Ezekiel 2

Stand on Your Feet: Sent to a Rebellious House

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION

"These were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

God picks Ezekiel up off the ground, fills him with His Spirit and sends him to hard-faced people who probably won't listen. Ezekiel's job is not to get results but to say what God says — without fear, and without becoming rebellious himself. Before he speaks the Word, he has to take it in.

Ed Smith · Started 20 October 2026

Scripture in the text and key-verse cards: King James Version (public domain). Quotations in the notes: New American Standard Bible® (NASB 1995), © The Lockman Foundation; used by permission. Commentary sources: David Guzik, Enduring Word.

00 The Text

EZEKIEL 2 (KJV), MARKED

Gold God — His character & actions
Green Command / instruction
Sky Key repeated word
Rose Sin / warning
Violet Promise / blessing
Amber Time / place / contrast

[1]And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee.

[2]And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.

[3]And he said unto me, Son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: they and their fathers have transgressed against me, even unto this very day.

[4]For they are impudent children and stiffhearted . I do send thee unto them; and thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD.

[5]And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

[6]And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briers and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions: be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.

[7]And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious.

[8]But thou, son of man, hear what I say unto thee; Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house: open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee.

[9]And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein;

[10]And he spread it before me; and it was written within and without: and there was written therein lamentations, and mourning, and woe.

Marked in the text

- **v1** Son of man *(every occurrence)*
- **v1** stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee
- **v2** the spirit entered into me
- **v2** set me upon my feet
- **v3** I send thee to the children of Israel
- **v3** a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me
- **v3** they and their fathers have transgressed against me
- **v3** even unto this very day
- **v4** impudent children
- **v4** Thus saith the Lord GOD
- **v5** rebellious *(every occurrence)*
- **v5** whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear
- **v5** yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them
- **v6** be not afraid of them
- **v6** briers and thorns be with thee
- **v6** thou dost dwell among scorpions
- **v7** thou shalt speak my words unto them
- **v8** hear what I say unto thee
- **v8** Be not thou rebellious like that rebellious house
- **v8** open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee
- **v9** a roll of a book
- **v10** written within and without

- **v10** ⚠ lamentations, and mourning, and woe

Marks are drawn on the KJV text. Quotations in the notes are from the NASB95, so their wording may differ from the KJV above.

01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 2:3 (KJV)

3 And he said unto me, ⇄ Son of man, ▲ I send thee to the children of Israel, to ⚠ a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me: ⚠ they and their fathers have transgressed against me, ◷ even unto this very day.

Setting

Same day, same place as chapter 1: about 593 BC, by the river Chebar among the exiles in Babylon. Ezekiel has just seen the glory of the LORD and fallen on his face (1:28). Now the voice from the throne speaks to him. Jerusalem has not yet fallen; that is still about seven years away (586 BC). The exiles around him are hoping for a quick trip home, and God is about to send them a man with a very different message.

Structure

- vv1–2 — **stand up:** "Son of man, stand on your feet that I may speak with you!" (v1). "The Spirit entered me and set me on my feet" (v2), and Ezekiel hears Him speaking.
- vv3–5 — **the commission:** "I am sending you to the sons of Israel, to a rebellious people" (v3) who, with their fathers, have transgressed "to this very day" (v3). They are "stubborn and obstinate children" (v4). His message: "Thus says the Lord GOD" (v4). "Whether they listen or not — for they are a rebellious house — they will know that a prophet has been among them" (v5).
- vv6–7 — **don't be afraid:** "neither fear them nor fear their words, though thistles and thorns are with you and you sit on scorpions" (v6), "nor be dismayed at their presence" (v6). "But you shall speak My words to them whether they listen or not" (v7).
- v8 — **don't be like them:** "do not be rebellious like that rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you" (v8).
- vv9–10 — **the scroll:** "a hand was extended to me; and lo, a scroll was in it" (v9). "It was written on the front and back," and on it were "lamentations, mourning and woe" (v10).

