

Ezekiel 11:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Moreover the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the LORD'S house, which looketh eastward: and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men; among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.

Analysis

The Spirit lifting Ezekiel and bringing him to the east gate represents divine transportation in prophetic vision. The Hebrew *ruach* (רוּחַ, 'Spirit' or 'wind') indicates God's power enabling the vision. The east gate faced toward the rising sun, symbolically important as the direction of God's glory (Ezekiel 43:1-5) and also the direction from which Babylonian invaders would come.

The identification of twenty-five men, including named leaders Ja azaniah and Pelatiah, demonstrates the specificity of prophetic indictment. These were not anonymous evildoers but identifiable princes—likely members of Jerusalem's ruling council. Their presence 'at the door of the gate' suggests they were conducting official business, perhaps judicial or administrative functions. The naming of leaders emphasizes personal accountability—leadership brings heightened responsibility (James 3:1).

From a Reformed perspective, this passage illustrates that God's judgment begins with leadership ('judgment must begin at the house of God,' 1 Peter 4:17). Those entrusted with guiding God's people bear greater responsibility for the nation's spiritual condition. The twenty-five men represent the political establishment that

should have led in righteousness but instead led in rebellion, making them primary targets of prophetic condemnation.

Historical Context

The east gate of the temple complex served as a major entrance, a place where leaders gathered for official functions. Archaeological remains of ancient Israelite cities show that gates functioned as judicial and administrative centers where elders met to conduct business (Ruth 4:1-11, Deuteronomy 21:19). The twenty-five men likely represented Jerusalem's political elite who survived the first deportation in 597 BC.

Jaazaniah son of Azur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah are otherwise unknown, though the names indicate Israelite heritage ('Jaazaniah' means 'Yahweh hears,' 'Pelatiah' means 'Yahweh delivers'). The irony is striking—men bearing names reflecting faith in Yahweh were leading the people in rebellion against Him. This pattern of nominal faith combined with practical apostasy characterized pre-exilic Judah and prompted prophetic condemnation throughout Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does God's focus on leadership in judgment challenge those in positions of spiritual or political authority today?
2. What does the irony of these men's faith-based names combined with faithless actions teach about nominal versus genuine faith?
3. In what ways does personal identification (naming) of offenders emphasize individual accountability before God?

Interlinear Text

הִשָּׁעַר	אֶל	אֲתִי	וַתָּבֵא	רֹחַ	אֶת־י	וַתִּשָּׂא
gate			and brought	Moreover the spirit		lifted me up
H8179	H413	H853	H935	H7307	H853	H5375
וְהָיָה	קִדְיָמָה	הַפּוֹנֶה	הַקִּדְמוֹנִי	יְהוָה	בֵּית	
	eastward	which looketh	me unto the east	of the LORD'S	house	
H2009	H6921	H6437	H6931	H3068	H1004	
וְאֶרְאֶה	אֲנִי	וְחֲמִשָּׁה	עֶשְׂרִים	הַשָּׁעַר	בְּפֶתַח	
whom I saw	men	five	and twenty	gate	and behold at the door	
H7200	H376	H2568	H6242	H8179	H6607	
בֶּן	פְּלִטְיָהּ	וְהוּא	עֶזְרָא	בֶּן	יֶאֱזַנְיָהּ	אֶת־בְּתוֹכָם
the son	and Pelatiah		of Azur	the son	Jaazaniah	among
H1121	H6410	H853	H5809	H1121	H2970	H8432
הָעָם:	שָׂרֵי	בְנֵי	הוּא			
of the people	princes	of Benaiah				
H5971	H8269	H1141				

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 8:3 (Spirit): And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy.

Ezekiel 8:16 (References Lord): And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.

Ezekiel 3:14 (Spirit): So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the LORD was strong upon me.

Ezekiel 3:12 (Spirit): Then the spirit took me up, and I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of the LORD from his place.

Ezekiel 11:13 (References Lord): And it came to pass, when I prophesied, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?

Ezekiel 11:24 (Spirit): Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me.

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