

April 3, 2021

Read Ezekiel 37

Key verse: Ezekiel 37:3

He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord God, you know.'

God Only Knows

On this Saturday before Easter Sunday, we are left to ponder life beyond the grave. Our rational selves would dismiss the idea as absurd; we may believe in resuscitation or the possibility of waking from a death-like state, but we believe there are scientific explanations for people coming back from the dead.

I don't think that our ancient ancestors were much different from us in this respect; they saw physical death as final. Perhaps our spirits would "rest" in the earth or ascend from our bodies to another dimension, and from time to time those spirits would saunter into our dimension and communicate with us by some means. I've heard many testimonies of such contact with those on "the other side."

But what about physical resurrection? In today's reading we find Ezekiel standing in the presence of God and in the presence of a bone yard, a place where Israel's army had fallen, perhaps many years prior. Ezekiel's practical mind could probably accept the possibility that his defeated nation could rise again, that a new army and a new leader could liberate his people from Babylonian occupation, *but could God raise the dead?*

That's a question we Christians will answer tomorrow as we declare "Christ is risen indeed!" If Ezekiel had been alive during Jesus' time he may have encouraged Jesus' disciples on that very sad Sabbath after the crucifixion. But at the moment that God asks him, "Mortal, can these bones live?" Ezekiel answers the best way possible: "O Lord God, YOU know," and that statement conveys a profound faith, a faith that we as Christians must cling to in a world that seems to topsy-turvy. In our times of trial and trouble, we can look to God, who asks us if we believe in the impossible, and we can answer, "O Lord God, YOU know."

Prayer: Immortal God, as we strive to understand this world and find meaning in our own lives, we come to the topic of death. We're reminded of that on this Holy Saturday as our Lord Jesus lay in a tomb. Remind us on this day that what we see and what we experience is not everything, that there are possibilities beyond our imagination, and that with you all things are possible. Amen.