

Ichabod Has Left the Building

God's Presence and Absence Among His People

9:3 Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writing case at his waist.

10:1 Then I looked, and behold, on the expanse that was over the heads of the cherubim there appeared above them something like a sapphire, in appearance like a throne.

² And he said to the man clothed in linen, "Go in among the whirling wheels underneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city." And he went in before my eyes.

³ Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the house, when the man went in, and a cloud filled the inner court.

4 And the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub to the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the LORD.

⁵ And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks.

⁶ And when he commanded the man clothed in linen, "Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the cherubim," he went in and stood beside a wheel.

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

⁸ The cherubim appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings.

⁹ And I looked, and behold, there were four wheels beside the cherubim, one beside each cherub, and the appearance of the wheels was like sparkling beryl.

¹⁰ And as for their appearance, the four had the same likeness, as if a wheel were within a wheel.

¹¹ When they went, they went in any of their four directions without turning as they went, but in whatever direction the front wheel faced, the others followed without turning as they went.

¹² And their whole body, their rims, and their spokes, their wings, and the wheels were full of eyes all around—the wheels that the four of them had.

¹³ As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing “the whirling wheels.”

¹⁴ And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of the cherub, and the second face was a human face, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

¹⁵ And the cherubim mounted up. These were the living creatures that I saw by the Chebar canal. ¹⁶ And when the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them. And when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the wheels did not turn from beside them.

¹⁷ When they stood still, these stood still, and when they mounted up, these mounted up with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in them.

¹⁸ Then the glory of the LORD went out from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim.

¹⁹ And the cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth before my eyes as they went out, with the wheels beside them. And they stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the LORD, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them.

²⁰ These were the living creatures that I saw underneath the God of Israel by the Chebar canal; and I knew that they were cherubim.

²¹ Each had four faces, and each four wings, and underneath their wings the likeness of human hands.

²² And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the same faces whose appearance I had seen by the Chebar canal. Each one of them went straight forward.

11:1 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the house of the LORD, which faces east. And behold, at the entrance of the gateway there were twenty-five men. And I saw among them Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.

² And he said to me, "Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity and who give wicked counsel in this city;

³ who say, 'The time is not near to build houses. This city is the cauldron, and we are the meat.'

⁴ Therefore prophesy against them; prophesy, O son of man."

⁵ And the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and he said to me, "Say, Thus says the LORD: So you think, O house of Israel. For I know the things that come into your mind.

⁶ You have multiplied your slain in this city and have filled its streets with the slain.

⁷ Therefore thus says the Lord God: Your slain whom you have laid in the midst of it, they are the meat, and this city is the cauldron, but you shall be brought out of the midst of it.

⁸ You have feared the sword, and I will bring the sword upon you, declares the Lord God.

⁹ And I will bring you out of the midst of it, and give you into the hands of foreigners, and execute judgments upon you.

¹⁰ You shall fall by the sword. I will judge you at the border of Israel, and you shall know that I am the LORD.

¹¹ This city shall not be your cauldron, nor shall you be the meat in the midst of it. I will judge you at the border of Israel,

¹² and you shall know that I am the LORD. For you have not walked in my statutes, nor obeyed my rules, but have acted according to the rules of the nations that are around you."

13 And it came to pass, while I was prophesying, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then I fell down on my face and cried out with a loud

voice and said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Will you make a full end of the remnant of Israel?"

¹⁴ And the word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁵ "Son of man, your brothers, even your brothers, your kinsmen, the whole house of Israel, all of them, are those of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, 'Go far from the LORD; to us this land is given for a possession.'

¹⁶ Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: Though I removed them far off among the nations, and though I scattered them among the countries, yet *I have been a sanctuary to them* for a while in the countries where they have gone.'

¹⁷ Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.'

¹⁸ And when they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations.

¹⁹ And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,

²⁰ that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

²¹ But *as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things* and their abominations, I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, declares the Lord GOD."

²² Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them.

²³ And **the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain that is on the east side of the city.**

²⁴ And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me in the vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to the exiles. Then the vision that I had seen went up from me.

²⁵ And I told the exiles all the things that the LORD had shown me.

(Ezekiel 10:1:11-25)

Glory in God's House

On the first day of the first month, roughly March/April for us but corresponding to what we think of as Jan 1, God commanded Moses to **dedicate the tabernacle** that the people had finished designing. Complete with all of its amazing architectural features and the anointing of the priests, Moses did as he was commanded by the Lord (**Ex 40:1-33**). And then we read, “*The cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would set out. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of the LORD was on the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel throughout all their journeys*” (**Ex 40:34-38**).

Now, earlier, God had told Moses, “You shall put the mercy seat on the top of **the ark** [of the covenant], and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you. There *I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will*

speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel” (25:21-22). And so from this we learn that *this glory* that filled the tabernacle was particularly localized inside the Most Holy Place just above the ark of the covenant, which was designed as *a king’s throne*. In other words, God has now come to sit on his throne. That’s the imagery.

Fast forward many years to the days of *Samuel* after all the other Judges of Israel had come and gone. We are in the days of *Eli* who served as the priest of God. It was this Eli whom Samuel went to again and again when he heard the voice near the ark when he was a lad. Eli was old and blind and fat in those days and there was a war between Israel and the Philistines. And the Philistines defeated Israel prompting them to ask, “*Why has the LORD defeated us today?*” (1Sam 4:3). And so they said, “*Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies.*” They were using it as *a talisman*.

So the people went and fetched as it says, “*the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim*” (4), that is *enthroned above the actual ark*, for it is his seat. When the ark was seen in the camp, the Israelites let up a great shout so that the earth shook (5), and the Philistines

then learned of what had happened. And they were afraid, for they said, “A god has come into the camp” (7), and they knew it was “the gods” who struck down the Egyptians and there very afraid (8). But they roused their courage (9), and fought and Israel was again defeated(!) as 30,000 foot soldiers were killed (10). And they took the ark of God and captured the two sons of Eli, killing them (11).

A man of Benjamin ran from the battle and came to Shiloh where he met Eli sitting on his seat by the side of the road watching and trembling for the return of the ark (13). But the man came and delivered the devastating news. “Israel has fled before the Philistines, and there has also been a great defeat among the people. Your two sons ... are dead, and the ark of God has been captured” (17). And when Eli heard the news, he fell over backwards on his chair and died (18).

