

**EZEKIEL**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Ezekiel chapter 8 as we continue our study through the Word of God. Keep in mind that in Ezekiel chapter 1 through chapter 24 we see *the sin of Judah and the judgment of God*. They had past the point of no return, they were going into captivity by the hands of the Babylonians and the city of Jerusalem, the Temple would be destroyed!

We are told of the devastation that is coming upon them in Ezekiel 5:11-17, **“Therefore, as I live,’ says the Lord God, ‘surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish you; My eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity. One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them. Thus shall My anger be spent, and I will cause My fury to rest upon them, and I will be avenged; and they shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it in My zeal, when I have spent My fury upon them. Moreover I will make you a waste and a reproach among the nations that are all around you, in the sight of all who pass by. So it shall be a reproach, a taunt, a lesson, and an astonishment to the nations that are all around you, when I execute judgments among you in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I, the Lord, have spoken. When I send against them the terrible arrows of famine which shall be for destruction, which I will send to destroy you, I will increase the famine upon you and cut off your supply of bread. So I will send against you famine and wild beasts, and they will**

**bereave you. Pestilence and blood shall pass through you, and I will bring the sword against you. I, the Lord, have spoken.”**

Now some may feel that God is unfair, that He went too far! First of all you have to understand the attributes of God, that He is just, He is holy, that there is no darkness in Him at all. Thus, whatever God does is fair, it is right, it is just and the reality is, God does not give us all that we deserve, He does extend mercy.

Also, God was not doing this to destroy them but to awaken them from their spiritual sleep so that they might return to Him. He did everything possible to awaken them from their spiritual sleep and they refused to awaken and turn back to Him. Thus, His judgment came upon them.

Now for those who still think God went too far, then Ezekiel chapter 8 through chapter 11 will help you see the light. It is going to expose the sin of the people and we will also see the glory of God depart from the Temple because of their sin! So the purpose of these visions is to show that the divine judgments against Judah were justified.

Now as we go through these visions that Ezekiel is given see how they apply to the church today and individually in our own lives, if there are things we need to repent of before God.

With that as our background, let's begin reading in Ezekiel chapter 8 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

**EZEKIEL 8****VERSES 1-5**

1. This next vision takes place some 14 months after Ezekiel's first vision found in chapter 1. And at this point Ezekiel has established himself as a prophet of God. We see here Ezekiel sitting with the elders of Judah there in Babylon. And as he sat there he was waiting upon God before He spoke. And as he waited God touched him there and He gives Ezekiel a vision that is very disheartening as we see with this image of jealousy and what the leaders and what the people were involved in!

2. As Ezekiel looked he saw I believe a vision of the Lord, a vision of the pre-Incarnate Christ and the Lord grabbed the hair of Ezekiel and lifted him up. Now I don't believe that Ezekiel was actually transported to Jerusalem and saw these things, I believe it is a vision like the text says.

Could God have physically transported him to Jerusalem? Of course He could but again, I think the text speaks against that. And we see the Lord take Ezekiel to the north gate of the inner court, which means he was standing in the outer court.

This gate that Ezekiel stood by was also called the altar gate because it was the place they would kill the sacrifices before they burned them on the altar to the Lord. Another name for this gate was the king's gate because the palace was on the north side. And so this was a very prestigious gate that Ezekiel is taken to.

The problem is not simple and it is not an easy one to swallow. This must have been a huge shock to Ezekiel as he saw that they put up by this gate a giant image to be worshiped. They placed it right in the Temple of God. And this provoked God to jealousy, and thus the name **“the image of jealousy.”**

Many feel that this **“image of jealousy”** was an idol that King Manasseh put up. I too believe that is what is being spoken here and we read of this in II Chronicles 33:4-9 where we are told, **“He also built altars in the house of the Lord, of which the Lord had said, ‘In Jerusalem shall My name be forever.’ And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the Lord. Also he caused his sons to pass through the fire in the Valley of the Son of Hinnom; he practiced soothsaying, used witchcraft and sorcery, and consulted mediums and spiritists. He did much evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. He even set a carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, ‘In this house and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, I will put My name forever; and I will not again remove the foot of Israel from the land which I have appointed for your fathers - only if they are careful to do all that I have commanded them, according to the whole law and the statutes and the ordinances by the hand of Moses.’ So Manasseh seduced Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the nations whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel.”**

That idol was still there in the Temple during Ezekiel’s day and maybe from time to time it was pushed aside, into a corner but now the people of God had turned so far away from Him that it is back in place and worshiped!

