

Ezekiel 6:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Analysis

And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, This prophetic formula (vayehi devar-Yahweh elai lemor, וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר) introduces divine revelation, emphasizing that what follows originates from God, not human invention. The phrase "word of the LORD came" indicates active divine communication—God initiates, the prophet receives. This formula appears over 50 times in Ezekiel, establishing the book's authority as direct divine speech.

The Hebrew *davar* (דָּבָר, "word") signifies not mere verbal communication but powerful, creative utterance that accomplishes its purpose (Isaiah 55:10-11). When God's word comes, reality must conform. The passive construction "came unto me" emphasizes the prophet's receptivity—he doesn't generate messages but receives revelation from God. This distinguishes true prophets from false ones who speak from their own imagination (Jeremiah 23:16-22).

Theologically, this verse affirms Scripture's divine origin. The Bible isn't human religious philosophy but God's self-disclosure. Peter declares that prophecy never came by human will but by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21). This grounds biblical authority—when Scripture speaks, God speaks. Our response should be humble submission, not critical evaluation, recognizing that God's word judges us, not vice versa (Hebrews 4:12).

Historical Context

Ezekiel received prophetic revelations during his Babylonian exile (593-571 BC), communicating God's messages to fellow exiles in Tel-Abib. The formula 'word of the LORD came' connects Ezekiel to the prophetic tradition stretching back to Moses, through whom God spoke His law (Exodus 20:1). This authentication was crucial—exiles needed assurance they heard God's voice, not merely Ezekiel's opinions.

In ancient Near Eastern culture, prophets served as divine messengers, and this formula functioned as messenger credentials. Just as royal envoys declared 'thus says the king,' prophets declared 'thus says the LORD,' claiming to speak with divine authority. The frequency of this formula in Ezekiel (over 50 times) emphasizes the book's consistent divine origin throughout its 48 chapters.

For the exiles, hearing 'the word of the LORD came' would have both comforted and challenged. Comforted—God still spoke despite their exile from the land and temple. Challenged—His words demanded response and obedience. The continuing divine word proved God hadn't abandoned His people, even in judgment.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does the formula 'word of the LORD came' establish Scripture's authority as God's direct communication?
2. What does the prophet's passive reception of God's word teach about authentic spiritual leadership?
3. In what ways should recognizing Scripture as God's word (not human opinion) shape our reading and application?

Interlinear Text

וַיְהִי י'	דָּבַר	יְהוָה ה	אֵל י	לֵאמֹר:
H1961	And the word	of the LORD	H413	came unto me saying
	H1697	H3068		H559

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org