

# Ezekiel 36:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I have lifted up mine hand, Surely the heathen that are about you, they shall bear their shame.

## Analysis

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**Divine Oath Formula:** The phrase "I have lifted up mine hand" translates the Hebrew נָשָׂאתִי אֶת־יָדִי (nasati et-yadi), a solemn oath gesture signifying an irrevocable divine promise. This same formula appears in Numbers 14:30 and Deuteronomy 32:40, always indicating God's unbreakable commitment. **Reversal of Fortune:** The principle here is lex talionis (law of retaliation) on a national scale—the nations that shamed Israel will themselves bear shame.

The word כְּלִמָּה (kelimah, "shame") appears twice in this passage (verses 6-7), emphasizing the theme of humiliation reversed. **Covenant Faithfulness:** Despite Israel's unfaithfulness leading to exile, God remains committed to His covenant people. The judgment on surrounding nations demonstrates that God's discipline of Israel did not mean abandonment.

**Prophetic Context:** This promise comes within Ezekiel's restoration oracles (chapters 34-37), offering hope to exiles in Babylon that their oppressors would face divine justice while Israel would be restored.

## Historical Context

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**Babylonian Exile Setting:** Ezekiel prophesied during Israel's exile in Babylon (593-571 BC). The surrounding nations—Edom, Moab, Ammon, and others—had rejoiced at Jerusalem's fall in 586 BC and taken advantage of Israel's weakness to

seize territory and mock their God.

**Ancient Near Eastern Context:** In the ancient world, a nation's defeat was interpreted as their god's weakness. The nations surrounding Israel believed Yahweh had been defeated by Babylon's gods. Ezekiel's prophecy declares that God will vindicate His name by judging these mockers. Historical records confirm that within decades, Babylon conquered most of these surrounding nations, fulfilling Ezekiel's prophecies of judgment.

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

## Study Questions

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1. What is the significance of God "lifting up His hand" as an oath formula, and how does this strengthen the certainty of His promise?
2. How does the principle of reversal (Israel's shamers will bear shame) reflect God's justice and covenant faithfulness?
3. Why was it important for exiled Israelites to hear that surrounding nations would face judgment?
4. How does this promise relate to God's concern for His own name and reputation among the nations?
5. In what ways can believers today take comfort from God's promises to vindicate His people and His name?