Now, his daughter-in-law, the wife of his now dead son Phinehas, was pregnant, and about to give birth (19). And when she heard the news that the ark of God was captured, and that her husband and father-in-law were dead, she bowed and gave birth immediately and as she herself was about to die, she named her son Ichabod, saying, “The glory has departed from Israel!” because the ark of God had been captured and her family was dead (20-21).

Providentially, through a series of unfortunate events for the Philistines but rather funny occurrences to a Jew (such as their god Dagon falling face-down before the ark, not once but twice, [1Sam 5:3-4](#); and God sending bizarre tumors like the plague or hemorrhoids upon the people, [6, 9, 12](#); and then returning the ark with some divinely guided cows so they didn't have to get close to it, [6:10-12](#)), [the ark was returned](#) just a couple chapters later. The glory was back!

The [returning of the glory](#) to Israel is later [cemented](#) in an event that mirrors the glory coming in the tabernacle. This time we move to [the days of Solomon](#). And so we read that right after Solomon, like Moses, finished all the preparations for the [temple](#)—which was itself a permanent depiction of the tabernacle—that Solomon assembled the elders of Israel and “*brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion*” ([1Kg 8:1](#)). Everyone assembled in the seventh month and brought up the ark ([2-3](#)). They took all the instruments and assembled them and then with a great sacrifice and brought the ark to its place in the inner sanctuary of the house, in the Most Holy Place, underneath the wings of the cherubim ([6](#)). And it says when the celebration was over, “*And when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the*

priests could not stand to minister because of *the cloud*, for *the glory of the LORD* filled the house of the LORD” (10-11).

The Glory of God IS God

Today in Ezekiel 10-11, we are going to see a most unsettling thing. The Glory which descended upon the Tabernacle and Temple will, in a very calculated and visual movement, *leave*. This would have been a devastating and terrifying thought for the Jews to come to grips with. But before going to that story and its implications, we need to talk about the Glory of God.

What is the Glory of God? To put it most directly, *the Glory of God is God*. But maybe a little more precisely, the glory of God is *God’s covenantal presence, visibly manifesting his holy majesty and merciful commitment to dwell with and judge His people*. It is *Triune glory*. Paul calls the Father, “the Father of glory” (Eph 1:17). Stephen calls Jesus, “The glory of God, that is Jesus” (Acts 7:55).¹ Peter calls the Spirit, “the Spirit of glory and of God” (1Pe 4:14). Hence, the *Gloria Patri*: “Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and to the Holy Ghost...”

¹ Taking *kai* (“and”) epexegetically.

Glory in the Hebrew is the word *kavod*. It derives from a root that means “weighty” or “heavy.” The Greek *doxa* (where we get words like *doxology*) in classical Greek means “opinion” or “reputation.” God’s glory—his reputation, his weightiness—is be *perceived in his works*: the creation of the world, of human beings, and of historical events which include both restoration and judgment.² Who else can do such things? It is also *perceived in his Persons*, especially in the Son and Spirit who manifest and mediate the glory of the Father to the creation. *The Father is the source* of the glory, enthroned in transcendence with his majesty *revealed* through *the Spirit’s presence* often visible through phenomena such as a radiant cloud, a fire, a storm, or even a bird hovering and *mediated* and *embodied* by *the form of one like a man*—be he an Angel-man in the OT or a human Jesus in the NT, almost always in covenantal contexts where God is coming to his people to engage in a relationship with them via a covenant.

The idea first begins to appear even in the *second verse of the Bible* when “*the earth was without form (tohu) and void*” and “*the Spirit of God was hovering (rachaph) over the face of the waters*” (*Gen 1:2*) like some kind of *radiant*

² J. E. Fossum, “Glory,” in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst (Leiden; Boston; Köln; Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge: Brill; Eerdmans, 1999), 348. 348-52.

Glory-cloud or bird. Two Targums translate it as a “wind/spirit of mercy.” This directly parallels a passage in Moses’s song where he uses two of these words in the only other time they appear in the Pentateuch, “He found him in a desert land, and in the howling waste (*tohu*) of the wilderness; he encircled him, he cared for him ... Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that flutters (*rachaph*) over its young ... the LORD alone guided him” (Deut 32:10-12). This in turn directly evokes the pillar of cloud and fire in the Exodus “And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead them along the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. The pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night did not depart from them” (Ex 13:21-22). Like the bird image, the pillars hover over the people with God’s covenant glory-presence, even as was present in Gen 1:2.³

So where is the glory? Ex 16:10 tells us, “Behold, *the glory of the Lord* appeared in the cloud.” The meaning is that the Father’s glory appeared both as the Spirit’s presence manifesting as cloud and fire and the Angel’s presence who is *in* the cloud. As it says, “Then *the angel* of God who was going before the host of Israel moved and went behind

³ The two Hebrew words *tohu* and *rachaph* appear only in these two verses in Moses. I highly recommend reading Meredith G. Kline, *Images of the Spirit* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1999), 13-17.

them, and *the pillar* of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them, coming between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel” (Ex 14:19-20), and again, “And *the Lord* went before them by day in *a pillar* of cloud to lead them along the way” (13:21). And thus Isaiah concludes, “In all their affliction he was afflicted, and *the Angel of his presence* saved them... and *the Spirit of the LORD* gave them rest” (Isa 63:9, 14). The Spirit and Son are always working together to manifest the Glory of the Father to his people.

I brought up the targums because they add a word found in Aramaic that you have probably heard of. The word is *Shekinah*. It comes from the Hebrew verb *shakan*, which means “to settle.” So for example, “And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled (*shakan*) on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple” (Ex 40:35). The Targum says, “And Moses could not enter the tent of meeting, because he had made *the Glory of the Shekinah of the Lord* rest upon it, and the *Glory of the Shekinah of the Lord* filled the tabernacle.” The Shekinah is thus literally the settling or dwelling of God in glory in a particular place. The Isaiah Targum says in the famous text, “I saw the glory of the Lord resting upon a throne... and the temple was filled by the brilliance of his glory ... and in his mouth there

was a speech which he took before him *whose Shekinah is upon the throne of glory*” (Isa 6:1, 5).

Shekinah became a two-powers word that was used to describe the presence of the Memra—the Word of God. For example in Chronicles at the dedication of the temple is has Then Solomon said: “The Lord *has chosen to cause his Shekinah to dwell in the city of Jerusalem, in the sanctuary house which I have built for the Name of his Memra, but a thick black cloud has concealed before him*” (Targ 2Chr 6:1). John picks this up in his Gospel on several occasions. For example, he says that “Isaiah saw [Christ’s] glory and spoke of Him” (John 12:41). And of course he says at the beginning of his Gospel, “We have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth” because “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14). Dwelling is the exact idea of the Shekinah while Logos (Word) is the exact idea of the Memra.

