EZEKIEL 2

Stand on Your Feet: Sent to Rebels

“But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious.”
EZEKIEL 2:7

Where Ezekiel has brought us

1. Chapter 2 picks up on the same day and in the same place as chapter 1 — about 593 BC, by the river Chebar among the exiles in Babylon.

2. Chapters 2 and 3 are Ezekiel's commission.

Son of Man, Stand Up

The command comes with the Spirit's power to obey it

EZEKIEL 2:2

As He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet; and I heard Him speaking to me.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik, quoting Taylor: 'The phrase son of man is a Hebraism which emphasizes Ezekiel's insignificance or mere humanity.' God wanted a servant standing, not a man flattened on the ground.

WHAT IT MEANS

Ezekiel was on his face, and God's first words were "stand on your feet that I may speak with you" (v. 1). God does not only bark the order; "As He spoke to me the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet" (v. 2).

Son of man (בֶּן־אָדָם)

BEN ADAM · "SON OF MAN, A MORTAL"

Ben means son and adam means man, mankind; together ben adam simply means a mortal, a human being. It is the first of more than ninety times God calls Ezekiel "son of man."

From the Ground to the Mission



In ten verses Ezekiel goes from face down before the glory to a man on his feet, sent, and handed a scroll (1:28–2:10).

Sent to a Rebellious House

A hard people, one message: "Thus says the Lord GOD"

EZEKIEL 2:3

Then He said to me, "Son of man, I am sending you to the sons of Israel, to a rebellious people who have rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that "rebellious people" (v. 3) translates a plural word, goyim, usually used of Gentile nations; he cites Alexander that it covers both Israel and Judah.

