



The Book of EZEKIEL

Chapters 10 – 12

“God’s Glory Departing – The Days are at Hand!”

Ch. 10 - “Vision of God’s Glory Departing from the Temple”

(v1-8) Vision of God’s glory moving

(v9-17) Vision of the Cherubim and the wheels

- In review: CHERUBIM [CHEER oo beam] (meaning unknown) - winged angelic beings, often associated with worship and praise of God. The cherubim are first mentioned in the Bible in Gen 3:24. When God drove Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, He placed cherubim at the east of the garden, "and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life."

According to the prophets, cherubim belong to the category of unfallen angels; at one time, however, Satan or Lucifer was a cherub (Ezek 28:14,16), until he rebelled against God (Isa 14:12-14; Ezek 28:12-19).

Symbolic representations of cherubim were used in the TABERNACLE in the wilderness. Two cherubim made of gold were stationed at the two ends of the MERCY SEAT, above the ARK OF THE COVENANT in the HOLY OF HOLIES (Ex 25:17-22; 1 Chron 28:18; Heb 9:5). Artistic designs of cherubim decorated the ten curtains (Ex 26:1; 36:8) and the veil (Ex 26:31; 2 Chron 3:14) of the tabernacle.

When Solomon built the Temple, he ordered that two cherubim be made of olive wood and overlaid with gold. Each measured ten cubits (4.6 meters or 15 feet) high with a wingspread of ten cubits (4.6 meters or 15 feet) (1 Kings 6:23-28; 8:6-7; 2 Chron 3:10-13; 5:7-8). These gigantic cherubim were placed inside the inner sanctuary, or in the Most Holy Place in the Temple. Their wings were spread over the ark of the covenant. The woodwork throughout the Temple was decorated with engraved figures of cherubim, trees, and flowers (1 Kings 6:29-35; 7:29,36; 2 Chron 3:7).

A careful comparison of the first and tenth chapters of the book of Ezekiel shows clearly that the "four living creatures" (Ezek 1:5) were the same beings as the cherubim (Ezek 10). Each had four faces-that of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle (Ezek 1:10; also 10:14) - and each had four wings. In their appearance, the cherubim "had the likeness of a man" (Ezek 1:5). These

cherubim used two of their wings for flying and the other two for covering their bodies (Ezek 1:6,11,23). Under their wings the cherubim appeared to have the form, or likeness, of a man's hand (Ezek 1:8; 10:7-8,21).

The imagery of Rev 4:6-9 seems to be inspired, at least in part, by the prophecies of Ezekiel. The "four living creatures" described here, as well as the cherubim of Ezekiel, served the purpose of magnifying the holiness and power of God. This is one of their main responsibilities throughout the Bible. In addition to singing God's praises, they also served as a visible reminder of the majesty and glory of God and His abiding presence with His people.

In some ways, the cherubim were similar to the SERAPHIM, another form of angelic being mentioned in the Bible. Both were winged beings, and both surrounded God on His throne (Isa 6:2-3). But the seraphim of the prophet Isaiah's vision were vocal in their praise of God, singing "Holy, holy is the Lord of hosts" (Isa 6:3). Nowhere else in the Bible do the cherubim break forth in such exuberant praise. They apparently played a quieter, more restrained role in worship. (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

(v18-22) Vision of the LORD's glory departing

> What is GOD'S GLORY? - *Beauty, power, or honor; a quality of God's character that emphasizes His greatness and authority.* The word is used in three senses in the Bible:

(1) God's moral beauty and perfection of character. This divine quality is beyond man's understanding (Ps 113:4). All people "fall short" of it (Rom 3:23).

(2) God's moral beauty and perfection as a visible presence. While God's glory is not a substance, at times God does reveal His perfection to man in a visible way. Such a display of the presence of God is often seen as fire or dazzling light, but sometimes as an act of power. Some examples from the Old Testament are the pillar of cloud and fire (Ex 13:21), the Lord's deliverance of the Israelites at the Red Sea (Ex 14), and especially His glory in the tabernacle (Lev 9:23-24) and Temple (1 Kings 8:11). Since the close of the Old Testament, the glory of God has been shown mainly in Christ (Luke 9:29-32; John 2:11) and in the members of His church. Christ now shares His divine glory with His followers (John 17:5-6,22), so that in their lives Christians are being transformed into the glorious image of God (2 Cor 3:18). Believers will be fully glorified at the end of time in God's heavenly presence (Rom 5:2; Col 3:4). There the glory of God will be seen everywhere (Rev 21:23).