Ezekiel 10-11—Context and Structure

That’s a lot of background, I know, but it is vital if you are to truly understand the force of the incredible sight that Ezekiel is going to see that I want to bring out of Ezekiel 10-11. For something happens in these chapters that began back

in **Ezekiel 9:3**. “Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house.” Let’s take a very brief tour of where we have seen the glory thus far in Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 1:28 takes place **by the Chebar Canal in Babylon**. Here, the prophet sees that amazing vision of the wheels and four living creatures and one like a sun of man whose appearance was so dazzling and brilliant and terrifying. He called that appearance “**the likeness of the glory of the LORD**.” So here is the glory of God *in Babylon*? Again in **3:12**, the Spirit lifts the prophet up and says, “**Blessed be the glory of the LORD from its place!**” Again, the setting is the Chebar Canal in Babylon. This becomes explicit in the third mention of the glory in **vs. 23**.

In **Ezekiel 8:4**, however, **the setting changes**. Suddenly, the prophet is thrown into a visionary experience and he sees the glory of the God of Israel **in Jerusalem** in the temple, in the inner court near the altar of the burnt offering. This is the same place where we see that blurring of the Son and Spirit, which makes sense because both are the Glory of God. Now, the glory in Jerusalem is where the glory of God should be, *kind of*. The glory isn’t supposed to be in Babylon, but that will actually become good news at the end of the sermon. Yet, it is vital to see that the Glory in Exodus and Kings rested

above the ark of the covenant on his seat—inside the Most Holy Place.

But here, the glory is *outside in the courtyard*, directly in front of the entrance to the Holy Place near the altar of burnt offering. God has moved outside of his house because he sees what has been going on in the gross defilement of his temple. He is now outside and he is watching. God sees. This is explained in 9:3 where it said, “*Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub on which it rested to the threshold of the house.*” The form of the verb (*na‘ălâ* in the nif'al) is in a perfect tense, meaning that it conveys a completed action. That action was discussed in 8:4. But it is mentioned here because we have in chs. 8-11 a chiasm of geography where *Ezekiel moves* from outside the temple into the center and then *the Glory moves* out of the center to outside the temple.

- A. Ezekiel brought to Jerusalem, outer gate (8:1-5)
- B. Ezekiel moves to the court of the house (8:6-16)
- C. Ezekiel at the altar, judgment begins (9:1-6)
- D. God's glory was over the cherubim in the Most Holy Place (9:3a)**
- C'. God's glory to threshold near the altar, judgment executed (9:3b-11; cf. 8:4-5)
- B'. God's glory moves to the east gate (10:1-19)
- A'. God's glory departs to the Mount of Olives (11:22-23)

In my opinion, *this is the driving theological point* of all four chapters, but they really come to a head in Chs. 10-11, which

complete the full cycle that began back in Ch. 1 as we will see many ideas from the first chapter return again today.

- A. Vision of God's Glory (Ch. 1)
- B. Prophetic Commissioning (Chs. 2-3)
- C. Judgment Proclaimed (Chs. 4-7)
- D. Abominations and Judgment (Chs. 8-9)**
- C'. Judgment Executed (Ch. 10)
- B'. Glory's Departure Begins (Chs. 10-11)
- A'. Departure of God's Glory (Ch. 11)

(As for a deeper look at the structures embedded in chs. 10-11, because there are a lot of them, I will only note here that two of them center on the movement of the glory going further away from the Most Holy Place, while one of them stands alone contrasting bad news with good news as we end the chapters; see the Appendix at the end for more).

Ezekiel 10: The Glory Leaves the House

Having now seen that the glory of God has moved out of the Most Holy Place [into the courtyard](#) right at the threshold of the entrance to the Holy Place and that he has seen the abominations Israel has committed and called for the executioners to begin their judgment upon the temple and city, while also remembering that they were not allowed to touch those who were given the mark by the man clothed in linen,

we come to **Ezekiel 10:1**, “Then I looked, and behold, on the expanse that was over the heads of the cherubim there appeared above them something like a sapphire, in appearance like a throne.” We’ve seen this before. It is the vision that Ezekiel saw in Ch. 1. It describes God’s heavenly chariot throne; the so-called **Merkabah** (chariot). But now, instead of this being in Babylon, it too is here in the temple in Jerusalem.

We continue, “And he said to the man clothed in linen, ‘Go in among the whirling wheels underneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.’ And he went in before my eyes” (2). This is the same man who had just marked all those whose spirits groaned over the evils that were being committed in the temple. But what is he doing?

It comes in the middle of a **judgment scene**, so this is not for purification, like we see in Isaiah 6. Rather, these are the coals of fiery justice pouring down from heaven like the fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrah.

“Now the cherubim were standing on the south side of the house, when the man went in, and a cloud filled the inner court” (3). The picture is that of the divine chariot with its heavenly cherubim guarding the throne now appearing on the south part of the temple courtyard, **opposite the idol of**

Jealousy that was put up on the north side. But the cloud filling the inner court is very important to notice and it is why we needed to understand the relationship of the glory and the cloud earlier. For what is happening is that glory of God has left the building.

It continues and gets more specific. “*And the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub to the threshold of the house, and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was filled with the brightness of the glory of the Lord*” (4). God’s presence is very much here in the temple, but it is no longer hidden behind the walls or curtains of the holy place. Rather, it is out in the open filling the doorway and the house with the cloud and the whole court is being brightened like the sun coming out from behind an eclipse. This happens to be the center of a structure that goes from 10:1-7, so it is obviously important.

Suddenly, “*The sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard as far as the outer court, like the voice of God Almighty when he speaks*” (5). It must have been both *awe-inspiring and terrifying*. Simply the movement of the wings of these massive throne-guardians from heaven sounds like the thundering voice of the Almighty. And they are all fluttering together at once.

Just then, when “he commanded the man clothed in linen, ‘Take fire from between the whirling wheels, from between the cherubim,’ he went in and stood beside a wheel” (6). The “he” who is commanding goes all the way back to the Man-Spirit blurring early in Ch. 8. This is the LORD. Now, rather than coals, he is to take fire itself. “And a cherub stretched out his hand from between the cherubim to the fire that was between the cherubim, and took some of it and put it into the hands of the man clothed in linen, who took it and went out” (7). The man and the cherubim are working together to get the fire.