3. As you look at this it truly is a sad picture of how far the people of God had fallen. Here God is standing with Ezekiel in the Temple area, the place they are to be worshiping God, and right before them is this giant idol. Remember, the Southern Kingdom of Judah has not been destroyed yet. The third siege is still coming, and these things were taking place in Judah even after all of God's warnings!

What a warning this is to the church today who erect all kinds of idols within the church and instead of worshiping the true and living God they are worshiping these idols, something that God forbid the children of Israel to do and He has forbidden us to do as well!

#### VERSE 6

1. If that was not bad enough, the Lord tells Ezekiel that there is even more abominations that the children of Israel are involved in. And here is the key; God is not going to stay where He is not welcomed. And we will see that as we move on in Ezekiel, but before we read about the Lord departing from them we are going to see more of these horrible things that the leaders and the people were involved in, even with the warnings of the coming judgment!

#### VERSES 7-12

1. Now we see God take Ezekiel through a hole in the wall in the Temple area. Most likely one of the chambers built into the Temple complex. And as he looks in he sees seventy elders of Israel gathered together and instead of worshiping the true and living God they are offering incense, they are worshiping these animals, these creatures! Can you imagine, worshiping these idols instead of worshipping the God who created them! It is what Paul spoke about in Romans chapter 1 where they worship the creature instead of the Creator!

And these elders thought that no one was watching them, they did these things in the dark. In fact, they felt that what they did in this chamber not even God was aware and how wrong they were.

It would seem that they developed pagan reasoning believing that the gods they worshiped were limited to certain areas, certain territories. But God knows all things, nothing escapes Him as we are told in Hebrews 4:13 says, “**And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.**”

Can you imagine how God felt as these people; His leaders were worshiping these animals?

2. As I read this I see God giving to Ezekiel a look into the heart of these men and let's face it folks, none of us would like to have our hearts desires displayed for all to see. And many times we think we are okay, that it is not a big deal but I will tell you this, once you open the door to sin it will be hard to close. We need to close that door and give to God those issues in our heart that are drawing us away from Him, causing us to worship in a sense other things instead of Him! He was trying to purge these sins from the hearts of His people and they just refused to listen. May we listen and obey!

3. As bad as that is, God is not done showing Ezekiel how depraved, how far His people have turned from Him. Look at what they were also doing!

VERSES 13-14

1. The Lord is showing Ezekiel that it was not just the leaders in Judah, not just the religious people as we will see; it was the nation that had deteriorated into idolatry. Here we see these women gathering together in the Temple area and not to worship the true and living God!

Instead of worshiping the Lord they were worshiping and weeping for Tammuz, a Babylonian deity. Now to understand what this is all about we have to go all the way back to the time period of just after the flood and look at a man named Nimrod, who was involved in leading the people in the building of a tower to reach up into the heavens. A tower to worship the heavens by called the tower of Babel.

Now Nimrod married Semiramis, also known as the queen of heaven. We read about her back in Jeremiah 7:18 and 44:17-23 as they were worshiping her and Ezekiel is also seeing the very same thing.

Nimrod and Semiramis had a son named Tammuz. The thing we need to understand is that Semiramis claimed that this child was born to her while she was still a virgin and she was impregnated by a beam of light brought forth by the sun god. And guess what day Tammuz was born on? He was born on December 25<sup>th</sup>, sound familiar?

Jesus was not born on December 25<sup>th</sup>. That is a pagan holiday that was brought into the church during the time of Constantine! I will explain that a little more in a minute.

Nimrod and Semiramis also had a daughter who fell in love with Tammuz, and they were eventually married. And one day, as he was out hunting, he was attacked by a wild boar and killed. His wife was so overwhelmed by this that she mourned, fasted, and prayed for 40 days to the god of the netherworld. And because of that the god of the netherworld resurrected Tammuz allowing him to come out of the netherworld for 6 months, from spring through summer, and then he was to return to the netherworld for 6 months, from fall through winter.

