

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

*Worshipping Together* is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. [frankstonrp.org.au](http://frankstonrp.org.au) [bit.ly/WTrpcaf](http://bit.ly/WTrpcaf)

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. [airdrierpcs.org](http://airdrierpcs.org)

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. [bit.ly/WkBbl](http://bit.ly/WkBbl) or [bit.ly/3yrBbl](http://bit.ly/3yrBbl)

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on Ezekiel by John Calvin, Peter Jeffrey, Derek Thomas, Iain Duguid, and James Smith, and notes from the HCSB Study Bible, and the Reformation Study Bible

# Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

*The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.*



*If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men\* should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father\* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

*Read, pray, repeat.*

\* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested, a godly mother will lead her children

**Reading** Ezekiel 37:1-3 very dry bones

**Notes**  
(See back page for authors All today's notes are from Derek Thomas)

*This is a chapter which features the work of God's Spirit. The word 'spirit', in both Hebrew and Greek, is a picture word. It pictures breath breathed, or panted out, as when you blow out candles on a birthday cake or puff and blow as you run... When 'Spirit' is used of the Holy Spirit, it is meant to convey the powerful effect of his work.*

*Here, in Ezekiel 37, the word 'spirit' refers to breath, wind and the Holy Spirit in quick succession. It is meant to signal (as it evidently did to Hebrew readers) that the work of the Holy Spirit is both powerful and visible.*

*Not since chapter 11 have we been told that Ezekiel was taken somewhere by the 'hand of the Lord' (37:1). The prophet is taken to a 'valley' to observe a gruesome sight: the unburied, skeletal remains of a fallen army. It is a depiction of Jerusalem after its fall to the Babylonians, and it comes at what must have been one of the lowest points in the recorded history of Israel. At such a point, God comes with a word of great encouragement to cheer the hearts of his despondent people. It is a vision in which the bones come to life by the intervention of his sovereign power. When things are at their lowest ebb, God intervenes with promises of hope, blessing and revival.*

- Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. Where did God's Spirit take Ezekiel?
  2. What was the message of these dry bones?
  3. Can these dry bones live? explain
  4.     

- Praise Pray**  
Psalm 123a<sup>2</sup>
1. Pray for the work of God's Spirit in your and your families' life
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

<sup>1</sup> You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord's Day you review the previous week's readings and/or the previous or current week's sermons and pray together

<sup>2</sup> Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

**Reading** Ezekiel 37:20-28 One King will rule over them

**Notes**  
(See back page for authors. All today's notes are from Iain Duguid)

*Ezekiel's sign pointing to the reunification of God's people was grounded in the sovereign act of God's establishing one king over his people and one temple at the center of their worship. So also our desired unity as Christians, if it is to be genuine, must be grounded...in Jesus Christ, who fulfills both aspects of Ezekiel 37 as our true temple and our true king. True Christian unity...comes from Christ-centered people discovering that they are, in fact, servants of a common Lord and King.*

*Christ himself is our true temple because he accomplished in himself everything to which the tabernacle and temple of the Old Testament pointed. When the Word became flesh, he "made his dwelling [lit., tabernacled] among us" (John 1:14), manifesting God's glory in our midst... In him, God's glorious presence is experienced in the midst of his people...Because Jesus is our temple, he himself is what unites his people together in worship...*

*Our unity as God's people is also rooted in the kingship of Christ. Our fundamental, most basic Christian confession is "Jesus is Lord" (Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3)...The church is only one flock, because we are all under the one Shepherd (John 10:16). Jesus Christ is the true and only Head of the church, the One from whom all authority flows.*

*...Our oneness as God's people is based on the rule of Christ over his church and his work of building his saints together into a holy temple, fit for his habitation.*

- Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. Who is the one King that will rule over God's people?
  2. How is Ezekiel's prophecy of unity seen in the church today?
  3. What is God's covenant promise?
  4.     

- Praise Pray**  
Psalm 123a
1. Pray that God will unite His people together in worship
  2. Pray for your family
  3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
  4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God's word tomorrow

**Reading** Ezekiel 37:15-19 I will make them into a single stick

**Notes**  
(See back page for authors. All today's notes are from Iain Duguid)

*This passage contains a sign-act and a related oracle concerning the future reunification of God's people. It acts as a hinge, both summing up the oracles of hope in chapters 34–37 and looking forward to the establishment of the new sanctuary (chs. 40–48) after the final convulsion of evil in chapters 38–39.*

*The sign-act involves the prophet's taking two sticks, each of which he is to inscribe with a name (37:16). One is to be designated "Belonging to Judah and the Israelites associated with him" (i.e., the southern kingdom), while the other is to bear the message, "Ephraim's stick, belonging to Joseph and all the house of Israel associated with him" (i.e., the northern kingdom)...Ezekiel is then instructed to join the sticks together in his hand so that they become one stick (37:17).*

*The writing on the sticks makes the symbolism of the act entirely transparent...Not only will the events of recent history be reversed, as has been the focus of Ezekiel 34–37 so far; in addition, the events of much earlier history will be undone. The divided kingdom will once again be undivided...*

*The solution to Israel's lengthy history of internal division is not to be found in the appointment of a binational committee to develop a "peace process" but in the divine act of God reuniting his people.*

**Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What do each of the sticks represent?
2. Why were God's people divided? Why are they today?
3. What is the solution to God's divided people?

