

More Than Hearing Worksheet

Episode: ALent5x2017

Text: Ezekiel 37:1-14

The **hand of the Lord** came upon me, and he **brought me out by the spirit** of the Lord and set me down **in the middle of a valley**; it was full of bones. 2 He led me all around them; there were very many lying in the valley, and **they were very dry**. 3 **He said to me**, “**Mortal, can these bones live?**” I answered, “**O Lord God, you know.**” 4 Then he said to me, “**Prophecy to these bones**, and say to them: O dry bones, **hear the word of the Lord**. 5 Thus says the Lord God to these bones: **I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live**. 6 **I will lay sinews on 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.**”

7 So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, **suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone**. 8 **I looked**, and there were **sinews** on them, and **flesh** had come upon them, and **skin** had covered them; but there was no breath in them. 9 Then he said to me, “**Prophecy to the breath**, prophecy, mortal, and say to the breath: **Thus says the Lord God: Come from the four winds**, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” 10 I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, **and stood on their feet**, a vast multitude.

11 Then he said to me, “Mortal, **these bones are the whole house of Israel**. They say, ‘Our bones are dried up, and **our hope is lost; we are cut off completely.**’ 12 Therefore prophecy, and say to them, **Thus says the Lord God**: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. 13 And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. 14 I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken and will act, says the Lord.”

Word - I/S, Eye - I/S, Body - I/S, Music - I, Nature - I/S

Smarts	Images in the text/ interesting exegesis	Illustrations	SFX
Word - Verbal/Linguistic MWD		desiccate. (dēs'ī-kāt') To remove the moisture from something or dry it thoroughly. ◇ A desiccator is a container that removes moisture from the air within it. ◇ A desiccator contains a desiccant, a substance that traps or absorbs water molecules.	I can hear this passage done a la Sam Spade - “It was a dry place the Spirit led me to. Hot sun, no water; death everywhere. “Can these bones live?” was a sucker question. I wasn’t going to fall into that trap so I said, Lord. You know. [or ...so I said, ‘Yeah, well, I’m sure You

		<p><i>The word has a sound to it that catches the ear - it is adjacent to dissect. A word smart person could compose a poem playing with the idea of Ezekiel dissecting the desiccated bones of Israel. Or something!</i></p>	<p>know.}]”</p>
<p>Eye - Visual/Spatial</p> <p>D2</p>		<p>The obvious option is to offer images of valleys full of dry bones, like the Cambodian killing fields or the Holocaust. However, considering the massive loss of life happening in Syria and South Sudan, and various people’s sensitivity to such images, I would be very careful with this.</p> <p><i>Visual images can be extremely powerful ways to connect people to worship, but they also can be disturbing. You may want to discuss using images of widespread death with a good friend or colleague. Jesus, maybe.</i></p>	<p>For a visual effect that does not involve death on a huge scale, get a topographical map of Iraq that shows how arid it is. Annual rainfall map of Iraq (southern Tigris and Euphrates valley gets 4-8”) see also Nature</p> <p>Here’s a pretty cool short video that captures the experience (except for a numerical discrepancy at the end)</p>
<p>Math - Logical/Mathematical</p>		<p>No numbers or computations here (except maybe to calculate how many bodies might be lying in the sun - answer: a LOT). What might better be explored would be <i>the illogical command given by God to simply speak to the wind and make dried up bones come back to life.</i></p>	
<p>Body - Kinesthetic</p> <p>MWD</p>		<p>I’ve always felt like I need a good long drink after dealing with this passage!</p> <p>Dehydration is serious</p>	<p>Try doing a guided meditation with this passage as it relates to a human in a sun bleached valley. Talk about how the</p>

		<p>stuff.</p> <p>Body smart people will understand the effects of extreme heat and dryness on the human body.</p> <p>If you have athletes, dancers, yogis, laborers, or weekend warriors in your congregation, they will be very familiar with the need for hydration. They may feel the sensation of extreme heat while this passage is read.</p> <p><i>Body smart people will also be attuned to the reawakening of the bodies in the valley.</i></p>	<p>sun dries and burns skin; how lethargic people can get in high heat; how the wind may feel blowing into the valley, etc.</p> <p>See also Eye, Self</p> <p><i>Guided meditation is a move inward, which is Self Smart territory.</i></p> <p><i>Visualization in guided meditation can activate both spatial and visual activity in the brain (he supposed).</i></p>
<p>Musical</p> <p>D2</p>		<p>Dem Bones James Weldon Johnson</p> <p>Shirley Caesar</p> <p>Delta Rhythm Boys</p> <p>National Taiwan University Chorus</p> <p>Fats Waller</p> <p>A clip from The Singing Detective</p> <p>A poem - Coming Back to Life Again</p> <p>A poem - Turn Again to Life</p> <p>A.P.P. the Alzheimer's Poetry Project - Helping patients and caregivers connect with creativity and life through poetry and music</p> <p>See also People, Self</p>	
<p>Natural</p> <p>MWD</p>	<p>They were very dry</p>	<p>Desiccant - silicon beads</p> <p>Three natural moisture absorbing compounds.</p>	<p>Bring some of these natural moisture absorbing products to worship and talk about</p>

		<p>Clay based cat litter, chalk, and baking soda are also products that absorb moisture. They may not take as much as the sun and high desert temperatures, but they will hopefully keep the mold issues out of your basement!</p> <p><i>Connecting these natural compounds or elements to the sun bleached bones in the passage would spark the interest of nature minded people.</i></p> <p>The southern Tigris and Euphrates valley gets 4-8” of annual rainfall - not much!</p> <p>Tigris Valley article Botan Valley</p>	<p>how extraordinarily dry the bones must have been.</p> <p>Or, bring in some dried fruit or tanned leather and talk about how heat can be a good thing for preserving food and utilizing skins.</p> <p>Or dry bones!</p> <p>Get one of those dry pop-up sponges or growing animal sponge capsule toys that expand in water to demonstrate the reanimation of the bones.</p> <p>See also Eye Fruit, leather, bones, sponges - all are natural elements that will get the naturalist attention. The difference between “wet” and “dry” will also ring that bell.</p> <p><i>Presenting visual aids helps activate the visual intelligence, too.</i></p>
<p>People - Interpersonal</p>			<p>Discuss times when your congregation has struggled through a difficult time. Did it ever feel like you were dried out? If so, what brought you back to life?</p> <p><i>This could be either illustration from the pulpit or special effect with people talking. Either way, it engages people’s sense of community around your congregation and empathy with the people of Israel.</i></p>
<p>Self - Intrapersonal</p>		<p>Proverbs 17:22 “A joyful heart is good medicine, but a broken spirit dries</p>	

up the bones.”

The people living in exile may have been experiencing some serious depression. The dry bones in the valley are a metaphor yet, they vividly illustrate the effects of despair on groups of people.