And thus, this must have been a period of time when winter was upon them because the women were weeping for Tammuz. Now don't forget that this was pagan in origin and this worship was now occurring in the Temple area by these women, the place they were to worship God!

2. Let me expound a little regarding how Christian holidays became pagan. When Constantine had his so-called conversion experience and made Christianity the state religion, not to offend anyone he adopted many of the pagan practices, allowing the priests to come right in and bring their influence into the church.

For instance, we celebrate the birth of Christ on December 25<sup>th</sup>, when in all actuality, it is the birthday of Tammuz. The 40 days of weeping, praying and fasting that was done by the wife of Tammuz is called lent in the Catholic church which then leads right into the resurrection of Tammuz, which we call Easter. These are all pagan ideas that the church has incorporated.

I am not saying that Jesus was not born or that He did not die and was resurrected from the grave. What I am saying is that the dates we celebrate these events correspond to pagan holidays and they were not necessarily the days they actually happened.



VERSE 15

1. As you read these things you think it can't get any worse and it does. Yes it was bad that the elders were worshiping idols. It was bad that the women of Judah were worshiping the queen of heaven and her son. And as we will see, there was even more abominations that the Southern Kingdom of Judah was involved in and this is going to be the religious leaders. Look at what else was taking place!

VERSE 16

1. Here we see Ezekiel brought to the inner court and this area was where the priests had access. And Ezekiel sees 25 of these men, possibly representing the 24 courses of priests along with the high priest himself. It was showing the wickedness of the religious leaders who turned from Yahweh and were worshiping the Babylonian sun god!

And look at what they are doing here. Instead of facing towards the holy of holies they have turned their backs to the Lord and they are facing towards the east worshiping the sun god. And you may be thinking, "How in the world did they get that far from God?" Let's just say it is a slippery slope that they were traveling on and what happened to them we see happening in the church today!

2. Let me show you where we are headed or I should say where many Christian churches are headed. It is a warning just as Ezekiel was warned and shown these things. And please understand this is just the tip of the iceberg, there is much more we can talk about but I want you to just get an clear understanding and warning about some of these practices. We are told,

They call it alternative worship. Those involved in the Emerging church make use of liturgies, prayer beads, icons, chants and practices from Roman Catholics, the Orthodox, the Anglicans and even eastern religious practices. They see this as a return to the ancient faith that will give them a richer spiritual experience-practicing sacramentalism.

By making it their own experience many see this as privatization of their faith. Yet it was Jude and others who wrote of our commonness of the faith and salvation we all share together in the Lord. There is no mention of these practices in the Bible. Of course one may argue that not everything God told us for our spiritual practice is in the Bible, revealing their being influenced by this new thought spirituality. 2 Timothy 3:16 says otherwise.

Their worship does not just involve old style candles and crosses, and incense. They make use of multimedia-music, video projection screens etc. to bring one into a multisensory experience with “the divine.” They walk the labyrinth in the darkness lit by candles and have the fragrance of incense permeate the air as they stop and chant Christian words or contemplate their thoughts and prayers. They can also carry their portable CD players – it becomes a personal spiritual experience as each one enters into their own spiritual space. Unfortunately the Bible has nothing to say about worship, prayer or meditation of this sort; but other religions certainly do.

*There is a movement in youth ministry that is taking us back to what some would call ancient spiritual practices, or different contemplative tools.” (Mark Oestreicher, President Youth Specialties)*

*For example: It’s Sunday just after 5 P.M. in the youth room. Seven adults are sitting around a ‘Christ-candle’ “in the youth room. There is no talking, no laughter. For 10 minutes, the only noise is the sound of their breathing . . . now it’s 7 p.m. . . . one hour into the night’s youth group gathering. There are 18 senior highers and five adults sitting in a candlelit sanctuary. A gold cross stands on a table. They’re chanting the ‘Jesus Prayer’, an ancient meditative practice.”*

(from the July/August 1999 issue of Group Magazine - a leading resource magazine for Christian youth leaders. quotes from [www.lighthouse-trails-research.com](http://www.lighthouse-trails-research.com))

