

Ezekiel 2:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars 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.

Analysis

God commands Ezekiel four times: "be not afraid" of briars, thorns, scorpions, or their words. The metaphors describe hostile opposition—physical danger and verbal persecution. This divine commission requires courage grounded in God's presence, not human bravery. The repetition emphasizes the natural fearfulness of prophetic ministry and the supernatural courage required. Jesus echoes this in Matthew 10:28: "Fear not them which kill the body." The fear of God expels the fear of man; when we stand before the Holy One, human threats lose their power. Reformed theology emphasizes that God's calling includes His sustaining grace.

Historical Context

Prophets in ancient Israel faced severe persecution. Jeremiah was imprisoned, beaten, and thrown into cisterns. Zechariah was stoned. Tradition holds that Isaiah was sawn in two. Elijah fled Jezebel's murderous rage. Ezekiel would experience mockery, threats, and social ostracism from his own people. The imagery of briars, thorns, and scorpions reflects the painful reality of ministry among rebellious Israel. Despite dangers, God's command to speak His words without fear demonstrates that divine authority trumps human opposition. The exiled community's hardness made Ezekiel's ministry particularly hazardous.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What "briars, thorns, and scorpions" do you face in faithfully proclaiming God's truth?
2. How does the fear of God practically overcome the fear of human opposition in your life?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתָּה הָ	בֶּן	אָדָם	אַל	תִּירָא	מִהֶם	מִדְבָּרֵיהֶם	אַל
H859	And thou son	of man	H408	be not afraid	H1992	of their words	H408
	H1121	H120		H3372		H1697	
תִּירָא	כִּי	סִבִּי יִם	וְסִלּוֹנִים	אוֹתָךְ	וְאֵל	עִקְרֵי יִם	
be not afraid	H3588	though briars	and thorns	H854	H413	among scorpions	
H3372		H5621	H5544			H6137	
אַתָּה הָ	יוֹשֵׁב	מִדְבָּרֵיהֶם	אַל	תִּירָא			
H859	be with thee and thou dost dwell	of their words	H408	be not afraid			
	H3427	H1697		H3372			
וּמִפְּנֵיהֶם	אַל	תִּחַת	בֵּית	מֶרֶץ			
at their looks	H408	nor be dismayed	H3588	house	though they be a rebellious		
H6440		H2865	H1004		H4805		

הִמָּה:

H1992

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 1:8 (Parallel theme): Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 51:12 (Parallel theme): I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass;

1 Peter 3:14 (Parallel theme): But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

2 Timothy 1:7 (Parallel theme): For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Luke 10:19 (Parallel theme): Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Jeremiah 1:17 (Parallel theme): Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.

Micah 7:4 (Parallel theme): The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity.

Matthew 10:28 (Parallel theme): And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Jeremiah 18:18 (Word): Then said they, Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet. Come, and let us smite him with the tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his words.

Micah 3:8 (Parallel theme): But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.

