



Lesson 2: The Prophetic Vision - Crafting Your Future

- **Theme:** "Can you see a future?"
- **Bible Connection:** *God asks Ezekiel if the bones can live (Ezekiel 37:3)*
- **Key Element:** Crafting Your Resurgence Vision

He asked me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" | **Ezekiel 37:3a**

Zeke ... I'm asking you ... can I perform a miracle here? Can the situation change. I know it looks bleak ... a valley full of lost hope, shattered dreams, and abandonment ... but I need to know ... do you believe I can change the dynamic? Can I perform a miracle here? Can this army live again? When God asks us a question, it is an opportunity to make a faith statement! Tell me Zeke ... **"Can these bones live?"**

There are moments in life when you are positioned between what you believe, and what you see. Ezekiel wants to make a faith declaration, but as he scans the valley, he sees an impossible scenario. *"God ... this thing is bad! Really bad! What I see is graphically grotesque ... what I don't see is a human answer. I can't see a fix. **Can these bones live again ... I don't know.**"*

We are witnessing the intersection of spiritual depletion and a hard-core challenge. You are facing the Red Sea without your staff. Spiritually, the tank is empty, the cupboards are bare, the barrel is dry! The challenge is epic ... the resurrection of dry, sun-bleached, disconnected bones.

It's a hopeless situation that is devoid of an answer. Is it not too late God? Is this not irreversible? Look at their condition. It's inconceivable! *"God, I want to believe, but I don't know!"*

The valley of dry bones is a situation with no solution! And it's compounded by the fact that **"the whole nation"** is in it together. Everybody in the valley is messed up! I can't help you out of your mess because I'm as messed up as you are!

It's hard to give hope if you don't have any. It's hard to give help if you are helpless. You can't give away what you do not possess! And that's the problem. Nobody can help anybody else because the whole nation is dried up.

"Son of Man, look at the situation in Israel and tell me what you see?"

"I see dry bones?"

"Can these bones live again?"

A Legitimate Challenge

Ezekiel is confronted here with a real problem. It's legit! "God, how do you expect **me** to deal with this?" And isn't that the real problem? God didn't ask Ezekiel if **he** could bring those bones to life. He asked if the bones could live. There's a big difference. Our job isn't to resurrect our

church. That's God's department. Our job is to **believe it's possible** and to partner with God in the process.

How many times have we looked at our church situation -- maybe struggling programs, declining ministries, or community impact that seems impossible to restore -- and felt totally overwhelmed? We get it, Ezekiel. Sometimes the problems seem so big that we can't even imagine a solution.

Ezekiel's response? He played it safe. "**O Sovereign Lord, you alone know.**" Come on, Ezekiel! That's like answering "maybe" when God's looking for a "yes!" The prophet was so **paralyzed** by the condition he could not see the **possibility**. Zeke is not alone. I have also been paralyzed by problems ... unable to see past the mess to the miracle?

Hope Again!

The antidote for spiritual paralysis is the word 'hope.' **Romans 15:13** is a powerful reminder that **"Our hope comes from God!"** The same verse goes on to say, **"...may your hope grow stronger by the power of the Holy Spirit."** (NLV)

The word '**Hope**' is used over 200 times in the Scripture. It means *a confident expectation in the future ... a contagious enthusiasm for what will come* (a must for church revitalization). Have you ever seen someone who's lost hope? It's because they can no longer see a future! And when you can't see a future, you give up. You quit. And then? You die!

Our church will not close because of problems. EVERY CHURCH HAS PROBLEMS! The church down the street? Problems. The megachurch in the big city? Problems. Even the early church featured in the Book of Acts had problems!

The crucial question as it relates to revitalization at my church is not "Do we have too many problems?" The real question, the ONE THING that determines whether we're ready for revitalization is this:

"CAN WE SEE A FUTURE?"

This is our Resurgence Question this Week: Can We See A Future?

