

The Vision of God's Glory in the Book of Ezekiel

(Ezekiel Chapters 1 & 10)

I. The History of the Glory of the Lord in the Bible

A. In the age of the Old Covenant (Exod. 24:16-17; 40:34-35; 2 Chron. 5:14; 7:1-2; Ezek. 1:28; 3:23; Chapter 10; 11:22-23; 43:1-4; 44:4)

1. The God of glory appeared to Abraham (Acts 7:2)
2. The glory of the Lord appeared in Mt. Sinai
3. The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle
4. The glory of the Lord left Israel (1 Sam. 4:21)
5. The glory of the Lord filled the temple built by Solomon
6. The glory of the Lord left the temple

B. In the age of the New Covenant

1. The incarnation of the Lord Jesus as the living temple (Haggai 2:7, 9; John 1:14, 51; 2:19-21)
2. The glorious church (Eph. 1:23; 3:19-21; 5:25-27; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Rev. 1:12-20; 19:7-9)

C. In the millennial kingdom

1. The Son of Man coming in His glory, sitting on the throne of His glory (Matt. 25:31)
2. To be glorified in His saints (2 Thess. 1:10)
3. The glory of the Lord filling the temple (Ezek. 40-47; 48:35)

D. In the new heaven and the new earth (Rev. 21:9-11)

1. The New Jerusalem
2. Having the glory of God

II. The Vision of the Glory of God (Ezek. Chapters 1 & 10; Dan. 7:9-10, 13-14; 10:5-6; Is. 6:1-4; Rev. 1:13-18; chapter 4; 5:5-14; 10:1-3)

A. The need for the heavens to be opened

(vv. 1-3; Matt. 3:16; Mark 1:10; John 1:51; Acts 7:56; 10:11; Rev. 4:1; 19:11)

1. God initiating the vision
2. "The word of the Lord" (50x)
3. "The Spirit of the Lord" (10x – Ezek. 2:2; 3:12-14, 24; 8:3; 11:1, 5, 24; 37:1; 43:5)
4. "The hand of the Lord" (7x – Ezek. 1:3; 3: 14, 22; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1; 40:1)
5. The prophet Ezekiel ("God strengthens")

B. The whirlwind, the cloud, the flashing fire, the brightness and the electrum <Septuagint> (v. 4)

1. From the north – out of heaven from God (Rev. 21:2, 10; Ps. 48:2; Is. 14:13-14)
2. Whirlwind – the power of God's wrath and judgment based on His righteousness (Is. 66:15; Jer. 30:23; Ezek. 13:13)
3. The cloud – the glorious presence of God with His people (Exod. 13:21; 19:9; 24:16; 40:34-35; Rev. 10:1; 14:14)
4. The flashing fire – the holiness of God (Exod. 24:17; Zech. 13:9; 1 Pet. 1:7, 15-16)
5. The brightness all around (Acts 26:13; Rev. 1:16b; 1 John 1:5-7)
6. Electrum – a metal alloy of gold and silver – the divine nature of the Father with the redemptive work of the Son (John 17:1-5; 10:30, 38; 14:9-11; Rev. 22:1, 3)

C. The four living creatures – the Cherubim

(vv. 5-14; Rom. 1:19-20)