Just here it explains, “The cherubim appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings” (8). This takes us back to 1:8 and those four living creatures. The difference? Cherubim did not appear in Ch. 1. Now they are mentioned by this name—throne guardians. It’s another way of viewing the living creatures other than those cardinal directions of the zodiac that we saw before. It is a complementary idea. It is likely that this is in mind because they were associated with the ark of the covenant which the glory has now left. But though the ark is still in its place inside the Most Holy Place, the spiritual throne upon which he sits is in fact moving.

We get more descriptions from Ch. 1 that return. “And I looked, and behold, there were four wheels beside the cherubim, one beside each cherub, and the appearance of the wheels was like sparkling beryl” (10:9). We saw all this in Ezek 1:15-18. Then vs. 10, “And as for their appearance, the four had the same likeness, as if a wheel were within a wheel.” This matches 1:16. Again vs. 11. “When they went, they went in any of their four directions without turning as they went, but in whatever direction the front wheel faced, the others followed without turning as they went.” This matches 1:17.

The parallels continue. “And their whole body, their rims, and their spokes, their wings, and the wheels were full of eyes all around—the wheels that the four of them had” (10:12). This matches 1:18. Vs. 13 adds one feature we do not see in Ch. 1. “As for the wheels, they were called in my hearing ‘the whirling wheels.’” In other words, these wheels are for moving. God is mobile, he is not static, he is not confined to a place.

The repetition continues in vs. 14. “And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of the cherub, and the second face was a human face, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.” This repeats 1:10 except that the cherub has replaced the ox from Ch. 1. Why? Again,

it is likely because of the temple context—cherubim guard the ark of the covenant, not ox. In Babylon, nowhere near the temple, this didn't matter and the scene was more heavenly constellation driven.

Ezek 10:15-17 now parallel **1:19-21**, except that again we are **in the temple**, not Babylon. And Ezekiel says as much. “And the cherubim mounted up. These were the living creatures that I saw by the Chebar canal. And when the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them. And when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the wheels did not turn from beside them. When they stood still, these stood still, and when they mounted up, these mounted up with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in them.” With all of this **repetition**, it is important to ask **why**? I think there are several reasons. **First**, It brings consistency to the visions. These are over a year apart, and yet it is the same thing. Ezekiel is explaining the same thing because he really saw it. **Second**, it all reinforces **the Triune God** and his amazing glory, including the glory, the Spirit, the man, the whole thing. **Third**, it emphasizes the literary cohesion of Chs. 1-11 as well as 8-11 and helps you figure out how to interpret it. **Fourth** and finally, it shows that God is mobile and active and on the move, able to go anywhere he pleases.

Harmony of Ezekiel 10 with Ezekiel 1

Ezekiel 1

10:1 - "Then I looked, and behold, on the expanse that was over the heads of the cherubim there appeared above them something like a sapphire, in appearance like a throne."

10:8 - "The cherubim appeared to have the form of a human hand under their wings."

10:9-10 - "And I looked, and behold, there were four wheels beside the cherubim, one beside each cherub, and the appearance of the wheels was like sparkling beryl. And as for their appearance, the four had the same likeness, as if a wheel were within a wheel."

10:11 - "When they went, they went in any of their four directions without turning as they went, but in whatever direction the front wheel faced, the others followed without turning as they went."

10:12 - "And their whole body, their backs, their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes all around, even the wheels that the four had."

10:14 - "And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of the cherub, the second face was a human face, the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle."

10:15-17 - "And the cherubim mounted up. These were the living creatures that I saw by the Chebar canal. And when the cherubim went, the wheels went beside them. And when the cherubim lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the wheels did not turn from beside them. When they stood still, the wheels stood still, and when they mounted up, the wheels mounted up with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in them."

10:20-21 - "These were the living creatures that I saw underneath the God of Israel by the Chebar canal, and I knew that they were cherubim. Each had four faces, and each four wings, and underneath their wings the likeness of human hands."

Ezekiel 1

1:26-27 - "And above the expanse over their heads there was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like sapphire; and seated above the likeness of a throne was a likeness with a human appearance. And upward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were gleaming metal, like the appearance of fire enclosed all around. And downward from what had the appearance of his waist I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and there was brightness around him."

1:8 - "Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their faces and their wings."

1:15-18 - "Now as I looked at the living creatures, I saw a wheel on the earth beside the living creatures, one for each of the four of them. As for the appearance of the wheels and their construction: their appearance was like the gleaming of beryl. And the four had the same likeness, their appearance and construction being as it were a wheel within a wheel. When they went, they went in any of their four directions without turning as they went. And their rims were tall and awesome, and the rims of all four were full of eyes all around."

1:17 - "When they went, they went in any of their four directions without turning as they went."

1:18 - "And their rims were tall and awesome, and the rims of all four were full of eyes all around."

1:10 - "As for the likeness of their faces, each had a human face. The four had the face of a lion on the right side, the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and the four had the face of an eagle."

1:19-21 - "And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures rose from the earth, the wheels rose. Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, and the wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those rose from the earth, the wheels rose along with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels."

1:5-8 - "And from the midst of it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had a human likeness, but each had four faces, and each of them had four wings... Under their wings on their four sides they had human hands. And the four had their faces and their wings."

This is what now appears in **vs. 18**. You have to imagine with your mind this incredible multi-wheeled, four-living creatures, cherubim platform throne thing that Ezekiel is seeing now moving. “Then the glory of the Lord went out from the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubim.” This is **completely wild language**. The Glory is *standing*! It is personified, almost like it is the divine man-figure. In fact, that’s basically what **Ezek 1:28** had told us. This is **Christ enshrouded by the glory-cloud** mounting his chariot throne. He has now moved from the threshold away from the entrance to the holy place, now to the south to where his fantastical chariot now awaits him.

“And the cherubim lifted up their wings and mounted up from the earth before my eyes as they went out, with the wheels beside them. And they stood at the entrance of the east gate of the house of the Lord, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them” (**19**). So now the whole throne **moves** at the instigation of the cherubim to the **entrance of the east gate** of the temple—the place you go in. But the glory isn’t going in. It is moving out.