In the Dec. 3rd issue of Youth Worker. Disciplines, Mystics, and the Contemplative Life by Mike Perschon: excerpt: *“I built myself a prayer room, a tiny sanctuary in a basement closet filled with books on spiritual disciplines, contemplative prayer, and Christian mysticism. In that space I lit candles, burned incense, hung rosaries, and listened to tapes of Benedictine monks. I meditated for hours on words, images, and sounds. I reached the point of being able to achieve alpha brain patterns . . .”* (November 2004)

They may call it a Christian *prayer* or use a *sacred word* (from the Bible), but it IS the same methods and practices used in eastern religions to achieve union with other gods. Saying certain phrases over and over: it does not matter whether the word is “Jesus” or “aum,” using this method you arrive at the same place. The mystics would instruct to “sound” the word silently or out loud; one can synchronize it with your breathing till it becomes part of you. You let go of all your feelings and thoughts that enter your mind and have only the sound of the word (but ignore the meaning of the word.) As it is repeated over, ones thinking diminishes, a new state of mind rises in the silence. One can have feelings of euphoria, oneness, your senses can be overwhelmed.

They believe they have made a connection with something spiritual, sacred - God has broken through. The same state can be achieved with icons, mandalas [a spiritual and ritual symbol in Hinduism and Buddhism, representing the Universe]; various other methods can be used to bring an alternate state of consciousness. How do I know this? I use to practice it when I was involved in other spiritual practices (the new age movement) before I became a Christian. It is non- compatible and not negotiable with the historic/orthodox Christian faith.

The Roman Catholic monk, William Johnston said: *“In the mystical life one passes from one layer to the next in an inner or downward journey to the core of the personality where dwells the great mystery called God . . . This is the never-ending journey which is **recognizable in the mysticism of all the great religions**. It is a journey towards union because the consciousness gradually expands and integrates data from the so-called unconscious while the whole personality is absorbed into the great mystery of God”* (The Inner Eye of Love: Mysticism and Religion p.127 (1981).

- <http://www.letusreason.org/current74.htm>

I think we need to listen again and listen carefully to what Jude warns us about. He wrote, **“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”** Jude 3-4.

For the Southern Kingdom of Judah and these practices of worshiping the sun god, this was an even greater abomination than what the women were doing as they were weeping for Tammuz because these men were the religious leaders!

#### VERSES 17-18

1. With all the warnings that God gave to His people, they are still moving farther and farther from Him. They are living in rebellion against Him as they are worshiping all these false gods. The Lord says that His people have **“put the branch to their nose.”** Now there are a couple of ways to look at this and I think both are right as you will see.

First of all it was part of the pagan worship of the sun god. Secondly, I think it is speaking of the Jewish people thumbing their nose at God! And it does make sense. If you are worshiping the sun god you are thumbing your nose at the true and living God and because of their actions, God’s judgment was at the door!

2. And it was not just that they had turned their backs to God but because they turned their backs toward God **“they have filled the land with violence.”** In other words, apart from God it is a violent world out there and we can clearly see that today!

And make no mistake about it. God was serious back then and He is serious today about who we are to worship. If we reject His grace we will see His judgment. The choice is ours and we need to understand, we can't fool God, He sees our hearts, He sees what we do in secret. Come to Him and give Him all of your life or your will face His judgment!

## **EZEKIEL 9**

### **VERSES 1-2**

1. Here in verse 1 we see 6 angelic beings that are coming to execute God's judgment upon the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Remember what the Lord said in Ezekiel 8:18, "**Therefore I also will act in fury. My eye will not spare nor will I have pity; and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them.**"

They have been called to fulfill those words of judgment. Each of them had a battle-ax or a shattering weapon so that this judgment was going to flatten, break them in pieces. And as these angelic beings come into position, they would be passing by all those abominations that Ezekiel was shown in chapter 8.

Now besides these six angelic beings that are seen here we also see a seventh angelic being that is carrying with him an inkhorn, and we are going to see what this is used for in a few minutes.

