

Ezekiel 3:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

"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 experiences conflicting emotions—bitterness and anger alongside divine compulsion. The phrase "heat of my spirit" suggests frustration or distress. Yet "the hand of the LORD was strong" indicates sovereign enabling transcending natural emotions. This demonstrates that effective ministry doesn't require constant emotional enthusiasm—divine calling and empowerment suffice. God uses imperfect, struggling servants who persevere despite discouragement.

Historical Context

After receiving his difficult commission (593 BC), Ezekiel responded with bitterness—understandable given the message of judgment and expected rejection. The vision's overwhelming nature and ministry's difficulty produced emotional turmoil. Yet God's hand remained strong, enabling ministry despite personal struggle. This shaped understanding of prophetic calling: not easy triumphalism but costly obedience. Ministers serve faithfully not from constant joy but from divine constraint.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Ezekiel's bitterness challenge expectations of constant emotional enthusiasm in ministry?
2. What does God's strong hand despite human distress teach about divine enabling transcending feelings?

Interlinear Text

רוּחַ י	נִשָּׂא תְנִי	וַתִּקַּח נִי	וְאֵלַי הָ	מֵר	בְּחֹמַת
So the spirit	lifted me up	and took me away	H1980	in bitterness	in the heat
H7307	H5375	H3947		H4751	H2534
רוּחַ י	יָד	יְהוָה ה	עָלַי י	חֲזָקָה:	
So the spirit	but the hand	of the LORD	H5921	was strong	
H7307	H3027	H3068		H2388	

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 37:1 (Spirit): The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones,

2 Kings 3:15 (References Lord): But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him.

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 1:3 (References Lord): The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him.

2 Kings 2:16 (Spirit): And they said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the Spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send.

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.