Repeated words

son of man (vv1, 3, 6, 8); rebellious / rebelled (vv3, 5, 6, 7, 8); whether they listen or not (vv5, 7); fear / be afraid (v6, three times); words (vv6, 7); speak / speaking (vv1, 2, 7, 8); sending (vv3, 4).

Contrasts

Ezekiel on his face (1:28) ⟷ "stand on your feet" (v1). A mere "son of man" (v1) ⟷ the Spirit who enters him (v2). Their words (v6) ⟷ "My words" (v7). "That rebellious house" (v8) ⟷ the prophet

who must not rebel (v8). Whether they listen or not (v5) ⟷ "they will know that a prophet has been among them" (v5). A sweet calling ⟷ a scroll of "lamentations, mourning and woe" (v10).

Chapter theme (my words)

God picks Ezekiel up off the ground, fills him with His Spirit and sends him to hard-faced people who probably won't listen. Ezekiel's job is not to get results but to say what God says — without fear, and without becoming rebellious himself. Before he speaks the Word, he has to take it in.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 2:2 (KJV)

2 And ▲ the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and ▲ set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.

"Son of man" (v1)

This is the first of more than ninety times God calls Ezekiel "son of man." Taylor, in Guzik: "The phrase son of man is a Hebraism which emphasizes Ezekiel's insignificance or mere humanity." Ezekiel has seen the throne; now he is reminded he is only a man. Jesus took the same title for Himself, but His use draws on Daniel 7:13–14, where "One like a Son of Man" receives an everlasting kingdom — so on His lips it points both to His true humanity and to His glory.

Up on his feet (vv1–2)

God wanted a servant standing, not a man flattened on the ground. Trapp, in Guzik: "Oracles are for standers, not prostrate ones." Notice how it happens: God commands, and as He speaks, "the Spirit entered me and set me on my feet" (v2). Guzik's point is that the command came with the power to obey it, and that the Spirit worked through the word God spoke. McGee, in Guzik: "If God has called you to do a certain thing, He'll give you the power to do it."

Sent to rebels (vv3–5)

Judah still had a king and a temple, but the people were in rebellion — and had been, along with their fathers, for generations. "Rebellious people" (v3) translates a plural word, *goyim*, usually used of Gentile nations; Guzik cites Alexander that it refers to both Israel and Judah. "Stubborn and obstinate" is literally, as Taylor puts it in Guzik, "hard of face and firm of heart." Ezekiel has one message: "Thus says the Lord GOD" (v4) — not his opinion. Block, in Guzik, notes "the most serious charge that could be leveled against a true prophet was 'Yahweh has not sent you'." The phrase "rebellious house" runs through the book (more than a dozen times, Feinberg notes). Feinberg: "The greater the position of privilege, the greater the extent of disobedience."

Success is faithfulness (vv5, 7)

Twice God says "whether they listen or not." Ezekiel is not measured by the response. His vindication is that "they will know that a prophet has been among them" (v5) — and Block, in Guzik, says that

would come not through mass conversion but when his words came true. Guzik compares Paul's charge to preach "in season and out of season" (2 Tim 4:2).

Thistles, thorns and scorpions (vv6–7)

People would hurt him 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. "Dismayed" is strong — Taylor, in Guzik: "The verb here is a very strong word, meaning 'to be shattered'." Guzik argues that the vision of God's glory in chapter 1 is what would make Ezekiel able to face men's faces. When you have seen the throne, a scowl loses its power.

Don't become what you preach against (v8)

The prophet himself is tested first: "listen to what I am speaking to you; do not be rebellious like that rebellious house" (v8). The first rebellion God guards against is in His own messenger.