VERSES 3-7

1. Get a picture in your mind of what is taking place here. God is moving and not in a good way. He is going to be moving from the Holy of Holies out the east gate and over the Mount of Olives as we will see next time as we get to Ezekiel chapter 11.

In the Holy of Holies was the Ark of the Covenant which contained the Law of God, Aaron's rod that budded, and a jar of manna. On top of the Ark was the mercy seat and on either side of the Ark was a cherub. And the presence of God sat between the cherubim above the mercy seat. And what we are seeing here is the Shekinah glory or the presence of God rising up and He is going to begin to depart from the nation as I have said. You remember when Solomon dedicated this Temple the glory of the Lord filled the place. Now He is leaving. What a truly sad picture for Ezekiel to see.

2. As the Lord gets up He speaks to this angelic being who has this inkhorn at his side. And this angelic being is to "**mark**" those who are weeping over the abominations that they are seeing. You see, God did have His faithful remnant within the nation of Judah who were devastated, broken over what they were seeing. With this mark they will be protected from the judgment that is coming upon the nation! Once again we see that God will not punish the righteous with the wicked.

We also see this in Revelation 7:1-4, where God is going to seal 144,000 Jewish believers during the Tribulation Period. We read, **“After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’ And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed.”**

And then in Revelation 9:1-4 we see the judgment of God come, but those that have this mark are sealed. We are told, **“Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke of the pit. Then out of the smoke locusts came upon the earth. And to them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.”** God will not judge the righteous with the wicked!

3. Since we are talking about this **“mark”** that this angelic being was to place upon the remnant who believed in Judah I think I need to share this with you as well. The Hebrew word **“mark”** is not really a word but a letter, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *TAU*.

And, interestingly enough, in ancient Hebrew writing this letter was in the shape of a cross! That has changed today but that is what it looked like back then. And we should not be surprised by this but I always am. I am amazed at how detailed God is.

And let me also say this. We have all been marked by God. You see, when we come to Jesus we are sealed in Him. It is His atoning work on the cross of Calvary that has cleansed us. Paul put it this way in Colossians 1:19-20 as he said, **“For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”**

The cross in our life is the sign that marks us and because of this mark we are spared the judgment of God! Make no mistake about it, we are sealed by God and that is why Paul is able to say in I Thessalonians 5:9, **“For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.”**



4. And now we see the judgment of God go forth and no one is spared except those who have the **“mark.”** And it would seem that these angelic beings were representative of the Babylonians who came in and devastated the land and the people.



We see this played out for us in II Chronicles 36:17-19. And keep in mind the people are unaware of what is taking place on a spiritual level, they only see what the Babylonians are doing on a physical level. We are told, **“Therefore He brought against them the king of the Chaldeans, who killed their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, on the aged or the weak; He gave them all into his hand. And all the articles from the house of God, great and small, the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king and of his leaders, all these he took to Babylon. Then they burned the house of God, broke down the wall of Jerusalem, burned all its palaces with fire, and destroyed all its precious possessions.”**

Mass destruction taking place and God was going to defile the Temple and He was going to do that by placing all these dead bodies there. You see, coming in contact with dead bodies would make you unclean. But the reality was they were already unclean because of their abominations they did before the Lord!

5. Now why did this judgment begin with the house of God? The reason is simple, they should have known better. They had the truths of God but they refused to obey and they led the nation down a path of death and destruction, they were leading them away from God. And thus, God was holding them accountable for their actions. God is no different today. Peter put it like this, **“For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?”** I Peter 4:17.

VERSES 8-11

1. As you can imagine, Ezekiel is overwhelmed by all he sees and he loses sight of God's promise of sparing a remnant. He is concerned that God is going to wipe out everyone! And at times, as we look at situations, we may miss out on what God has promised as Ezekiel did.

God was not going to judge the righteous with the wicked and we see that over and over in the Scriptures, including the Rapture of the church! We will be taken out before the Tribulation Period starts, before the wrath of God is poured out. The problem then and the problem now is that wickedness filled the land and judgment had to come and it did and it will again, but God is gracious and merciful.

The problem for the Jews living in Judah, both those from the Northern Kingdom of Israel who were living in Judah and the Southern Kingdom of Judah, they did not believe God was going to judge them until it was too late!