1. In appearance they all had the likeness (shape) of a man (Gen. 1:26-28; Ps. 8)
2. Their feet were straight

- a. The sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot (Lev. 11:3-8; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; 1 Cor. 2:15; Heb. 5:14; Hab. 3:19)
- b. They sparkled like the color of burnished brass (Dan. 10:6; Rev. 1:15; 10:1)
3. They had hands of a man – skillfulness (Ps. 78:72; 137:5; 1 Chron. 22:15; 2 Chron. 2:7, 13; Song 7:1; Acts 20:34; 1 Cor. 4:12)
4. Each had four faces (v. 10; Rev. 4:6-7)
 - a. The face of a man in the front – the image and the glory of God (1 Cor. 11:7)
 - b. The face of a lion on the right side – kingly, bold and victorious (Gen. 49:9-10; Prov. 30:30; Rev. 5:5)
 - c. The face of an ox on the left side – the strength to serve (Num. 23:22; Deut. 33:17; 1 Tim. 5:18; 1 Cor. 9:9)
 - d. The face of an eagle on the back side – the hidden heavenly and divine power (Exod. 19:4; Deut. 32:11; Is. 40:31)
5. Each had four wings (vv. 6b, 9, 11; Is. 6:2; Rev. 4:8)
 - a. Two wings covering their bodies (Ex. 28:42-43; Ezek. 16:8, 36; Is. 47:3; Rev. 3:18; 16:15)
 - b. Two wings touching the wings of the other creatures on both sides (2 Cor. 12:18; Phil. 1:27)
 - c. Their movement (vv. 9, 12)
 - They did not turn as they move
 - They went everyone straight forward
 - They went whither the spirit would go (Acts 13:4; 16:7; John 14:26; 16:13-15; 20:22; Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:16, 18, 22-25; Rev. 1:10; 4:1-2; 17:3; 21:9-10; 22:17)
6. The likeness as a whole (vv. 13-14)
 - a. Burning coals of fire, like torches shining brightly – holy and pure (Is. 6:6-7; Ezek. 10:2)
 - Moving back and forth among the creatures
 - Lightning coming forth out of it
 - b. The living creatures ran back and forth (zig-zag) like the flash of the lightning

D. The wheels – the movement of God's administration upon the earth (vv. 15-21)

1. The color of a beryl (mostly green such as emerald, but also aquamarine, & red)
2. All wheels have one likeness
3. Each one is like a wheel within a wheel
4. They do not turn when they move
5. Their rims were so high and awesome, and full of eyes round about them (Rev. 4:6, 8)
6. Their movement (vv. 19-21)
 - a. They move when the creatures move
 - b. They went wherever the Spirit wanted to go (ref. C.5.c.)

E. A firmament above (over the head of) the living creatures (vv. 22-25)

1. Like an awe-inspiring crystal (Rev. 4:6)
2. Under the firmament the wings of the creatures were stretched out touching one another
3. Sound of the wings as they went:
 - a. Like the sound of many waters (Rev. 1:15)
 - b. Like the voice of the Almighty (Ps. 29:3-9)
 - c. Like the sound of the tumult of an army
 - d. Like a great thunderous noise (3:13)
 - e. There was a voice from the firmament

F. The throne above the firmament (vv. 26-28)

1. The appearance – like a sapphire stone
2. One sitting on the throne had the likeness of a man
 - a. Upward from His waist was like the color of electrum enclosed with fire
 - b. Downward from the waist had the appearance of fire
 - With brightness round about it
 - Having the appearance of a rainbow (Rev. 4:3; 10:1; Gen. 9:13-16)

G. Ezekiel fell upon his face, and heard His voice speaking to him (Dan. 8:17; 10:8-10, 15-17; Rev. 1:17)

III. The Calling of the Prophet Ezekiel (Chapters 2-3)

A. The background – the rebellious nation of Israel (2:3-8; 3:7)

1. Impudent and stubborn
2. Transgressing against God and provoking Him continuously with abomination (Chapter 8)
3. Despising the living God

B. The appearing of the glory of God

C. Eating the living word (Ezek. 2:8-10; 3:1-4; Jer. 15:16; Rev. 10:9-10; Ps. 119:103; John 6:63)

D. The Spirit of the Lord coming upon him (ref. II.A.3.)

E. The hand of the Lord strengthening him (ref. II.A.4.)

F. To proclaim God's judgment to His people and the nations

IV. God's Judgment on the Rebellious House of Israel (Ezek. Chapters 4-24; 1 Pet. 4:17)

A. Against the rulers (ch. 11); **the false prophets and prophetesses** (ch. 13); **the elders** (ch. 14); **the whole nation of Israel** (ch. 22)

B. The prophet Ezekiel – bearing the iniquity of the people (4:4-6)

C. God's mercy in the midst of His judgment

1. Keeping for Himself a remnant
(Ezek. 6:8; 7:16; 12:16; 14:22; 16:53, 60-63)

2. The promise of the new covenant and restoration (Ezek. 11:19-21; 18:30-32; 34: 11-31; 36:24-27; 39:25-29)
3. The vision of the valley full of bones (Ezek. 37:1-14)
4. The vision of the two sticks joined into one (Ezek. 37:15-28)

V. God's Judgment on the Gentile Nations

(Ezek. 25-35; 1 John 2:15-17; James 4:4; Rom. 12:2; Tit. 2:11-13; 2 Pet. 1:4)