The scroll (vv9–10)

A hand holds out a scroll. "Written on the front and back" was unusual — scrolls were normally written on one side. Feinberg, in Guzik: "the message of the Lord was so full of threatenings and woes that both sides had to be utilized." Block, in Guzik, says it implies "a complete message" — no room for Ezekiel to add his own. The content was "lamentations, mourning and woe" (v10): the message Israel most needed and would most resist. The eating comes in 3:1–3; Guzik sees it as a picture of taking God's Word fully inside before giving it out (compare Jer 15:16; Rev 10:9–10).

Word study (Hebrew)

- **son — *ben* (H1121):** son; "son of man" (*ben ʾadam*) — a mortal, a human being.
- **man — *ʾadam* (H120):** man, mankind.
- **Spirit — *ruach* (H7307):** wind, breath, Spirit.
- **sending — *shalach* (H7971):** to send, send out on a mission.
- **rebelled — *marad* (H4775):** to rebel, revolt (v3).
- **transgressed — *pashaʿ* (H6586):** to rebel, break away, transgress.
- **stubborn — *qasheh* (H7186):** hard, severe — "hard of face."
- **obstinate — *chazaq* (H2389):** strong, hard — "firm of heart."
- **Lord GOD — *ʾAdonay Yehovih* (H136 + H3069):** the sovereign Master, Yahweh.
- **listen — *shamaʿ* (H8085):** to hear, listen, obey.
- **rebellious — *meri* (H4805):** rebellion — "a house of rebellion" (vv5, 6, 8).
- **prophet — *nabiʾ* (H5030):** a spokesman for God.
- **dismayed — *chathath* (H2865):** to be shattered, terrified.
- **scorpions — *ʿaqrab* (H6137):** a scorpion.
- **scroll — *megillah* (H4039):** a roll, scroll.
- **lamentations — *qinah* (H7015):** a dirge, funeral song.

Cross-references

Exod 4:10–12; Num 11:25; 2 Chr 36:15–16; Ps 40:7–8; Isa 6:8–10; Jer 1:7–8, 17–19; Jer 15:16; Ezek 3:1–11, 26–27; Dan 7:13–14; Matt 10:16–20; Mark 2:10; Luke 10:16; Acts 26:16–18; 2 Cor 2:15–16; 2 Tim 4:2–5; Heb 4:12;

Rev 5:1; Rev 10:9–11.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · EZEKIEL 2:5 (KJV)

5 And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

Command to obey — "speak My words."

My job, whether I'm writing a book, building a study tool or sitting across from a man, is to say what God says, not what will be liked. "Thus says the Lord GOD" (v4) is my standard. I'll check my words against the scroll before I hand them out.

Sin to confess — measuring by results

I'm tempted to judge my ministry by who responds. God told Ezekiel twice, "whether they listen or not" (vv5, 7). I confess the pride and discouragement that come from keeping score. Faithfulness is my part; fruit is His.

Warning to heed — "do not be rebellious like that rebellious house."

It's easy to preach against rebellion and still hold back in my own heart. God dealt with the messenger first (v8). I'll ask where I've been stubborn and obstinate — hard of face, firm of heart — toward Him.

Promise to trust — the Spirit sets me on my feet

Ezekiel was on his face, and God's Spirit stood him up (v2). For the man who has fallen so many times he has stopped trying to get up — after a relapse, a sentence or a divorce — God's word comes with God's power. He doesn't only say "stand up"; He sets you on your feet.

Example to follow — courage among scorpions

Ezekiel was sent into briers, thorns and scorpions and told three times not to fear (v6). The men I disciple go back into neighborhoods, families and cell blocks full of stinging words and hard looks. Like Ezekiel, we stand because we have seen the throne. Their faces are not the final word; God's is.

Worship

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. He is faithful even when His people are not.

Prayer

Lord GOD, I'm only a son of man. Stand me on my feet by Your Spirit. Keep me from the rebellion I see in others, and give me Your words to eat before I speak. Make me unafraid of faces and faithful whether people listen or not. And let the men I serve know that You have spoken among them. Amen.