When God hit Zeke with the question, '**Can these bones live?**' ... He was testing Zeke's vision! This was not a biology lesson! God was challenging him ... can you SEE past the obvious and envision a future full of life? **Can you see past this graveyard and envision a resurrection?**

And it wasn't about bones; it was about belief. "Zeke, can you see what I see?" That's what vision is all about! It's the ability to picture life where everyone else sees death! You envision potential where others see problems. It's looking at a valley of dry bones and envisioning a mighty army! **Sometimes, the first step towards resurgence is simply believing that it's possible.**

Can WE SEE a future for our church? When we look at our congregation, our programs, and our community impact, what do we see? Are we fixated on the "dry bones" (problems, declining numbers, lack of resources)? Or **can we SEE the possibilities** -- the potential for renewal?

DO WE HAVE A VISION FOR OUR CHURCH'S FUTURE?

If you stretch a little further, you'll spot a deeper revelation: this vision is not just for Zeke. It was for those dry bones, those fallen warriors who'd lost all hope. You're looking at prophetic vision! God was asking Ezekiel to be a vision-caster for the hopeless!

This is what I know ... we've got good people in our church! Strong, vibrant, and valiant in faith! But there are some folks here who are **battle-scarred and spiritually tired!** Let's work together to help them heal. Let's inspire them to see beyond their current disappointments and stand in the gap for those who are struggling to stand on their own.

I want the people who make this church their home to SEE the blueprints God has designed for us. And I will see it for those who can't see it yet. I (we) will paint the picture for them. We will point them to the dry, barren places and boldly declare ... we see life here!

This is what it's all about - helping people see beyond their current reality to divine possibility, but we must see it first as a unified team, because...

IT'S VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO HIT A TARGET WE CAN'T SEE

Every church without a vision is blind! Every ministry without a vision is blind! Every leader without a vision is blind! Every person without a vision is blind! You have an idea of where you want to go and what you want to achieve, but without a clear vision, you'll wander aimlessly and never reach your destination.

On the contrary, when you have a vision, it's like turning the light on! It's that moment when hazy becomes clear. The haze dissipates and you can now SEE the target. And once you can see it, you can focus on it with all your energy and determination. All you need is a target. You need something to take aim at. Something to point to. Something to point others to.

Henry David Thoreau said, *"In the long run men hit only what they aim at."*

CHURCH ... WHAT ARE WE TAKING AIM AT?

The Lord spoke to Habakkuk, emphasizing the importance of a clearly defined vision (target).

Write down this vision. Write it clearly on tablets, so that anyone who reads it may run. (Habakkuk 2:2 VOICE)

Taking Aim Together: The Three C's of Leadership

1. Clarity: What are we taking aim at?

Clarity is about getting laser-focused on our God-given target. **It's asking, "What Mountain has God called our church to climb?"** Is it reaching the lost in our city? Reviving worship?

Revolutionizing community outreach? We need to get clear, because a fuzzy vision will lead to fuzzy results!

2. Communication: Does our congregation know what the target is?

Nehemiah communicated the vision effectively. He presented the solution to the problem and the call to action. **We've got to communicate our vision so clearly that it becomes contagious.** My aim is to paint a picture so vivid that our folks can taste it, touch it, feel it!

3. Conviction: Do we truly believe we can hit the target?

This is the question God is asking us! We can have the clearest vision and communicate it like pros, but **we've also got to believe it in our bones!** Conviction is that fire in our belly that says, "With God, this is not just possible - it's inevitable!" It's that Caleb and Joshua spirit that looks at giants as steppingstones. When we lead with conviction, doubt doesn't stand a chance!

These Three C's work together. Clarity without communication leaves people confused. Communication without conviction lacks the power to inspire. And conviction without clarity can lead to misguided zeal.

Moving to Action

In just a few minutes we are going to work together to craft a vision for our church. It will be shaped by all of us. Our thoughts, our passions based on our giftings! To help us shape our future we will all collaborate using a powerful verse of Scripture:

*"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or **imagine...**"*
(Ephesians 3:20 MEV)

Transition to Workbook Session

Now let's turn to pages 6-10 in our workbooks. We're going to work through the vision casting exercises together, starting with the "Future I SEE" section on page 7. This is where we begin to dream God-sized dreams for our church.