlessness, unable to function or stand. Spiritually, the bones in Ezekiel’s vision symbolize the structure and strength of God’s people that had been lost due to sin. Likewise, when we stray from God’s will, we too become as dry, lifeless bones—disconnected from our source of vitality and helpless to fulfill the purpose for which we were created.

Is this not a sobering reflection of the world we see today? As we approach 2025, we must recognize that many among us have grown spiritually dry. The pressures of modern life, the distractions of technology, and the increasing rejection of God’s truth have left countless individuals

disconnected and without the framework of faith to anchor them. But, beloved, just as Ezekiel's vision did not end in despair, neither does God intend for us to remain in this state. Let us now turn to the hope and power that follows.

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1. Bones as Structure and Unity

Bones hold the body together, providing order and coherence. When we, as families, become spiritually dry, we lose that order and unity, both within the family and in our relationship with God. God wants to restore our families in 2025 to be structured on faith, prayer, and mission, enabling us to stand firm as beacons of light in a chaotic world.

2. Bones as Life-Givers

Inside bones is marrow, which produces blood cells, a vital component of life. Spiritually, when we disconnect from God, it's as though our intrinsic source of life—our spiritual marrow—dries up, leaving us weak and unable to serve. Through His Spirit, however, God seeks to renew our innermost being, filling our marrow with the blood of Christ and enabling us to spread His life to others.

3. Bones as a Call to Movement

Bones connect to muscles and joints, allowing movement and activity. If bones are disjointed or broken, movement ceases. In the same way, spiritual dryness immobilizes us, preventing us from serving God and engaging in His mission. God desires to heal our bones, to reconnect what has been scattered, and to set us into motion as His hands and feet. Someone once said: "God has no hands but our hands, God has no feet but our feet".

When God referenced "dry bones" in Ezekiel's vision, it was not merely a vision of physical decline but also spiritual despair. Where there is no vitality, no nourishment, and no movement toward God's righteous plan, life diminishes until all that remains is dryness. This dryness symbolizes the deep moral, social, and spiritual ills afflicting our world. Yet the same God who spoke life into the valley of bones desires to speak life into our hearts today.

IV. The Dryness of Today: Crime, Sickness, and Spiritual Decay

In our modern context, the dryness described in Ezekiel 37 can represent the spiritual despondency we sometimes face—whether personal sins or the evils that seep into our society. Crime remains rampant in many places, home invasions and robberies are the order of the day, with injustices dividing families and communities. Sickness has shaken us, not only in physical terms, but also

mentally and emotionally — We find ourselves worn down by anxiety, fear, and uncertainty our global battle against diseases continues. In addition, spiritual dryness emerges as people become too busy or consumed by worldly concerns to nourish their souls with prayer, Bible study, and fellowship.

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Now, let us reflect briefly on the current state of the world. In many ways, we are living in a valley of dry bones. Crime, sickness, and spiritual dryness are rampant, breaking families, scattering communities, and eroding faith. Ellen G White Reminds us in her book *Great Controversy* (p. 508) "Satan has entered every department of the household, breaking up families."

1. Crime as a Sign of Brokenness

Violence and injustice have dried up our society, creating fear, mistrust, and despair. God's heart breaks over these scattered bones of humanity fractured by crime. He is calling us to be peacemakers and agents of reconciliation in a world desperate for His love.

2. Sickness as Evidence of Fragility

The global challenges of illness—both physical and mental—have exposed how frail we are without God's healing power. Disease saps strength and hope, leaving many feeling like lifeless bones. God reminds us that through Him, all things are possible, and He desires to breathe healing and restoration into His people.

3. Spiritual Dryness in Families

Perhaps the greatest tragedy of all is that many families today are spiritually dry, disconnected from the living waters of faith. Without God as the foundation, families crumble under the weight of life's challenges. In 2025, God is calling every Adventist family to rise up and minister to at least two non-Adventist families, helping them rediscover hope, purpose, and life in Him.

V. God's Plan for a New Creation in 2025

Friends, in Ezekiel 37:14, the Lord declares, "I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and I will settle you in your own land." This promise is not just for ancient Israel; it is for us today. God desires to make us into a new creation, to breathe His Spirit into us so that we can fulfill His mission. God's vision for 2025 is a clarion call for transformation. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, Apostle Paul proclaims, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" God desires to make us new—renewed in spirit, mind, and purpose. This renewal involves shedding the old patterns of sin, sickness, and spiritual dryness that have left our bones dry and fragile. Instead,

He calls us to embrace the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit, revitalizing our faith and equipping us for the mission ahead.

