Ezekiel has just witnessed in a vision the glory of God coming out of the north in a great windstorm as a great cloud appeared with lightning; God’s glory was in the form of a chariot with four living creatures with four heads and four wings and beside them were wheels within wheels that were full of eyes; the Spirit of God was in the wheels and in the cherubim as the wheels and the cherubim moved together under the power of the Spirit.

Above the cherubim was a great expanse called the firmament; it was like a giant platform on which rested a throne and on the throne was the figure of a Man who looked like glowing metal with the appearance of a rainbow around His head.

When Ezekiel saw the glory of the Man on the throne he fell facedown; He had just witnessed the glory of God riding on the wings of a chariot---it was the all-powerful, all-present, all-knowing God.

This vision revealed the mystery of God----He came in a whirlwind; it revealed the ministry of God---He works with His creatures; it revealed the majesty of God---He was “high and lifted up.”

When Ezekiel saw the vision he fell flat on his face; it’s from flat on your face to forward on your feet.

Flat on Your Face (1:28)

The weight of God (1:28b)... the Hebrew word for “glory” is kabod meaning “weight” or “worthiness;” it is a word used to speak of an impressive person or worthy person; when used of God it is used in contrast to what others consider valuable or important; that is when God’s glory is revealed all other things which
humans regard as important are reduced to nothingness; God's worth carries more “weight” (2 Corinthians 4:17).

God’s glory is first seen in the wilderness in the pillar of fire and smoke that led the Israelites (Exodus 40:34); it departed when the Philistines stole the Ark of the Covenant (1 Samuel 4:21); it appeared at the completion of Solomon’s Temple (1 Kings 8:10-11); it departed because of all the idolatry in Jerusalem in the days of Ezekiel (Ezekiel 10:18); it returned in the Person of Jesus (John 1:14); it departed when He was nailed to the cross (Matthew 27:46); it returned in His Church (Ephesians 2:22) as well as in His people (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

What is the key to experiencing God’s glory but praise (Psalm 22:3; 2 Corinthians 3:18).

*The worship of God (1:28c)*... Ezekiel fell on his face; the most common word for to be in the presence of God is to fall on your face in worship; Daniel fell on his face when he heard the voice of God (Daniel 8:17) as did John after seeing a vision of the “Son of Man”(Revelation 1:17) and now Ezekiel; there are three other examples: 1 Kings 18:38-39; 2 Chronicles 7:2-3; Matthew 17:1-6.

There is something significant about the direction of the fall; it is face down; it is not falling backward or what is called “slain in the Spirit”; that is a sign of God’s judgment (1 Samuel 4:18; John 18:4-6; Acts 5:1-11).

*The word of God (1:28d)*... Ezekiel hears the voice of God; God is both transcendent and intimate; God has transcended to us in the Person of Christ, yet He is intimate in that we can know Him personally. Amen!

**Forward on Your Feet (2:1-8)**

*The command to stand up (2:1)*... Ezekiel is called “Son of man” 87 times; Jesus is called “Son of Man” 86 times in the Gospels; this was to emphasize His humanity; He is called “Son of God” to emphasize His deity; He is called the God-Man.
Ezekiel is son of man like Jesus is Son of Man in three ways: he was rejected by his own for his message, he was humiliated and called to be a prophet to “a rebellious house,” he was exalted by beholding the glory of God.

He is given the directive to stand on his feet; this shows respect for God; it shows readiness to act.

*The coming of the Holy Spirit and the communication from God (2:2)*... There is power in the Word to create (Hebrews 11:3); to give life (John 6:63); to raise the dead (John 11:43-44); the Holy Spirit came to Ezekiel “to set me on my feet;” if God gives us a ministry He gives us to power to perform it.

*The commission of Ezekiel (2:3-6)*... God is sending Ezekiel to speak to a rebellious nation and to say to them: “Thus saith the LORD God....”

This commission is three fold”

1. **Go by the Spirit** ...“I am sending you” (2:3)... It is the Holy Spirit that gives us power to witness (Acts 1:8); the words to say (Matthew 10:16,19,20; John 14:26); sharing Christ should not cause fear as He convicts the unbeliever (John 16:18; Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2 Timothy 2:25); He makes it possible for the unbeliever to believe (Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 12:3) ; if the gospel is rejected, they have not rejected you but the Holy Spirit (Acts 7:51).

2. **Go to the spiritually stubborn**... He was to speak to a rebellious nation... in revolt against Me... obstinate and stubborn...” (2:3-4); we are to go as sheep amidst the wolves (Matthew 10:16); Our nation has become a rebellious nation against God.

3. **Go in the sovereignty of God**... “Say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says...” (2:4 NIV)... Ezekiel went out under the authority and the sovereignty of the God of the universe; we too have been commissioned to go under His authority (Matthew 28:18-20).

*The courage of Ezekiel*... “do not be afraid of them, or afraid of their words... (2:6).. Ezekiel is speaking to his own people--- people who believed in God, they
just did not want to obey Him; the hardest people to get to repent are not the most wicked, but God’s people who think they need no repentance; God told Ezekiel, “If I had sent you to the Gentiles they would have listened to you and repented right away” (3:6); Jesus referred to His people as spoiled children (Matthew 11:21).

_The calling of Ezekiel..._ “You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they are rebellious” (2:7)... Speak to them even though they won’t listen; Ezekiel knew ahead of time there would be no success; John Calvin wrote: “When God wishes to move us to obey Him, He does not always promise us a happy outcome to our labors--- but sometimes He wants to test our obedience to the point that He will have us be content with His command, even if people ridicule our efforts.”

_The commitment of Ezekiel..._ “... son of man, hear that I say to you. Do not be rebellious like the rebellious house; open your mouth and eat what I give you” (2:8); when faced with opposition human nature tends to act in one of four ways: confront, chicken out, compromise, cooperate with the opposition.

When faced with opposition what we learn from 2:4-8 speaks of both your attitude and your authority.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Attitude</th>
<th>Your Authority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speak with the authority of God</td>
<td>The Sovereignty of God (2:4 NIV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand your ground</td>
<td>Do not fear what they say (2:6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Share the Word of God</td>
<td>Speak My words to them (2:7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustain your message (2:7)</td>
<td>Speak whether they listen or not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop short of any compromise</td>
<td>Do not be rebellious (2:8)</td>
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The lesson for us: Once you have an encounter with the glory of God, you have no option but to embrace the ministry of God; you encountered God’s glory when you encountered Christ (John 1:14). If you love Jesus and believe that He has saved you from your sins, you have a calling and that calling is to a stubborn and
rebellious world; fall on your face before Him, get up under the power of the Spirit, be ready to do and to go where He sends! Amen!