

EZEKIEL 2

THE LORD COMMISSIONS EZEKIEL

In this chapter, we read of the Divine commissioning of the Prophet to his ministry. The Lord had just finished preparing Ezekiel's mind by the solemn vision in the foregoing chapter, and that vision had caused him to fall upon his face in reverence and humility. And now the ordination begins. O how devoutly ought we to pray for all the ministers of God's sanctuary – that they would be given grace to humble themselves to the dust of the earth before the Lord, in a consciousness of their own nothingness, before they go forth to tell others of their nothingness, and of the Lord Jesus' all-sufficiency! And we cannot help pausing here to observe the peculiar title by which the Lord addresses the prophet: "son of man!" This title occurs nearly 100 times in this Book, and it particularly designates Ezekiel as a picture of Jesus – for of Him, it is used in the Gospels more than 60 times.

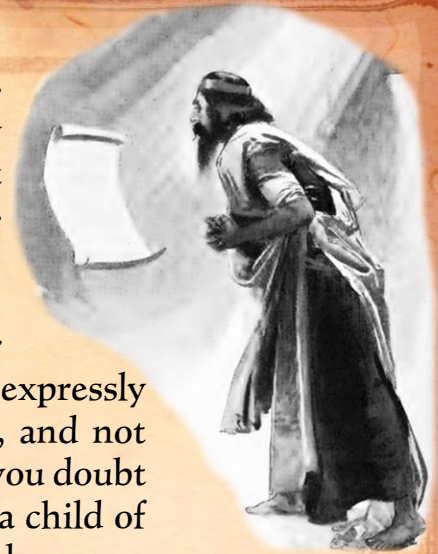
The Lord wisely arranged that Ezekiel would first behold the glorious vision that he saw in chapter 1, so that he would have a proper understanding of that work to which He was about to call him. Ezekiel had fallen flat on his face, which was a posture that showed reverence; but now the Lord told him to stand up, for that would be a posture of greater readiness and fitness for business. But the "son of man" had no strength of his own to enable him to rise up on his feet; therefore, the Spirit of God entered into him with bracing power and energy, causing him to recover somewhat from the astonishment which the bright and magnificent spectacle had produced upon him. Similarly, when the Lord Jesus reveals Himself to a sinner, and calls upon him to awake and pay attention to the concerns of his soul – the Holy Spirit of life and grace comes with that call, enabling him to obey it and believe the good news of the Gospel!

And now Ezekiel received his Divine commission to be the Lord's messenger to his captive brothers and sisters who were there with him in Babylon. Observe the characteristics by which these people are described: stiff-necked, stiff-hearted, impudent scorpions! Such are the terms employed to describe their wayward and disobedient disposition. This would require the prophet to stand steadfast, and to have a heart that was resolved to speak the Word of the Lord alone – whether or not they would listen to it. Many would treat his message with contempt, yet they would know by the outcome of events that a prophet of God had been truly sent among them. Jehovah will be glorified, and His Word will be made honorable – whether it becomes a savor of life unto life, or a savor of death unto death.

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ The Lord commissions Ezekiel to preach to His people – verses 1-5
- ❖ He encourages him to be resolute, faithful, and devoted – verses 6-8
- ❖ Ezekiel is shown a scroll filled with words of lamentation, mourning, and woe – verses 9-10

The Lord described His people as rebellious children, but we must never lose sight of the fact that they were still His *children!* They were rebellious children, but they were not rebels. The Holy Spirit does make a distinction between these two terms, all throughout the Bible. And the Lord has never once called His children rebels; in fact, He even seems to have been angry with Moses for calling them so (Num. 20:10). Those whom the Lord expressly calls rebels are those who are outside of His Covenant, and not those who are His children of promise (Rom. 9:6-7). Do you doubt this? Then see if you can find, on any page of Scripture, a child of God called a rebel! But on the contrary, you will only find the reprobate being expressly called by this name, as in the case of Korah and his companions (Num. 17:10). And in Ezekiel 20:38, the Lord says that He will purge out the rebels from among His people. But whenever He speaks of His children, He still calls them *children* – although they may often be rebellious children, upon whom He sends great sorrows and afflictions, so that His grace may recover them and bring them to repentance. Indeed, He *waits* to be gracious to them! (Isa. 30:18) What a distinguished proof of God’s Covenant-love and faithfulness, that He condescends to deal with such a people – and to send a faithful ambassador of Heaven to shepherd them!



In order to make Ezekiel more fully aware of what awaited him as a prophet among these rebellious children, a symbolic action was added. Looking up, he saw a hand stretched out toward him; and in the hand, there was a scroll that had words written on both sides – but only words of “lamentations, and mourning, and woe.” This was a picture of the heavy tidings which were to form the chief theme of his communications to the people. For although they were broken and afflicted in their condition, they were not yet weaned from their sins. Sadly, in order to crush their proud and rebellious spirit, it would take troubles and calamities that were even more disastrous than those which they had already experienced. This is why the prophetic scroll that was delivered into the hands of Ezekiel was written with the dark forebodings of tribulation and sorrow.

It is noteworthy that Isaiah also received a similar manifestation of the glory of the Lord (Isa. 6) when he was ordained to be a prophet; and John, the beloved Apostle, had a similar experience with a scroll (Rev. 10:8-10). Perhaps these outward tokens were meant to teach both Christ’s ministers and His people that the words of the Lord are not to be heard or read only, but also eaten and lived upon (as Ezekiel did in the next chapter). And if the written Word holds such a fullness of blessings, what must be contained in the Uncreated Word – that is, Christ, the Living Bread from heaven! (John 1:1-5; 6:33)

Lord, we lament the fact that our words and actions often betray rebellion against You, but we thank You that You still mercifully call us Your children! Amen.