1. All Family as Engines of Mission

The mission theme of 2025, "All Family in Mission," is more than just a call to action—it's a divine mandate. Each Adventist family is called to embrace a missional identity, reaching out to two non-Adventist families with love, compassion, and the Gospel message. Our families must become vessels through which God breathes life into those who are spiritually dead. To fulfill this mission, we must first allow God to address our own spiritual dryness. This involves honest self-examination, repentance, and a renewed commitment to spiritual disciplines. The same Spirit that brought life to the dry bones must animate our own spiritual experience. Our effectiveness in reaching others will be directly proportional to our own spiritual vitality.

The roles and functions we are called to fulfill are diverse but unified in purpose. Some families may excel in hospitality, opening their homes for Bible study and fellowship. Others may have gifts in health ministry, education, or social service. Like the various bones in a skeleton, each family has a unique function but contributes to the overall effectiveness of the body of Christ.

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2. A Unified Army for God

Notice that in Ezekiel's vision, the dry bones did not come alive as scattered individuals but were joined together to form a vast army. This is God's vision for His Church in 2025: not fragmented believers, but a unified force, standing together in mission, marching as one to bring His light to the world. Ezekiel 37:10 declares, "So will I open your graves and bring you up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel." This resurrection from death to life signifies the formation of a mighty army—an assembly of renewed believers, each equipped and empowered to carry out God's mission. In 2025, as "All Family in Mission," every family unit is called to be an active participant in this divine army. By partnering with two non-Adventist families, we extend our reach, embodying Christ's love and message to those outside our immediate faith community. This collective effort transforms our society, bringing light to darkness and hope to the hopeless.

VI. Practical Roles and Functions of Families in Mission

To mobilize this army, each family must understand and embrace their roles:

- **Prayer Warriors:** Families dedicate time to intercessory prayer, seeking God's guidance and blessing for their mission partners and communities.
- **Evangelists:** Sharing the gospel message in personal and meaningful ways, conversing with neighbours, and inviting others to experience God's love.

- **Service Providers:** Engaging in acts of kindness, supporting those in need, and demonstrating Christ's compassion through tangible actions.
- **Discipleship Leaders:** Mentoring and nurturing spiritual growth within their mission families, fostering environments of learning and faith development.
- **Advocates for Justice:** Standing against societal injustices, promoting fairness, and working towards the betterment of their communities.

By fulfilling these roles, families become pillars of strength and instruments of change, integral to the revival of dry bones and the expansion of God's kingdom.

As we look toward 2025, we must remember that this vision of revival and mission is not dependent on human effort alone. Just as Ezekiel could not bring life to the bones through his own power, we cannot transform lives through programs and strategies alone. Our role is to be available and obedient, allowing the Spirit of God to work through us to bring about His purposes.

VII. The Breath of the Spirit

As Ezekiel prophesied, the breath of God—the ruach, which can also mean "spirit" or "wind." This same breath is seen in Genesis 2:7, when God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life, and Adam became a living being. It is also the Spirit of God who descended at Pentecost, empowering the early church to carry out God's mission. In Ezekiel 37, the ruach represents the Holy Spirit, entered the bones, bringing them to life. We too need the Holy Spirit in our lives and families. Only by His power can we overcome spiritual dryness and rise up to fulfill the mission before us.

After Ezekiel prophesied, something miraculous began to happen. The bones came together, bone to bone, and were covered with sinews, flesh, and skin. But there was still no life in them until the Lord instructed Ezekiel to prophesy to the breath: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these slain, that they may live" (v. 9).

When the breath entered the bodies, they came to life and stood on their feet—an exceedingly great army (v. 10). This is the ultimate purpose of God's restoration: to raise up a people who are not merely alive but actively engaged in His mission.

An army is not a collection of individuals working in isolation; it is a disciplined, unified force committed to a common goal. Likewise, God desires for His church to rise as a unified body, equipped to advance His Kingdom. In 2 Corinthians 5:17, we are reminded that "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." This transformation is not merely personal but extends to the collective body of believers. God is calling us to be a testimony to the world—a living demonstration of His power to make all things new.

Conclusion

In 2025, I believe God is calling His people to take their place as an army for His glory. This means stepping out of complacency and into action. It means deepening our prayer lives, anchoring ourselves in His Word, and actively sharing the Gospel with those who remain in darkness. It means showing the love of Christ through our actions and living as ambassadors of His Kingdom. The world is in desperate need of hope, and God has chosen us to be His vessels.

God is calling us out of the valleys of spiritual dryness, crime, and sickness. He is calling our families to stand up as a vast army in mission for Him, bringing life to those who are lost and guiding them into His kingdom. May the dry bones of our spiritual lives rattle and come together. May the breath of God fill us with strength. And may every family take up the mantle of mission, working to bring the light of Christ's love to those who need it most.