To tie the whole chapter then back to Ch. 1 creating an inclusio, we have the last three verses of the chapter. “**These**

were the living creatures that I saw underneath the *God of Israel* by the Chebar canal; and I knew that they were cherubim. Each had four faces, and each four wings, and underneath their wings the likeness of human hands. And as for the likeness of their faces, they were the same faces whose appearance I had seen by the Chebar canal. Each one of them went straight forward” (20-22). Notice how he has now specifically identified the glory-man as “the God of Israel.”

Ezekiel 11:1-13 Judgment Upon the House of God

Now, we have moved very quickly through **Ezekiel 10**, in some ways because we’ve seen much of it before. But also, I wanted to preach it with **Ch. 11**,⁴ and we are only halfway done with our text for today, so moving faster was necessary. Ch. 11 is going to take us to a main reason why God is leaving the temple. He is coming to send judgment upon it. Daniel Block argues that the first half (**vv. 1-12**) is written in the genre of **a prophetic disputation speech**—a component is some prophetic covenant lawsuits (Heb: *rîb*). This is a genre where the prophet quotes a **popular opinion** or saying, **exposes its falsehood**, and **refutes it with divine truth**. It’s aim is to correct false beliefs and behaviors with God’s truth.

⁴ Note the third chiasm in the Appendix that ties Chs. 10-11 together.

- a. Summons and Setting (Preamble, v. 1)
- b. The People's Claim (the thesis; vv. 2–3)
 - (1) Introduction (v. 2)
 - (2) The quotation (v. 3)
- c. God's refutation (vv. 4–6)
 - (1) Introduction (vv. 4–5a)
 - (2) The dispute (vv. 5b–6)
- d. Judgment and Covenant Context (The counterthesis; vv. 7–12)
 - (a) The first refutation (vv. 7–10)
 - (b) The second refutation (vv. 11–12)
- e. Epilogue (v. 13)⁵

It begins with **a summons and setting** in a kind of preamble. “**The Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the house of the Lord, which faces east. And behold, at the entrance of the gateway there were twenty-five men. And I saw among them Jaazaniah the son of Azzur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people**” (**Ezek 11:1**). So now Ezekiel is just inside the temple complex facing the east gate. Surely, the Glory-Chariot is beside him. As he looks at the gate, he sees **twenty-five men** at the entrance, among whom are **Jaazaniah the son of Azzur**, and **Pelatiah the son of Benaiah**. These are princes of Israel. Their presence is similar to summoning the accused in a covenant lawsuit, except that

⁵ Modified from **Daniel Isaac Block**, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 1–24*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 330.

they aren't being summoned, but they still represent the covenant community's rebellion.

Now, we saw the name Jaazaniah in Ch. 8, but he was the son of *Shaphan*. He seems to have the ringleader of the seventy elders that were desecrating the temple in his mad-return to worship the gods of the nations emulating Baal worship. But this guy is called a prince, not an elder and his father is Azzur, not Shaphan. So it is likely two different men. Nevertheless, the name **Jaazaniah** is the same and we remember that it means, “**He will be heard of the LORD; whom Jehovah hears; Jehovah does hearken.**” Surely, this is ironic again in a way that mirrors the rebellion of the seventy elders of whom the other Jaazaniah lead.

Azzur means “**help**” or “**helper**” and likely contrasts with his sons harmful counsel in the next verse. Further, if the former Jaazaniah emulates Baal, Azzur could remind us of the Assyrian god Ashur, a fitting idea given that Ezekiel in Babylon is godly while this guy in the temple of worshiping the gods. **Pelatiah** comes from *palat*: “**to escape**” or “**deliver**” and *Yah*, so it means something like the LORD delivers. This will be totally ironic, as the man will die in **vs. 13**. Finally, **Beniah** comes from *banah* (“**to build**”) and *Yah*, so it means the

LORD builds.⁶ Let's see how these names all play out in the story as the people's false claims.

“And he said to me, ‘Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity and who give wicked counsel in this city...’” (Ezek 11:2). Given that they devise iniquity and there are twenty-five of them by the east gate, the same as the twenty-five in 8:16 who were worshiping the sun at the east gate, they are likely the same people, and we recall that this was the worst of the four abominations in that chapter. Very sinful men.

Next comes their false opinion. “... who say, ‘The time is not near to build houses. This city is the cauldron, and we are the meat’” (3). What does this mean? Heiser helpfully explains that if you boil meat in a cauldron, you boil the good meat, not the bad meat, grizzle, and bones. It's a metaphor. You put the good meat in the cauldron. Jerusalem is the cauldron, and they are the meat. In other words, “We're the good part of the city. We're the ones in the city that are worth saving. The grizzle and bones have already been thrown out in the earlier deportations.” You get the impression that they think that God is going to spare them because of who they are.

So *who are they*, exactly, besides guys worshiping the sun in God's temple! They are either home-grown nobility or

⁶ Stelman Smith and Judson Cornwall, *The Exhaustive Dictionary of Bible Names* (North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos, 1998), 117, 28, 193, 35.

they could be the Jews in governing positions left behind by the Babylonians to rule the city in their place after they took Israel's nobility into exile. In other words, they are [the puppet government of the city](#)!⁷ In making deals with Babylon, they feel utterly secure, untouchable, not unlike so many in our own political elites who do unspeakable things believing that they will never be caught or punished.

The “[building houses](#)” part is difficult to understand, especially as how to translate it isn't clear. It could mean what the KJV says, “[It is not near; let us build houses.](#)” In other words, they don't think anything is going to happen to the city, so let's build away. This probably isn't a great translation, so some think it may refer to a prophecy in [Jeremiah 29:5](#) where he commands *the exiles in Babylon* to build houses. If so, they are again saying, “[That day is long from now, don't worry about Babylon. After all, we are in tight with them, they won't come and harm us anymore.](#)” A fourth interpretation is that the houses are actually advocating for preparing for war with confidence that Jerusalem's defenses will protect them like a cauldron protects meat from the fire.⁸

⁷ [Michael Heiser](#), “[Naked Bible Podcast Transcript: Ezekiel 10-11, Episode 119](#),” [Naked Bible Podcast](#) (Sept 24, 2016), 11.

⁸ [John B. Taylor](#), *Ezekiel: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 22, Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1969), 109-11.