(3) Praise. At times God's glory may mean the honor and audible praise which His creatures give to Him (Ps 115:1; Rev 5:12-13). (from Nelson's Bible Dictionary)

Chapter 11 - “Prophesy Against Them Ezekiel”

Wiersbe gives historical insight for this section, “When you read the prophecy of Jeremiah, you discover that the civil and religious leaders of the kingdom of Judah, as well as the rulers of Jerusalem, were not interested in knowing and doing the will of God. When one of the kings inquired of Jeremiah, he did it secretly because he was afraid of what his advisers might do (Jer 37:17).

During Judah's last years, the people were ruled by weak men who promoted idolatry and would not call the people to repentance and prayer (2 Chron 7:14). By publicly wearing a yoke, Jeremiah had made it clear that the only way to spare the city and the temple from destruction was for the Jewish leaders to surrender to the Babylonians (Jer 27). Instead, the Jewish leaders secretly made an agreement with the Egyptians, asking them to rescue them from Babylon, but the Egyptians were helpless to do anything. God had decreed the fall of the nation, and He was using Nebuchadnezzar as His servant to accomplish His will (Jer 25:9; 27:6; 43:10).”

(v1-13) God’s judgment upon the leaders in Judah.

(Remember who they are and their sin from Ezekiel 8:16 - *He then brought me into the inner court of the house of the Lord, and there at the entrance to the temple, between the portico and the altar, were about twenty-five men. With their backs toward the temple of the Lord and their faces toward the east, they were bowing down to the sun in the east.*)

(v14-21) God’s promised restoration of the remnant of Israel

> The remnant of Israel/Judah will be scattered amongst the nations, yet God says in verse 16, “I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone.”

- Let us define “SANCTUARY” - A holy place set apart for worship of God or refuge from danger. The word has at least five different meanings in the Bible:

1. Israel's earliest sanctuary was the portable tent known as the TABERNACLE, where the ARK OF THE COVENANT containing the Ten Commandments was housed (Ex 25:8; 36:1). After the conquest of the land of Canaan by Joshua, the tabernacle with its sanctuary was placed at Shiloh, a town in central Palestine (Josh 18:1).

2. When David became King, he planned the TEMPLE in Jerusalem, and it was eventually built by his son Solomon. This became a more permanent place of worship (1 Chron 22:19).

3. The prophets refer to the heathen sanctuaries, where pagan gods were worshiped (Isa 16:12).

4. The word sanctuary is applied also to the most holy place, or the Holy of Holies, in the tabernacle and the Temple (Lev 4:6).

5. The word is also used of God's holy habitation in heaven (Ps 102:19). In the New Jerusalem there will be no sanctuary, "*for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple*" (Rev 21:22). Where all is made sacred, consecrated, and holy by God's presence, there is no need for one specific holy place. (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

- C.I. Scofield writes, "Even in drastic judgment, as in the case of the dispersion of Israel, God provides for His people a place of refuge. This refuge, called here "*a little sanctuary*," is the LORD Himself (cp. Ps. 90:1; 91:9; Isa. 4:6). So, with all of God's own, Gentile as well as Jew, in the midst of deserved judgment there is still a sanctuary of refuge and peace in Him."

(v22-23) Vision of God's glory departing from the Mt. Of Olives

(v24-25) Vision of the captives in Chaldea (Babylon).

Chapter 12 - "The Days are at Hand & the Fulfillment of Every Vision"

(v1-7) Ezekiel is a sign for their captivity!

(v8-16) Ezekiel tell them what it means!

(John MacArthur writes regarding verses 10–13 "the prince" - This is a reference to King Zedekiah, who was always referred to by Ezekiel as prince, never king. Jehoiachin was regarded as the true king (cf. 17:13), because the Babylonians never deposed him formally. All the house of Israel, however, shared the calamity to fall on Zedekiah. How literally these prophecies were fulfilled can be seen from the account in 2Ki 25:1–7. The "net" and "snare" (v. 13) were the Babylonian army. He was taken captive to Babylon, but he never saw it because his eyes had been put out at Riblah.¹⁾

(v17-20) The coming anxiety, dread & desolation!

(v21-28) The days are at hand!

¹MacArthur, John: *MacArthur Study Bible NASB*. Thomas Nelson Publishers; Nashville, TN, 2006; 2008, S. Eze 12:10-13

- Within six years Jerusalem will be destroyed!