2. As this chapter closes we see that this angelic being had completed his work. The faithful were sealed and Ezekiel could relax seeing again that God does not judge the righteous with the wicked. That He will protect, spare this faithful remnant. That you can rest in the promises of God, His Word! May we learn to trust Him and His Word even when the situations we face don't seem right, they don't seem fair, they may even seem like God has failed. He hasn't and if we can't trust in His promises then we can't trust Him at all!

But we can trust Him, make no mistake about it and we can trust in His Word. Paul tells us, **“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.”** I Thessalonians 5:23-24. Not only that but he also reminds us, **“But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.”** II Thessalonians 3:3.

## **EZEKIEL 10**

### **VERSES 1-2**

1. We covered these living creatures or Cherubim back in Ezekiel chapter 1 and here they are again. We also see here this chariot-throne of God carried by these four cherubim. And the Lord tells this angel to go and take coals of fire that is located in the chariot-throne and spread them out over Jerusalem. Again, this was what was taking place in the spiritual world. In the physical world we see this poured out by the Babylonians.

In II Kings 25:8-9 we see this take place as we read, **“And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month (which was the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, came to Jerusalem. He burned the house of the LORD and the king’s house; all the houses of Jerusalem, that is, all the houses of the great, he burned with fire.”** You see, all that the people saw was the judgment but this judgment was coming from the throne of God!

VERSES 3-4

1. Here we see God's glory, the Shekinah glory, moving away from the nation. Now please understand that the people did not want the Lord anymore. They had other gods they were worshiping and thus, God will not remain where He is not wanted and He is leaving the Temple and the nation. Now as He is leaving He pauses at the threshold of the Temple. I get the idea that He didn't want to leave but they drove Him out as I have said!

God is slow to anger, He is patient, He is longsuffering and-so-on. But then there comes a time when His Spirit will no longer dwell with man and His judgment will come. That is what we see here with the Southern Kingdom of Judah!

VERSES 5-8

1. Once again this chariot-throne is on the move, and as it moves it makes a thunderous sound. We also see the Lord command the man clothed in linen to grab the coals of fire that is in this chariot-throne and he will cast them out upon Jerusalem. Again we see the judgment of God being poured out upon this nation, as the Babylonians would destroy Jerusalem by fire.

VERSES 9-13

1. Now these are not UFO's as some like to speculate. They are angelic beings, cherubim, created by God. But, as we said when we studied Ezekiel chapter 1 it could be the exact opposite. UFO's could be nothing more than fallen cherubim trying to deceive people! And again, as you look at how people describe these UFO's and some of the so-called abductions, they are all very similar. Some say mass hysteria and they just have heard these things and are repeating them.

I don't think so. I truly believe, some, not all of the reported cases are real in the sense that they actually believe they were abducted and what they saw, these space ships are nothing more than these fallen angelic beings deceiving people!

I do realize that there are those out there that try to prove the existence of UFO's by using what Ezekiel described here in chapter 10 and in chapter 1. Again, there is no such thing as UFO's but I do believe in Cherubim and many of these angelic beings fell with Satan when he tried to exalt himself above God.

Thus, I believe they will deceive man anyway they can and keep them from the true and living God. Tragically many have bought into their lies, their deception! Remember the warning that Paul gave to us in II Corinthians 11:13-15, **“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”**

Yes there are false teachers and false prophets out there that pretend to be something that they are not and they deceive many by their deceitful words. But also keep in mind that Satan and his demonic forces are in the business of deception and they do a great job because many have negated what God's Word has to say and they believe what they see and feel instead of what God has said!

2. In verse 13 we see the word “**wheel**” used and it is the Hebrew word GALGAL, which speaks of a wheel, but specifically here the wheel of a chariot. And thus, this could be the chariot-throne of God on this earth. Keep in mind when you see God’s throne in heaven it too is surrounded by cherubim just like we see here.

#### VERSES 14-17

1. Like in Ezekiel chapter 1 we see the description of these cherubim, their faces that is. And they are both in agreement in regards to them each having a face like a man, a face like a lion and a face like an eagle.