Whatever the case, it is clearly a false opinion of reality. And that's where the prophet turns. "Therefore prophesy against them; prophesy, O son of man" (4). It's never a good sign when God commands a prophet to prophesy against you. "And the Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and he said to me, 'Say, Thus says the Lord: So you think, O house of Israel. For I know the things that come into your mind. You have multiplied your slain in this city and have filled its streets with the slain'" (5-6). This is God's refutation of their foolishness. They are trusting in a place and human structures, rather than a Person. *You think after the evil you have committed in your very own streets and my people, all the deaths—the "slain"—that you are not going to be punished? You've got another thing coming.*

Vv. 7-12 are the judgement given in a covenantal context of the divine glory-presence making his judicial pronouncement right there at the east gate where the 25 presently stand.⁹ "Therefore thus says the Lord God: Your slain whom you have laid in the midst of it, they are the meat, and this city is the cauldron, but you shall be brought out of the midst of it. You have feared the sword, and I will bring the sword upon

⁹ **Going Deeper.** I don't really have time today to get into the Judgment context of the glory-presence. But needless to say it goes back all the way to **Genesis 3:8** when after the Fall, Adam and Eve hear the "thunderous sound" of God traversing the garden "as the Spirit of the day" (Kline, p. 97-107), a judicial Glory confronting sin. This primal *parousia* guards Eden's sanctity. See Kline, 97-107; Kline, "Primal Parousia," *WTJ* 40 (1977/78): 245-89; see also William Cooke, *The Shekinah* (London: J. B. Cooke, 1857), 31-35. I will deal with this in my upcoming book on the Serpent Mound with Dr. Judd Burton.

you, declares the Lord God. And I will bring you out of the midst of it, and give you into the hands of foreigners, and execute judgments upon you.” (7-9). In other words, **you think that you are the good meat?** No, I tell you those who have slain are the meat and Jerusalem is not a place of safety, but death. You are going to be dragged out of the city and judged.

Again, “**You shall fall by the sword. I will judge you at the border of Israel, and you shall know that I am the Lord. This city shall not be your cauldron, nor shall you be the meat in the midst of it. I will judge you at the border of Israel, and you shall know that I am the Lord. For you have not walked in my statutes, nor obeyed my rules, but have acted according to the rules of the nations that are around you**” (10-12). Essentially, those who do not die by the sword will be **taken into captivity** like the earlier waves. You wanted to act so much like the nations around you, according to their rules and laws, their worship and abominations, then that’s precisely where you are going to live from now on.

This is **a sharp warning to the church today**, and the reason is because this behavior was *the people of God* in the OT, while the people in the God in the NT is the church. Whenever the church decides that it will look around at the world and emulate its immoral behavior or philosophies, corrupting God’s law through sexual perversion or clear disobedience to

commandments or tolerating public sin in its midst, they are acting like the nations around them and we see here that this is precisely why God is judging them.

Vs. 13 completes this prophetic disputation by bringing it full circle. In it, we see what will eventually happen just a handful of years from now. “**And it came to pass, while I was prophesying, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died**” (**13a**). Pelatiah didn’t escape; he **died**. The son of Benaiah didn’t build; he was **buried**. It happened at the moment Ezekiel prophesied! That very moment—proving he was God’s mouthpiece.

This all **causes the prophet to lament** in horror. “**Then I fell down on my face and cried out with a loud voice and said, ‘Ah, Lord God! Will you make a full end of the remnant of Israel?’**” (**13b**). Importantly, recall we saw nearly this same thing in **9:8**, “**I fell upon my face, and cried, ‘Ah, Lord GOD! Will you destroy all the remnant of Israel in the outpouring of your wrath on Jerusalem?’**” Previously, I noted how God **didn’t really answer Ezekiel’s question**, in fact God simply doubled down on the judgment saying that these people were wicked and deserved it. The best we got was a hint that God would remember, because the man in linen had gone out and marked those who were faithful to the LORD. God knows his people. The end of vs. 13 now recalls this same

thing and it begs for an answer. And indeed, in the midst of all this judgment, that is exactly what the prophet will finally get. And what a remarkable series of verses we now find ourselves running into.

Ezekiel 11:14-25 The New Covenant—The Glory With Us

We come to vv. 14-25 and a series of two chiastic structures that mirror one another as ABBA and ABBA contrasts. “And the word of the Lord came to me...” (Ezek 11:14). I always want you to remember that this refers to Christ coming to Ezekiel. But now, I want you to understand that what we’ve just seen is the covenantal curses coming down on the heads of Israel in all of their weighty glorious power. The covenant has been broken. This will become very important as we go along.

“Son of man, your brothers, even your brothers, your kinsmen, the whole house of Israel, all of them, are those of whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, ‘Go far from the Lord; to us this land is given for a possession’” (15). The idea here is that the residents who remain in Jerusalem have been claiming that the exiles (that is, Ezekiel’s community in Babylon) have been cast out from God’s presence, implying that

those that those remaining in the city are favored and possess the land. This reflects their false confidence in their status, which God has refuted. It is a remarkably **blind and pathetic display** of how we humans rarely seem to be able to interpret the world around us, indeed we never can when we forget what the Word of God teaches us about it.

So now think about **vs. 16**. “Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: Though I removed them far off among the nations, and though I scattered them among the countries, yet *I have been a sanctuary to them for a while in the countries where they have gone.*’” This verse is actually given as a great comfort to *Ezekiel and the elders* who are sitting by him in Babylon as he tells them about his vision. And notice the language. **God has been a sanctuary to them.** God has been their temple.

They are 1000 miles away from the temple where those rebels are, where God’s presence has always resided, and yet *God has been their temple!* **Suddenly, the whole point of Ezekiel 1** and this profound vision of the chariot throne of God himself in Babylon of all places comes sharply into focus. *You thought that I was only in Israel? You think I’m like the gods of the nations who either can’t go into other territories or need permission first? No. I’m right here with you, my people. I’m in your midst. I am the Living God, the Creator of heaven and earth. And my Spirit hovers wherever I want. My Glory presence is right here. My*

Word—the one with the likeness of a human being who is seated above the cherubim, I am here.

But that's not right. That's not possible, the Jews had come to think as they created God in their own image and likeness. Sproul writes,

Right before the exile into Babylon, the old covenant community lost sight of the fact that the Lord does not limit Himself to one place. True, He chose to make His presence felt in a special way in the Jerusalem temple during the old covenant period. Yet **He was by no means imprisoned there.** A belief that God could never leave His temple, however, was commonly held during the ministries of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Thus, the people paid little heed to the warnings of these prophets to repent lest Jerusalem be destroyed. If the Lord could not leave Jerusalem, how could it be destroyed? “This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord” they would cry in order to shout down the threats of divine judgment (**Jer 7:4**).¹⁰

So here we have God telling all of the Jews, he has been with them as a temple in his glory in Babylon. Meanwhile, something else is happening to his glory in Jerusalem. But before we get to that final destination of the glory at the end of Ch. 11, we want to keep reading.