A. Moab and Ammon – the descendants of Lot
(25:1-11)

B. Edom (Esau) – the old and natural man (Obad. 1:8; Jer. 49:7; 1 Cor. 2:14; Matt. 16:24-25; Heb. 12:6) **and the Philistines – the religious flesh** (25:12-17)

C. Tyre (ch. 26-28:19) **and Sidon** (28:20-24; Matt. 13:7, 22; Mk. 4:18-19; Lk. 8:14) – **trade and commerce**

D. Egypt (ch. 29-32; 1 John 5:19) – **the whole system of the world in general**

E. Satan – the prince of this world
(28:11-19; John 12:31; 16:11; Eph. 2:2)

VI. The Prophecy of the Judgment on Gog and Magog (Ezek. 38-39; Rev. 20:7-9)

VII. The Vision of God's Holy Temple (Ezek. 40-42)

A. Taken by the hand of the Lord to a high mountain
(Ezek. 40:1-2; Rev. 21:9-11)

B. A man whose appearance is like brass
(Ezek. 40:3; Dan. 10:5-6; Rev. 1:15; 10:1)

1. With a cord of linen in one hand

2. And a measuring reed in the other hand (Exod. 25; Zech. 2:1-2; Rev. 11:1-2; 21:15, 17; <Matt. 22:30>)

C. The measurement of the temple

(Ezek. 40:5; 43:10-12; John 1:3; Col. 1:15-19; Heb. 1:2)

VIII. The Return of the Glory of the Lord into the Temple (43:1-12)

A. Through the east gate (44:1-3; Col. 1:18)

B. The place of God's throne and the place of the soles of His feet (v. 7)

C. The entire area shall be most holy

IX. The Altar (43:13-17)

A. Standing in the center of the temple

B. Representing the cross of the Lord Jesus

C. The purification and sanctification

X. The Ordinances for the Priestly Services

(Chapter 44)

A. The qualifications – the sons of Zadok (vv. 15-16)

B. The garments (vv. 17-19)

C. Their personal life (vv. 20-22)

D. Their services toward the people (vv. 23-24)

E. Not being defiled with dead persons and not eating any bird or beast that has died a natural death or has been torn to pieces (vv. 25-27, 31)

F. God Himself being their inheritance and possession (vv. 28-30)

XI. The Apportionment of the Land and the City
(45:1-8; 47:13-23; Chapter 48)

XII. The River of the Water of Life flowing out from under the threshold of the house (47:1-12; John 4:10-14; 7:37-39; 1 Cor. 10:4; 12:13; Rev. 22:1-3)

XIII. The Name of the City – JAHWEH SHAMMAH – THE LORD IS THERE (48:35)

Ezekiel 1

The Vision of the Glory of God

¹ Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth *month*, on the fifth *day* of the month, as I *was* among the captives by the River Chebar, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

² On the fifth *day* of the month, which *was* in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity,

³ the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was upon him there.

⁴ Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud and a blazing fire engulfing itself, and brightness *was* all around it; and out of its midst it gleamed as it were electrum¹, out of the midst of the fire.

¹ LXX; i.e. gold mixed with silver; a natural existing alloy of gold and silver (see Rev. 1:15)

The Four Living Creatures

⁵ And from the midst of it *came* the likeness of four living creatures. And this *was* their appearance: they had the likeness of a man.

⁶ And each one of them had four faces, and each one of them had four wings.

⁷ Their feet *were* straight feet, and the soles of their feet *were* like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled as the look of burnished bronze.

⁸ Under their wings on their four sides were the hands of a man; and all of the four had their faces and their wings.

⁹ Their wings were joined one to another; they did not turn when they went; they went each one straight forward.

¹⁰ As for the likeness of their faces, each of the four had the face of a man *in front*; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle *at the back*.

¹¹ Thus *were* their faces. *Two of* their wings stretched upward: two *wings* of each one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.

¹² And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the Spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went.

¹³ As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance *was* like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches, and *the fire* moved back and forth among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

¹⁴ And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like flashes of lightning.

The Wheels

¹⁵ Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel *was* on the earth beside each living creature toward its four faces.

¹⁶ The appearance of the wheels and their workings² *was* like the look of beryl³, and all four had the same likeness. And their appearance and their construction *was*, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel.

¹⁷ When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn when they went.

