

Ezekiel 8:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me.

Analysis

And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me. This opening verse establishes both chronological and situational context for Ezekiel most shocking vision—the temple abominations. The hand of the Lord falling upon him indicates divine initiative for revelatory experience showing Jerusalem spiritual corruption.

In the sixth year places this vision in 592 BC, approximately fourteen months after the vision in chapters 1-7. Ezekiel dates his prophecies precisely, demonstrating their historical reliability and unfolding nature of revelation. As I sat in mine house shows the prophet domestic setting in Babylon exile, far from Jerusalem yet about to receive vision of temple conditions.

The elders of Judah sat before me indicates Ezekiel recognized teaching and prophetic role among exiles. These community leaders came seeking prophetic word. The hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me describes prophetic experience—overwhelming divine presence producing visionary state. This phrase appears throughout Ezekiel (1:3, 3:14, 8:1, 33:22, 40:1), marking major revelatory moments.

From Reformed perspective, this demonstrates God sovereignty in revelation—He

chooses when, where, and to whom to reveal truth. The elders sought guidance, but God provided more than they expected: devastating exposure of Jerusalem temple abominations. This also shows God presence is not limited to Jerusalem temple but accompanies His people even in exile.

Historical Context

By 592 BC, Ezekiel had been in Babylon exile for approximately six years, following Jehoiachin deportation in 597 BC. The prophet lived in Tel-abib along the Chebar canal (Ezekiel 3:15), a Jewish exile settlement. Archaeological evidence from Babylon confirms existence of Jewish communities maintaining their identity in exile.

The elders visiting Ezekiel indicates organized community leadership structure among exiles. Despite displacement, they maintained social and religious cohesion, seeking prophetic guidance for understanding their situation. Similar elder consultations appear elsewhere in Ezekiel (14:1, 20:1).

Meanwhile in Jerusalem, conditions were deteriorating. King Zedekiah reigned as Babylon puppet, but anti-Babylonian factions pushed toward rebellion. The temple, which should have been center of pure Yahweh worship, had become corrupted by syncretistic practices that Ezekiel is about to see in vision.

The precise dating formula matches conventions used in ancient Near Eastern royal chronicles and demonstrates Ezekiel prophetic ministry historical concreteness. These are not timeless myths but specific revelations given at particular historical moments addressing real situations.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. What does the hand of the Lord falling on Ezekiel teach about divine initiative in revelation?
2. How does God communicate with His people even when displaced from traditional worship centers?
3. What is the significance of elders seeking prophetic guidance during crisis?
4. How does precise historical dating strengthen confidence in biblical revelation reliability?
5. In what ways does Christ provide continuous access to God presence that exile could not prevent (Matthew 28:20)?

Interlinear Text

| | | |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| בשָׁנָה הַזֶּה יְהִי | בשָׁנָה | בשָׁנָה |
| H1961 year | And it came to pass in the sixth | And it came to pass in the sixth |
| H8141 | H8345 | H8345 |
| במֹעֵד הַ | לְחֵדֶשׁ | בְּבֵיתِ |
| month in the fifth | day of the month | as I sat |
| H2568 | H2320 | H3427 |
| בְּבֵיתِ יְהוָה | יֹשַׁבְתִּים אָנִי | יֹשַׁבְתִּים |
| and the elders | of Judah | in mine house |
| H2205 | H3063 | H1004 |
| וַיַּתֵּפֶל לִפְנֵי יֹשַׁבְתִּים יְהוָה הַזֶּה | וַיַּתֵּפֶל | עַל |
| me that the hand | of the Lord | me |
| H3027 | H136 | H8033 |
| אֱלֹהִים | אָדָם | אָדָם |
| me that the hand | of the Lord | GOD |
| H3027 | H136 | H3069 |

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 20:1 (References Lord): And it came to pass in the seventh year, in the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD, and sat before me.

Ezekiel 14:1 (Parallel theme): Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me.

Ezekiel 33:31 (Parallel theme): And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

Ezekiel 14:4 (References God): Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;

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