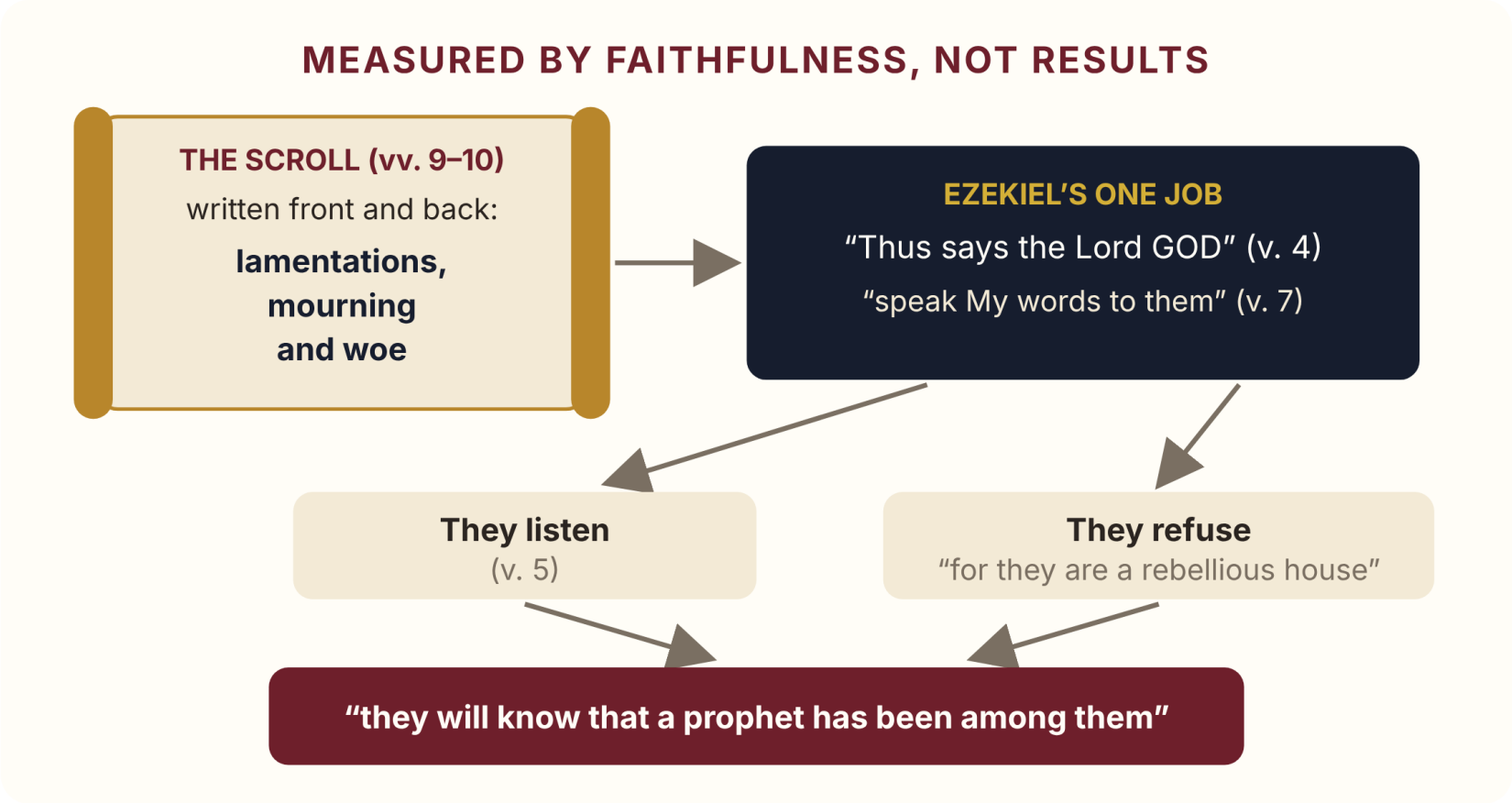
WHAT IT MEANS

Judah still had a king and a temple, but the people were in rebellion and had been for generations (v. 3). God does not send Ezekiel to win a popularity contest.

Rebellious (מְרִי)
MERI · "REBELLION"

Meri means rebellion, so "a rebellious house" is literally 'a house of rebellion' (vv. 5, 6, 8). In verse 3 the verb is marad (H4775), to rebel or revolt, and "transgressed" is pasha (H6586), to break away.

Measured by Faithfulness



Whether the people listened or refused, Ezekiel's faithfulness would be proven: "they will know that a prophet has been among them" (2:5).

Do Not Fear Their Faces

Thistles, thorns and scorpions — and speak anyway

EZEKIEL 2:7

"But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik pictures people who would hurt Ezekiel like thorns and sting him like scorpions. Poole, in Guzik, notes that the command not to fear is repeated so that Ezekiel would not forget it.

WHAT IT MEANS

Ezekiel was sent into thistles, thorns and scorpions and told not to fear them or their words (v. 6). The men we disciple go back into neighborhoods, families and cell blocks full of stinging words and hard looks.

Dismayed (חָתַת)
CHATHATH · "TO BE SHATTERED"

Chathath means to be shattered or terrified. God tells Ezekiel not to "be dismayed at their presence" (v. 6) — do not let their faces break you.

Do Not Rebel — Eat the Scroll

The messenger is tested first, then handed a scroll of woe

EZEKIEL 2:8

"Now you, son of man, listen to what I am speaking to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you."

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik, quoting Feinberg: 'the message of the Lord was so full of threatenings and woes that both sides had to be utilized.'

WHAT IT MEANS

Before God hands Ezekiel the scroll, He tests the messenger: "do not be rebellious like that rebellious house" (v. 8). The first rebellion God guards against is in His own man.

Scroll (מְגִלָּה)
MEGILLAH · "ROLL, SCROLL"

Megillah is a roll, a scroll — from a root meaning to roll up. This one was unusual: "it was written on the front and back" (v. 10), when scrolls were normally written on one side.

What to carry from this chapter

1

Only a man.

“Son of man” stresses Ezekiel’s mere humanity, Taylor says in Guzik, right after he has seen the throne (2:1).

2

Power with the command.

As God spoke, “the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet” — the word brought the strength to obey (2:2).

3

Oracles are for standers.

Trapp, in Guzik: God wanted a servant standing, not a man flattened on the ground (2:1).

4

A house of rebellion.

Meri means rebellion; the people are qasheh and chazaq — ‘hard of face and firm of heart’ (2:3–5).

More to carry

5

Success is faithfulness.

Twice God says “whether they listen or not”; the prophet is not measured by the response (2:5, 7).

6

Not shattered.

Chathath means to be shattered; Ezekiel must not let their faces break him (2:6).

7

The messenger first.

“Do not be rebellious like that rebellious house” — God tests His own man before the people (2:8).

8

A complete message.

Written front and back, Block says in Guzik, the scroll left no room for Ezekiel to add his own (2:10).

Talk it through

1. God told Ezekiel to stand, and then His Spirit stood him up. Where do you need God's power more than another command?

2. God sent Ezekiel "whether they listen or not." How would your service change if you stopped keeping score of results?

3. What are the thistles, thorns and scorpions in the places you go back to? What helps you speak anyway?

4. God warned Ezekiel not to be rebellious himself. Where might you be preaching one thing and holding back from God in another?

5. The scroll was full of "lamentations, mourning and woe." Why do people most resist the message they most need?

CLOSING

He is the Lord GOD who speaks, who sends, and who gives His Spirit to weak men. He calls a mere son of man, stands him up and fills his mouth with His words. Stand up, take in His Word, and speak it — whether they listen or not.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides and reflection journal: see the Ezekiel study page.