

What Do You See?

An Invitation to the Valley

Chapter 5

The Rattling

Most of us want miracles to happen instantly. We want prayers answered immediately, for healing to arrive overnight. We want broken relationships restored in a single conversation. We want grief to disappear, anxiety to lift. We want certainty, we want completion, but Ezekiel 37 offers a different picture, a much more honest picture, a much more human picture. After Ezekiel speaks to the bones, something happens, but not what we might expect. The bones do not suddenly leap into life, the valley does not instantly become an army, instead, Ezekiel says: *“As I prophesied, there was a noise, a rattling sound, and the bones came together, bone to bone.”*

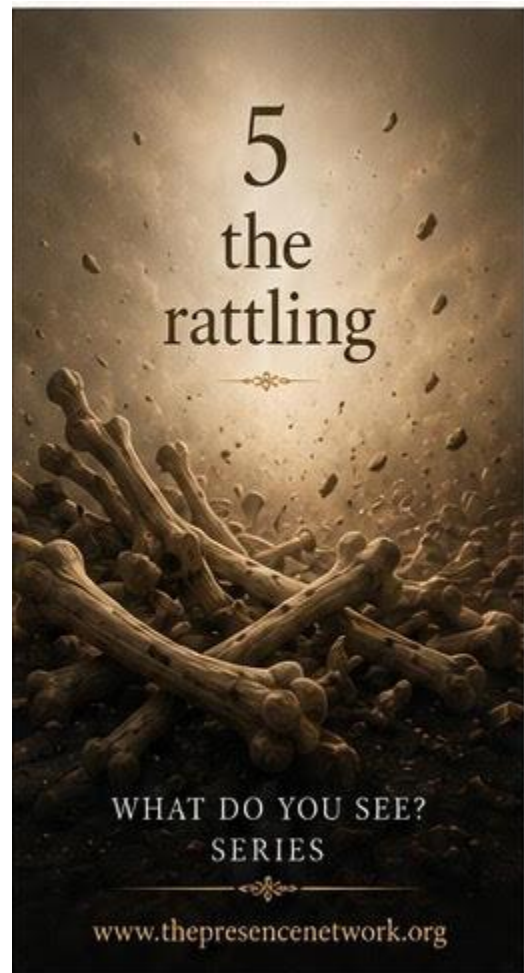
A rattling, not resurrection. Movement, not completion, something has begun, but the miracle is still unfinished.

The Sound of Change

Imagine standing in that valley: Silence has existed for years; death has been the only reality. Nothing has moved; nothing has changed; nothing has lived, then suddenly there is a sound. A noise, a rattling, something is shifting, something is happening, not enough to satisfy the impatient observer, but enough to indicate that the story is changing. Many of us miss this stage, because we are waiting for resurrection while The Presence is initiating movement, we are waiting for the finished product. God is beginning the process; we are waiting for certainty. God is offering evidence; we are waiting for life. God is producing a rattling, and rattling can be uncomfortable, because movement often creates disruption before it creates order.

Before Things Come Together

One of the most overlooked details in this story is that the bones were scattered before they were assembled. Before there could be life, there had to be connection: Bone to bone; piece by piece; fragment by fragment; part by part, the miracle begins with gathering. The things that had been separated start finding one another again, perhaps that is why healing often feels messy. We imagine restoration as a smooth upward journey, but restoration often begins with scattered pieces being brought together: Old wounds surface; forgotten memories emerge; conversations



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happen; truth is spoken; relationships shift; patterns become visible, the process can feel chaotic, but sometimes chaos is simply evidence that something long disconnected is being reassembled.

Progress Does Not Always Feel Like Progress

One of the greatest frustrations in any healing journey is that progress often feels slow: a grieving person may still cry; a recovering addict may still struggle; a marriage may still have difficult conversations; a caregiver may still feel tired; a person wrestling with anxiety may still have anxious days, and because the miracle is incomplete, they assume nothing is happening. Ezekiel teaches us otherwise: the rattling mattered; the gathering mattered; the movement mattered, even before breath arrived. Sometimes we dismiss the very things that indicate healing: a difficult conversation; a moment of honesty; an apology; a boundary; a counseling session; a new habit; a small act of courage, none of these are the finished miracle, yet all of them may be signs that the bones are moving.

The Courage to Stay

Many people quit during the rattling stage, because the outcome is not yet visible, because change is not yet complete, because the valley still looks like a valley. The temptation is to abandon the process, to return to old patterns, to assume nothing is happening, to conclude that hope was misplaced, but healing often requires remaining present long enough to witness what God is building. Imagine if Ezekiel had walked away after the rattling. Imagine if he had said: *“Well, that didn’t work.”* He would have missed the next stage entirely. How often do we do the same? How often do we abandon growth because it is incomplete? How often do we mistake unfinished work for failed work? Yet throughout Scripture, God seems remarkably comfortable with process: seeds become trees, children become adults, disciples become apostles, wounds become wisdom, valleys become testimonies, rarely overnight, almost always through process.

The Ministry of Reconnection

The phrase “bone to bone” carries profound significance. Healing often involves reconnection, parts of ourselves that have become fragmented. Relationships that have become distant. Communities that have become divided. Dreams that have been abandoned. Truths that have been forgotten. Many people live disconnected lives; disconnected from themselves, disconnected from others, disconnected from God oftentimes through unresolved trauma, disconnected from purpose.

The journey of restoration often begins by bringing those scattered pieces together, not perfectly, not instantly, but gradually: bone to bone; conversation by conversation; decision by decision; step by step.

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The Gift of Small Victories

We often celebrate dramatic transformations, but small victories deserve attention too: the grieving person who gets out of bed; the couple who chooses one more conversation; the recovering addict who remains sober one more day; the anxious person who takes one courageous step; the caregiver who asks for help; the estranged family member who sends a text. These moments may seem insignificant, yet they are often the rattling, evidence that movement has begun. Evidence that something long dormant is stirring. Evidence that restoration is already underway, even if it remains incomplete.

Reflection Questions

1. Where in your life do you hear the sound of rattling?
2. What small signs of movement have you overlooked?
3. Have you ever mistaken slow progress for failure?
4. What scattered pieces of your life might need reconnection?
5. What would it look like to remain faithful during the process rather than demanding immediate results?

Journal Exercise

Complete the following statements:

- The area of my life where I most desire immediate change is _____.
- A small sign of progress I have overlooked is _____.
- What feels unfinished right now is _____.
- The pieces that may be coming together are _____.
- One reason I can remain hopeful is _____.

Presence Practice

Take ten minutes today: Write down every small sign of growth, healing, or movement you have experienced in the last year. Do not evaluate them, simply list them. Notice how many things have shifted that you may have forgotten. Sometimes the miracle is larger than we realize because we have only been looking for dramatic change. The Presence often works through smaller movements first.

Closing Meditation

The valley did not change all at once, first came a sound: a rattling, a movement, a gathering. The miracle or breakthrough began long before it was complete, and perhaps that is where you find yourself today: not fully restored; not fully healed; not fully free, yet no longer where you

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once were. Something is moving, something is shifting, something is gathering, something is reconnecting, do not despise the rattling, it may be the first evidence that life is returning. Every great restoration begins the same way: one movement; one connection; one step; one bone finding another.

And now we arrive at what may be one of the most profound insights in the entire chapter. The bones come together: tendons appear, flesh appears, skin appears; everything looks alive, but it isn't, there is still no breath.

Many people have structure, success, religion, routines, marriages, ministries, careers, and responsibilities, yet feel spiritually empty because the breath has not yet filled the body.