¹⁰ Unattributed, but presumed to be **R. C. Sproul**, “[God Leaves the Temple](#),” *Ligonier* (Sept 16, 2013).

“Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel’” (17). It’s like somehow, for some reason, **suddenly blessing are coming**. Where did this come from? God is going to gather the people whom he has just promised to scatter among the countries? And he will give them the land of Israel? I thought the land was already theirs? What does this mean? We have to keep reading.

“And when they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations” (18). It is tempting to think that this fulfillment is to be found in the return of the exiles in the days of **Ezra and Nehemiah**. The Ezra/Nehemiah return (c. 538–450 BC) partially fulfilled this verse by removing idolatry and restoring worship (Ezra 9–10, Nehemiah 13), but it failed to fully realize the promise due to persistent sin and incomplete covenant renewal, as seen in ongoing violations (**Neh 13:26–27, Mal 2:10–17**). The Latter Prophets, such as Haggai and Zechariah, critique the returnees’ spiritual lethargy and unfinished temple (**Hag 1:2–11, Zech 1:2–6**), indicating that this can’t be the final fulfillment.

But isn’t not just this line of evidence. We still must keep reading. “And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from

their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, *that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God*” (19-20). Does that sound familiar? One of the most famous new covenant prophecies appears later in Ezekiel 36. It says, “Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God” (Ezek 36:26-28).

This passage is also closely related to perhaps the most famous of all new covenant passages found in Jeremiah, who prophesied just prior to Ezekiel. “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah... I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people... for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more” (Jer 31:31-34). Notice here how this is explicitly called the “new covenant.” And, it is quoted in Hebrews (Hebrews 8:6–13) precisely so that we will know that its fulfillment comes only *with Jesus and his church*. Ezekiel 11, which hardly anyone

even knows is there, is therefore also talking about **the new covenant**, echoed in many places in the NT (**John 3:3–5; 2Co 3:3–6; Rom 2:28–29; 8:9–11; Titus 3:5–6**; etc.).

But there's one more piece here, which is this comment that *you will be my people, and I will be your God*. This originates in **Ex 6:7**, obviously of the Israelites in Egypt. However, Paul takes this exact language, picked up by both Ezekiel and Jeremiah in their new covenant prophecies, and directly equates the fulfillment to the church, even talking about how there is no agreement between the temple of God and idols (**2Cor 6:16**).

Therefore, the “**land**” called Israel is talking about *Christ's church*, whom Paul refers to as the “**Israel of God**” (**Gal 6:16**). How could the a *people* be called the *land*? Does that make sense? Yes, when you understand that where the glory of God goes is into his people all over the world when they are brought into the new covenant.

This is why Jerome long ago said, “**I linger long in the land of the midday sun [Israel], for it was there and then that the spouse found her bridegroom at rest and Joseph drank wine with his brothers once more. I will return to Jerusalem ... [where here] according to Ezekiel the cherubim after leaving the temple founded the church of the Lord**” (**Jerome**,

Letter 108.12).¹¹ That foundation is rooted here in the promises of **Ezekiel 11:17-20**.

But friend, we must still keep reading, for though this is good news, it does not belong to those who reject God and follow the desires of their own evil hearts. “*But as for those whose heart goes after their detestable things and their abominations, I will bring their deeds upon their own heads, declares the Lord God*” (**Ezek 11:21**). Contrary to the popular opinion of some, the new covenant isn’t for those who walk in evil ways. It is, as Jeremiah said, “**not like**” the old covenant. It **isn’t about automatic inclusion** in covenant promises—except on a very basic level of coming near to the blessings God gives to his people which spill over into the world. But then again, as Paul and John and others argue in many places, it was never really about that in the old covenant either. For Abraham was justified by faith in Christ and not become of some automatic inclusion due to being born. And not all Israel are Israel. Never were. This is why it is foolish to trust in temples or churches or who your parents are, in going to church or pretending to worship. The only thing that matters to God is **your faith in his promises** that come through his glory and that you believe they are for you.

¹¹ **Kenneth Stevenson** and Michael Gluerup, *Ezekiel, Daniel*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture OT 13 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 39–40.

The thing about our story today is how it all comes to an end. Immediately after this first promise of the new covenant in Ezekiel it says, “Then the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was over them” (22). Thus begins the final movement of the glory of God. Where does it go? “And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain that is on the east side of the city” (23). As the daughter-in-law of Eli said, “Ichabod! The Glory of God has departed.” God has left his house entirely. And now he stands over to the east on the Mt. of Olives watching the destruction that he is bringing upon the wicked.¹²

“And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me in the vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to the exiles. Then the vision that I had seen went up from me. And I told the exiles all the things that the Lord had shown me” (24-25). In another piece on the same subject, Sproul again reminds us, “One of

¹² **Going Deeper.** Many have noticed that this is precisely where Jesus ascends to heaven, and some have made a link here to this verse such that when Jesus ascends, he is judging Jerusalem. There could be something to this in terms of Jesus has just cursed the fig-tree and 40 years later Jerusalem was destroyed. However, this isn't an excuse for antisemitism. In fact, just 40 days later, the glory returns to Jerusalem—something taken back up in the parallel to Ezekiel 1-11 which is Ezekiel 40-48 and the third temple (these units are chiastically parallel, which is a big deal for interpreting properly). Thus, the judgment that might have been on a nation is at least mitigated by the glory returning in the new covenant to Jews and Gentiles—whoever turns to Christ to become his new covenant people.

the errors that God's people committed during the old covenant period was to believe that the presence of the tabernacle or temple and the associated furnishings guaranteed that the nation could not be conquered, that Israel would always be victorious."¹³ But he continues,

As we consider the idea that God departed from Israel, we must keep a few things in mind. First, when the Bible speaks of the Lord departing, it does not mean that He is no longer present in any sense in the place where He has left. After all, the Lord is not a physical being, and He is omnipresent—everywhere present. There is no place in creation where God is absent (Ps 139:7–12). Second, even though the Lord could be said to have left Israel, this does not mean He left everyone in the covenant community of Israel. God always remains with His remnant (Ps 23:4).

