



prayer *life!*

Weekly Prayer Focus

December 3, 2023

LORD Knows

The 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. And he led me around among them, and behold, there were very many on the surface of the valley, and behold, they were very dry. And he said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" And I answered, "O Lord GOD, you know." —Ezekiel 37:1-3

A favorite verse we use on others is, *Judge not, that you be not judged* (Matthew 7:1). There are lots of things to say about judging, but one thing is clear. Judgment happens. It happened in the past, will happen in the future, and it looks like it's happening it now. Most likely, things will not quite be the same again.

Judgment is God's way of getting us to look up instead of looking around to get our bearings and find hope. It's really true, Christian. We're not of this world. We don't evaluate things just by what's happening. We look to God in His Word, follow His Spirit's guidance, draw strength from His Church, take assurance from His sovereign goodness. He'll see us through whatever life throws at us and bring us safely to heaven.

Ezekiel was only about thirty when his homeland was invaded and he was hauled off in chains to a distant and very foreign land. Jerusalem—his hometown—had been called "the joy of the whole earth." Now it was leveled, its temple burned, and its entire population either dead or deported. They'd had a good run, but sin and the worship of fake gods had severed them from the One True God. Hope was gone.

At times like that, God makes His most audacious promises and does the most outlandish things. Something in the Name "Yahweh," or "Jehovah," connotes the idea, "You ain't seen nothing yet." Through Ezekiel, God told His people, *I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, and which you have profaned among them. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Lord GOD, when through you I vindicate my holiness before their eyes* (Ezekiel 36:23). God's reputation was at stake, so despite all appearances, God's people still had a future and a hope.

Ezekiel's famous vision of the valley of dry bones was God's vivid way of reassuring Israel of their hope for new life. That's why the LORD posed the question, *son of man—you weak and simple human—can these bones live?* (37:3a), in a way that challenged the prophet's budding faith. Ezekiel responded with simple, open-ended trust. *O Lord GOD, you know* (37:3b).

Like a son, whose loving Dad included him in a major task, Ezekiel heard the Lord tell him, *"Prophecy over these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. And 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"* (37:4b-6). Not only was that prediction audacious, it's exactly what happened.

So 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. And 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. Then he said to me, "Prophecy to the breath; prophesy, 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." So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army (37:7-10).

We are God's army. Today, it's the Church who's the people of God—not the United States but Christians everywhere on earth. Like the prophet Ezekiel, we, the people of the Lord GOD Almighty, will play a part in His great work. As American citizens, we work to save our country, but as Christians, we hope only in the risen Christ.

The Lord knows His plans. He's able to restore what's lost and repair what's broken. If He chooses to keep using our nation—and He can—it will be through those who trust in Christ alone.

To the praise of God's glory.

Continued Daily Bible Reading

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Bible in 1 Year	Ezekiel 33-35	Ezekiel 36-38	Ezekiel 39-41	Ezekiel 42-44	Ezekiel 45-47	Ezekiel 48; 1 st John 1-2	1 st John 3-5
Year 1	Hebrews 6	Hebrews 7	Hebrews 8	Hebrews 9	Hebrew 10	Hebrews 11	Hebrews 12
Year 2	Daniel 8	Daniel 9	Daniel 10	Daniel 11	Daniel 12	1 st Thessalonians 1	1 st Thess. 2
Year 3	Zechariah 3-4	Zechariah 5-6	Zechariah 7	Zechariah 8	Zechariah 9-10	Zechariah 11	Zechariah 12-13

Prayer for the Week

Sunday (Church): Ask God to build His Church and restore the faith we need to do great deeds in His name and receive great things from His hand. *And my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus* (Philippians 4:19).

Monday (Home and Family): *Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is in vain that you rise up early and go late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives to his beloved sleep.* (Psalm 127:1-2). Ask God to teach you to labor in faith and live in the peace that *surpasses all understanding* (Philippians 4:8).

Tuesday (Job/School): Look to the Lord to be at work in your work, as you acknowledge that everything you do serves Him, and all you have comes from Him. *And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him* (Colossians 3:17).

Wednesday (Neighborhood and Community): Ask God to show you ways you can demonstrate His love to your neighbors. *Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" Jesus said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise"* (Luke 10:36-37).

Thursday (Our Nation): Ask God to work through you, as a member of His Church, to influence our country to turn to His righteousness, so we can receive His blessings once again. *Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people* (Proverbs 14:34).

Friday (The World): Ask God to guide you, and Northpoint as a church, to bring the Gospel to those around you and to the ends of the earth. *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age* (Matthew 28:19-20).

Saturday (Praise and Rejoicing): Praise God the we are not alone and do not labor in vain in the Lord. *Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen* (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Prayer for Our Church Leaders

Ask God to raise up leaders with wisdom and integrity to trust and follow Him in all our ways.

- 1. Our Pastors and Directors:** Tony Chute, Taylor Mendoza, Tamene Menna, Terilyn Brown, Steve Dahlgren, Amber McEwen, and Tyler Van Horssen.
- 2. Our Lay Elders:** Woody Armstrong, Steve Flood, Craig Hawkins, Perry Schaefer, and Vinoj Zechariah.
- 3. Our Church Staff:** Analiese Alfonzie, Michele Balga, Bob Brown, John Cordill, Carolee Jefferson, Corie Saunders, Dani Tiqui, Micah Valdez, Christina Vasquez, and Holli Worthington.