

The Valley of Dry Bones

And lo the bones were very dry. Ezekiel 37:2

By Michael Clark

Life is in the blood and the blood gets its life from the marrow. The natural life of man and its natural source must be completely dried up before the power of Christ's blood can bring new life into fullness within.

Have you ever gone through a spiritual dry spell where the skies are brass and your prayers seem to fall off the end of your lower lip and hit the floor with a crash? Well, many of us have, and I in particular went through one that lasted fourteen years. It was a time when no matter what I did to have a "Christian experience," nothing worked. Prayer was fruitless, fellowship was rare and when it came it was as dead as a mackerel. Going to church services just made it worse. Everyone else would be raising their hands and clapping and having a wonderful time, and there I sat wondering what they were all feeling and getting excited about. The happier they were the worse I felt, because I was so disconnected from it all. The Lord quit speaking to me through my study efforts in the Bible and I ceased to hear His voice in anything at all.

So after many years of this I started to relate to Ezekiel's valley of dry bones in chapter thirty-seven. I looked it up and one phrase in the second verse seemed to haunt me, "[And lo, the bones were very dry.](#)" I wondered why the Lord showed him that the bones were very dry. What is wrong with just plain dry? A dry bone is just as dead as a *very dry* bone, isn't it? I cried out, "God, I know you are drying me out, but enough is enough! Are you going beyond my present dryness and leaving me in this wilderness captivity until I am very dry?" After a few more years of this dryness the answer was becoming very obvious.



In about the fourteenth year of this wilderness time, my brother-in-law (a Baptist preacher) took me on a fishing trip up the pristine St. Joe River in northern Idaho. It was a beautiful sunny day as we drove along in his van and hop-scotched up the river, first fishing a stretch, then getting back in the van and driving a mile or so and fishing another stretch. The fishing was good, even though it was catch and release.

Near the end of one of our fly fishing stretches, I looked down as I was walking back to the van and saw this leg bone of an animal drying on the rocks in the sun. It was dry to the touch and starting to bleach out, so I picked it up and carried it back to the van. Once there, I put it on the dashboard I could relate to that bone, because it seemed to speak of me and where I had been for years. I thought I'd take it home and hang it on my wall. I almost felt a kinship with that poor dry bone.

As we drove along, the windshield started to fog up from our clothes being wet from fishing, so brother-in-law turned on the defroster. Soon he looked over at me and said, "Did you step in something?" I checked the bottom of my shoes and I assured him that it was not me making that smell. He did the same to no avail. Then I looked up on the dash, and some dark fluid was oozing out of the end of my bone as it lay there next to the defroster vent. It was that old bone making the smell. So out the window it went! We wiped up the stinky rotten marrow and got rid of the paper towels as well.

For another couple of months I pondered the meaning of all that. Then one day the Lord spoke and said, "Do you know now why the bones have to be *very* dry?" My bone was dry on the outside to the touch, but still was "wet" on the inside because the marrow was still rotting away. Jesus said, "The life is in the blood," and the blood is made in the marrow. The marrow that once produced life in this bone was now supporting bacterial life and making a stink when the heat was turned up.



A quick study through the Bible made it obvious that many of those used by God to do His will in a great way had to go through a wilderness or captivity period first. There was David and his cave of Adullam period, after dodging spears in King Saul's palace. There was Joseph, persecuted and almost killed by his own brothers, sold by them into slavery, taken down into Egypt, made a slave of Potiphar, almost raped by his wife and then cast into Pharaoh's prison for many years for resisting her advances. Many years later Moses refused to eat from Pharaoh's table and ended up in his own forty years in the wilderness, then had to spend a second forty year stint with the rebellious Israelites in their wilderness. John the Baptist spent almost *all* his life in the wilderness only to have it end in Herod's prison with his head being invited to dinner on a platter. This gives a whole

new meaning to the verse, "A man's gift makes room for him, and brings him before great men" (Proverbs 18:16 KJ2000).

Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested for forty days. He was a quick student. Paul spent three years in the wilderness of Arabia after his encounter with Jesus on the Damascus road. A total of twenty one years went by before the Lord spoke to the saints in Antioch to separate Paul and Barnabas for their first missionary journey. After studying the lives of the saints, A.W. Tozer concluded that God was more interested in the preparation of a man than what He could get out of him afterward.

Life is in the blood and the blood gets its life from the marrow. The natural life of man and its natural source must be completely dried up before the power of Christ's blood can bring new life into fullness within. Jesus told his disciples, "[The flesh profits nothing.](#)" We are to walk by the Spirit, not the flesh, and there is a war between our flesh and the invading Spirit of God. God has the tools to weaken and nullify our natural man, and asks us to give the authority over our lives to Him so He can go to work. The personal cross and the wilderness are His primary tools.

If He just dried us out until we were dry to all outward appearance, the time would come when the heat is turned on under us and we would prove that we are nothing more than a whitewashed sepulcher filled with dead men's bones. Many a high profile ministry has been taken down by Satan because the man still had his own carnal life alive inside him. No, the bones must become *very* dry if God is to raise them up and cause His life to be freely manifest in them. Be faithful to let Him do a deep work within you, so deep that others see only the life of His Son in you.

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