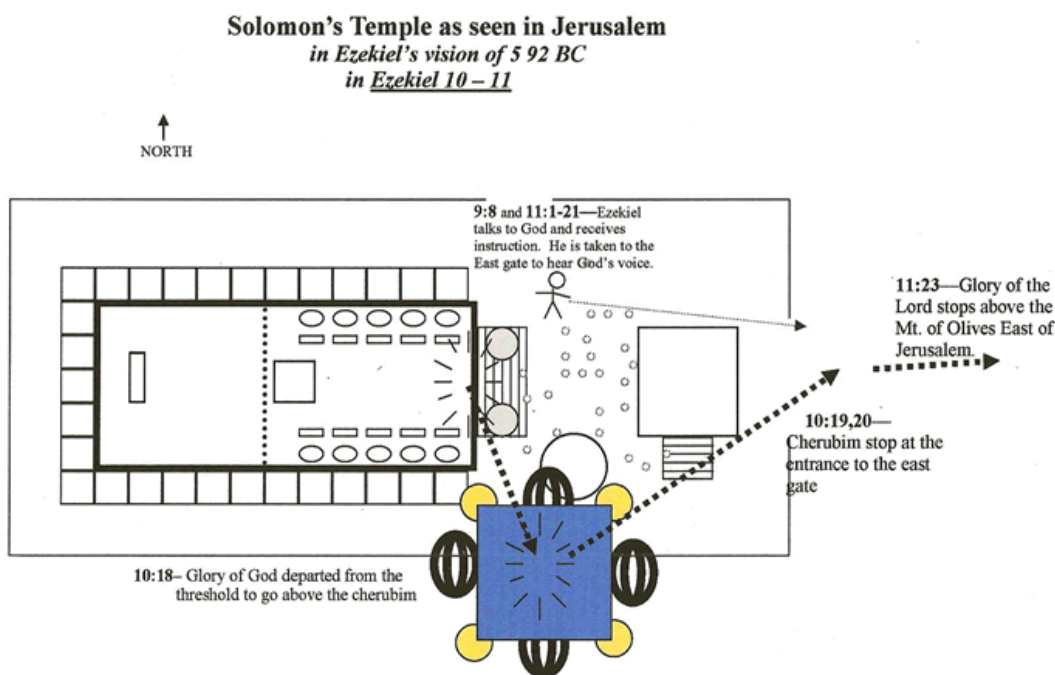
And that answers Ezekiel's question directly. “No, Ezekiel, I will always have my remnant. In fact, I will not only have a remnant, but out of that remnant, I will create a seed so vast and glorious that it shall cover the face of the whole earth.” *They will be my temple and I will be in their midst.*

Beloved, the good news is that even though the glory departed, God does not depart from his people. In fact, because

¹³ Also unattributed, but presumed to be R. C. Sproul, “[The Glory Departs from Israel](#),” *Ligonier* (April 5, 2019).

of the new covenant, the glory of God literally goes with the people by being *in* the people. **The Glory of God is in you.** “**Christ in you the hope of glory...**” (**Col 1:27**). This is the great mystery of the OT now unveiled for you in the pages of the New.

So, fret not over your sins and failings, for when you confess them, God has already heard and forgiven then for the sake of his Son, the Glory of God. He has sent his Spirit, the glory of God himself to dwell inside of you, his people as his new covenant temple—wherever you happen to be in this world. God has forgiven you and made you holy and clean in his site for Christ’s sake. Christ’s promise remains sure. He will not leave you nor forsake you, but he is with you always even to the very end of the world.



Galyn Wiemers

Appendix: Chiastic Structures of Ezekiel 10-11

I.

- A. Man clothed with linen ... wheels ... cherub ... coals of fire (10:1-2)
- B. Cloud fills inner court (3)
- C. **Glory went up from the cherub, stood over the threshold (4)**
- B'. House filled with the cloud, court full of the brightness of the LORD's glory (4b)
- A'. Man clothed with linen ... wheels, cherubs ... coals of fire (5-7)¹⁴

II.

- A. Every one had four faces (10:14)
- B. Cherubims ... Living Creatures (15)
- C. Cherubims ... wheels ... wings ... stood (16-17)
- D. **The Glory of the LORD departed from the threshold and stood over the cherubims (18)**
- C'. Cherubims ... wings ... wheels ... stood (19)
- B'. Living creatures ... cherubims (20)
- A'. Every one had four faces (21-22)¹⁵

III.

- A. East gate of the temple (10:19)
- B. By the river Chebar (20)
- C. Faces (21a)
- D. wings (21b)
- E. **Likeness of the hands of a man (21c)**
- D'. wings (21d)
- C'. Faces (22a)
- B'. By the river Chebar (22b)
- A'. East gate of the temple (11:1)¹⁶

IV.

- A. Pelatiah the son of Benaiah (11:1)
- B. City is the caldron, we are flesh ... prophesy against them (2)
- C. **Spirit of the LORD fell upon me ... your slain (5-6)**
- C'. **Therefore, thus says the LORD God ... your slain (7)**
- B'. They are flesh, this city is the caldron (7b-8)
- B2. Strangers ... execute judgments (9)
- C2. I will judge you in Israel, you will know I am the LORD (10)
- D2. **This city will not be your caldron, neither shall you be the flesh in its midst (11)**
- C2'. I will judge you in Israel, you will know I am the LORD (11b-12)
- B2'. You have not executed my judgments, but are like the Gentiles (12b)
- A'. Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died (13)¹⁷

V.

- A. Israel ... this land given in possession (11:14-15)
- B. **Thus says the LORD ... cast them far among the heathen, scattered them among the countries (16)**
- B'. **Thus says the LORD ... gather you from the people, assemble you out of the countries you were scattered (17)**
- A'. I will give you the land of Israel (17b)
- A. Take away the detestable things and abominations (18)
- B. **I will give them one heart and a new spirit (19)**
- B'. **I will take the stony heart of flesh and give them a heart of flesh to obey me (19b-20)**
- A'. But not for the wicked and the detestable things and abominations (21)¹⁸

¹⁴ <https://www.chiasmusxchange.com/2015/09/17/ezekiel-101-7/>.

¹⁵ <https://www.chiasmusxchange.com/2017/09/20/ezekiel-1014-22/>.

¹⁶ <https://www.chiasmusxchange.com/2015/09/14/ezekiel-1019-111/>.

¹⁷ <https://www.chiasmusxchange.com/2017/09/21/ezekiel-111-13/>.

¹⁸ <https://www.chiasmusxchange.com/2017/09/21/ezekiel-1114-21/>. (I modified all five)

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