² *or* construction

³ *or* chrysolite, turquoise

¹⁸ As for their rims, they were high and awesome; and their rims *were* full of eyes⁴, all around the four of them.

¹⁹ And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose.

²⁰ Wherever the Spirit wanted to go, they went, *because* there the Spirit went; and the wheels rose together with them in perfect unity, for the spirit of the living creature *was* in the wheels.

²¹ When those went, *these* went; when those stood, *these* stood; and when those rose from the earth, the wheels rose together with them in perfect unity, for the spirit of the living creature *was* in the wheels.

The Firmament

²² And above the heads of the living creatures there was the likeness of a firmament like the look of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads.

²³ And under the firmament their wings were *spread out* straight, one toward the other: Each one had two wings which covered its body.

²⁴ When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumultuous noise as that of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings.

²⁵ Whenever they stood, and they let down their wings, a voice came from above the firmament that *was* over their heads.

The Throne of God

²⁶ And above the firmament that was over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone. And seated above the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness with the appearance of a man.

²⁷ Also from the appearance of His loins and upward I saw the look of electrum with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His loins and downward I saw the appearance of fire with brightness all around it.

²⁸ Like the appearance of a bow in a cloud on a day of rain, so *was* the appearance of the brightness all around it. Such *was* the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw *it*, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.

⁴ *see* Ez. 10:12; Rev. 4:6

Ezekiel 10

The Glory of the Lord Departed from the Temple

¹ And I looked, and behold, on the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim, there appeared something like a sapphire stone, having the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

God's Judgment on Jerusalem

² And He spoke to the man⁵ clothed with linen, and said, “Go in among the wheels⁶, under the cherub, fill your hands with coals of fire⁷ from among the cherubim, and scatter *them* over the city.” And he went in as I watched.

³ Now the cherubim stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

God's Love for His House

⁴ Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, *and came* over the threshold of the temple; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD's glory.

⁵ And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard *even* in the outer court, like the voice of Almighty God when He speaks.

⁶ Then it happened, when He commanded the man¹ clothed in linen, saying, “Take fire from among the wheels, from among the cherubim,” that he went in and stood beside the wheels.

⁷ And the cherub stretched out his hand from among the cherubim to the fire that *was* among the cherubim, and took *some of it* and put *it* into the hands of the *man* clothed with linen, who took *it* and went out.

The More Detailed Description of the Cherubim

⁸ And there appeared in the cherubim, the form of a man's hand under their wings.

⁵ see Ez. 9:2; John 5:22-27; 30

⁶ Heb. גַּלְגַּל “galgal” (s. V. 2, 6a, 13b) – a different word than the normal “wheel” (Heb. אֹפָנַי “ophan”). “galgal” is a doubling/duplication of the Heb. word גָּלַל (“galal”), which means to “roll”.

⁷ see Ez. 1:13

⁹ And I looked, and behold, there were four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel by one cherub and another wheel by another cherub; and the appearance of the wheels was like the brightness of a beryl stone.

¹⁰ *As for* their appearance, all four had one likeness, as if a wheel were in the middle of a wheel.

¹¹ When they went, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went, but followed in the direction the head was facing. They did not turn aside when they went.

¹² And their whole body, and their backs, their hands, their wings, and the wheels *were* full of eyes all around in them four and their wheels.

¹³ As for the wheels, one called to them in my hearing, "Whirl."

¹⁴ Each one had four faces: the first face *was* the face of a cherub, the second face the face of a man, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

¹⁵ And the cherubim raised themselves up. This *was* the living creature I saw by the River Chebar.

¹⁶ When the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them; and when the cherubim lifted their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also did not turn from beside them.

¹⁷ When *the cherubim* stood still, *the wheels* stood still, and when *one* was lifted up, *the other* lifted itself up, for the spirit of the living creature *was* in them.

The Glory of the Lord Departed from His House

¹⁸ Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim.

¹⁹ And the cherubim lifted their wings and rose from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels *were* beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel *was* above them.

²⁰ This *is* the living creature I saw under the God of Israel by the River Chebar, and I knew they *were* cherubim.

²¹ Each one had four faces and each one four wings, and the likeness of the hands of a man *was* under their wings.

²² And the likeness of their faces *was* the same *as* the faces which I had seen by the River Chebar, their appearance and their persons. They each went straight forward.