

Ezekiel 33:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.

Analysis

"So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me." God personally commissions Ezekiel as watchman, establishing divine authority for his warnings. The phrase "hear the word at my mouth" emphasizes receiving revelation directly from God before transmitting it. Ministers don't invent messages but faithfully relay what God reveals. The Reformed principle of ministerial authority appears: pastors have authority only insofar as they speak God's Word faithfully. Their authority is derivative and ministerial, not magisterial or independent.

Historical Context

This renewal of watchman commission (585 BC) followed Jerusalem's destruction, a traumatic validation of Ezekiel's previous warnings. The survivors and exiles needed continued prophetic guidance for responding to judgment and anticipating restoration. God's "I have set thee" emphasizes divine calling, not human ambition. True ministers are called by God, not self-appointed. This shaped Reformed polity's emphasis on divine calling confirmed by the church. The watchman metaphor continued influencing Christian ministry—pastors as shepherds responsible for flock's spiritual safety.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does the sequence—hearing from God then warning others—shape proper ministerial practice?
2. What distinguishes divinely called ministry from self-appointed religious activism?

Interlinear Text

וְאַתָּה	בָּן	אֵצֶן	צָפֵה	נָתַתִּי	לְבַית
H859	So thou O son	H1121	H120	H6822	I have set
	of man				unto the house
				H5414	H1004
וְיִשְׁרָאֵל	וְשִׁמְעֵת	מִפִּי	דְּבָרִים	וְהַזְבְּרָתִים	אֵת
of Israel	therefore thou shalt hear	at my mouth	the word	and warn	H853
H3478	H8085	H6310	H1697	H2094	
מְלֹא					
H4480					

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 26:2 (Word): Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD'S house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word:

Acts 5:20 (Word): Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

Hebrews 13:17 (Parallel theme): Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for 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.

Isaiah 62:6 (Parallel theme): I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence,

Song of Solomon 5:7: The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.

Acts 20:20 (Parallel theme): And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,

Jeremiah 23:28 (Word): The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 6:27 (Parallel theme): I have set thee for a tower and a fortress among my people, that thou mayest know and try their way.

Jeremiah 31:6 (Parallel theme): For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God.