The difference between chapter 1 and chapter 10 of Ezekiel is chapter 1 describes one of the faces as being an ox while here in chapter 10 one of the faces is described as a cherub. Why the difference?

The face of a cherub could also be the face of an ox in the sense that both were servants, and Ezekiel tells us that these are the same angelic beings he saw in his vision in chapter 1. And as we said when we studied Ezekiel chapter 1, each face represents the ministry of Jesus Christ, and we also see that manifested to us in the four Gospels.

But I think there is more to it than that. I could be wrong but I do agree with what one commentator had to say regarding this portion of Ezekiel. He wrote,

As in ch 1, each cherub had four faces. Three of the faces are the same as those seen in ch 1- the man, the lion, and the eagle. The face of the ox (1:10), however, is now described as the face of the cherub. In ch 1 this face was third in order; here it is first. The ox-like face that looked straight forward is thus assumed to be the primary or real face of each cherub. The definite article - the face of the cherub - possibly indicates that this was the particular cherub that had given the coals of fire in v 7.

- James E. Smith, An Exegetical Commentary on EZEKIEL, p. 80

That seems to be what is going on here. Others feel that there were different cherubs with different faces, which could be true but we don't see that here because we are told that this is the same vision of these cherubim that he saw back in chapter 1.

So these cherubim that are carrying the throne of God are on the move. Let's see where they are going.

#### VERSES 18-22

1. God has now entered His chariot-throne and left the threshold of the Temple. They are by the east gate of the Temple as the Lord is moving farther and farther away from His Temple and His people. And as we will see as we continue on in Ezekiel we will see that **“. . . the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city.”** Ezekiel 11:23. The glory of the Lord left the Temple, went out through the east gate and now is going over the Mount of Olives!

When God departs from a nation it truly is a dark time for that nation. I pray for our nation, a nation that no longer wants the true and living God to be a part in the workings of this nation and its people, that we would come to our senses before it is too late and the glory of the Lord departs!

And the same is true in churches across America. One writer put it like this,

Like Israel, many in the church are just going through the motions, relying on traditions and practicing an institutional Christianity. But God's presence is no longer there and our institutions are powerless. We have been fooled into thinking our private sin goes unnoticed, but what we do in private has a public, corporate effect. The enemy continues to win battles and take ground in our nation, largely while the church goes about our business as usual. We blame our losses on the government, politicians or those who disagree with us, with little understanding of the role we've played in our own defeat.

The key to victory is not the ark, nor our Christian institutions, but obedience. Disobedience causes the lamp to go out and the presence of God to depart. Without His presence, there can be no victory. . . .

The times we are facing are truly difficult times. Everything around us is being shaken, so that only that which cannot be shaken will remain (Hebrews 12:27). Many foresee a great economic collapse. Fires, floods, earthquakes and natural disasters abound. The **moral failure** of our leaders and decline of our culture continues.

These challenging times should cause us to heed the warnings of a God who loves us and wants to save us from the day of trouble. But they should also cause us to rejoice in the hope that remains. God desires to redeem and restore us. He is looking for the faithful with whom he can change a nation.



In the midst of Hophni and Phineas' private disobedience, God was already preparing to raise up Samuel out of what seemed to be an impossible situation. Hannah cried out to God in desperation for a miraculous fulfillment of promise. God had not forsaken Hannah, nor had he forgotten Israel. He had a perfect plan and perfect timing. Samuel represented a new, **prophetic voice** that would rise in the land. He represented a righteous generation to replace that which was profaned. . . .

We need princes, politicians, priests (pastors), prophets and people who love God and others more than they love themselves. From preachers to politicians, from pulpits to political offices . . . and all in between, we need A REVIVAL OF CHARACTER!

We need a new generation of Samuel to arise! God wants to reconfirm His covenant promise and commitment, so that He can restore the Nation . . . before the lamp of the Lord goes out and the glory of God departs in the land.

- <http://www.charismanews.com/opinion/33895-is-the-glory-of-god-departing-from-us>

Amen to that!

2. As this chapter closes Ezekiel wants us to understand that the Cherubim he saw in chapter 1 are the same ones he saw here. These cherubim were servants of God and where He directed them they went. May we have that same kind of passion and obedience that when the Lord calls we are ready to move!