4.     

**Praise Pray** Psalm 123a

1. Pray with your family for God's reuniting work to increase in His church today
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

**Reading** Ezekiel 37:4-10 Prophecy to these bones

**Notes**  
(See back page for authors. All today's notes are from Derek Thomas)

*How do these bones live again? God uses three means to accomplish it.*

1. *The preaching of the Word*  
*Ezekiel is told to 'prophesy' (37:4; literally: 'preach God's Word'), and does as he is told (37:7).*
2. *The prayer of God's servant*  
*God urges Ezekiel to call upon the 'breath' to come and breathe into the slain (37:9). As we have already seen, the passage uses the words 'wind,' 'breath' and 'spirit' interchangeably. Even though God may have promised something, he invariably links the promise with the prayers of his people.*

3. *The power of the Holy Spirit*  
*'This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life' (37:5; for 'breath' we can read 'Spirit').*

*These are the ingredients of any work of revival by God. It is the explanation of what occurred at Pentecost, when 3,000 people came to faith as the result of preaching (Acts 2:14–39), prayer (Acts 1:14) and the powerful work of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 2:18, 38).*

**Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How do these bones live?
2. How do dead souls live?
3. How should we pray for those who are dead in their sin?

4.     

**Praise Pray** Psalm 123a

1. Commit yourself and your family to pray for dead souls to live
2. Pray for a member of your church
3. Pray for your family
4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

**Reading** Ezekiel 37:7-10 So I prophesied...

**Notes**  
(See back page for authors.)

Smith notes that *Ezekiel carried out his instructions. With dramatic swiftness things began to happen. He first noticed a noise—a rattling—as bones came together “bone to its bone,” i.e., each bone joined the appropriate bone in the skeleton. As he continued to look at this weird scene he noticed sinews coming upon the skeletons followed by flesh rapidly covering the bones. Still there was no evidence of life in these corpses for “there was no breath in them.” The double use of the word “behold” suggests Ezekiel’s amazement and shock at what he was witnessing (37:7f.).*

*Ezekiel was now directed to prophesy to the “breath” or spirit of these dead ones. He was to command their breath to come from “the four winds,” i.e., from four directions, and “breathe on these slain that they come to life.” Ezekiel did as he was told. The breath or spirit came into the corpses and they lived. When they rose to their feet Ezekiel could see that they were an exceeding great army (37:9f.).*

Jeffrey asks, *is God telling us to witness to dry bones such as these, to tell them the gospel? And can we respond, as Ezekiel did, ‘So I prophesied as I was commanded’? (v. 7). It may be that we feel totally inadequate to meet the needs of today, but we could not be more inadequate than Ezekiel in the valley of dry bones. Our adequacy is no more the issue than the condition of the bones. What really matters is this: do we trust God to work?*

**Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What does Ezekiel do?
2. Who was responsible for the dead bones living? explain
3. How might we witness to dry bones today?

4.     

**Praise Pray**

- Psalm 123a
1. Pray with your family for your obedience even to seemingly impossible commands
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

**Reading** Ezekiel 37:11-14 I will put My Spirit in you...

**Notes**  
(See back page for authors. All today’s notes are from Iain Duguid)

*The oracle that follows the vision (37:11–14) merely serves to make explicit what the vision has already recounted. The dry bones are the whole house of Israel, who have come to recognize the seriousness of their situation. They are helpless and hopeless, cut off from God’s life-giving presence (37:11). Without in the least contradicting this self-perception that their present situation is hopeless—indeed, reinforcing the accurateness of the idea—the Lord still affirms that there is nonetheless hope for the future.*

*There is a sure and certain future based not on what Israel can do but on God’s determination to save his people. Twice, the Lord addresses them as “my people” (37:12–13). Though they are indeed dead, God can and will tear open their graves (shifting the metaphor slightly) and bring them up from the dead, giving them life through his Spirit and resettling them in their land (37:14). The promises of a new spirit and a return to the land made in Ezekiel 36:27–36 will indeed be fulfilled. Then they will know that the Lord not only speaks but acts...*

*When the resuscitated bones came together, they became an army, not a debating club or a beach party. They were raised for a purpose. In a similar way, we as Christians have been regenerated and Spirit-filled in order that we too may serve, equipped by the gifts of the Spirit and dressed in the armor of God so that we may do his bidding in the world.*

**Questions**  
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What is the basis for Israel’s hope?
2. What is the basis for our hope of effective service?
3. Why has God raised dead bones to life?

4.     

**Praise Pray**

- Psalm 123a
1. Pray with your family for your service in God’s army by His Spirit
  2. Pray for a member of your church
  3. Pray for your family
  4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member