

Ezekiel 7-10 • Visions of Judgment and Mercy

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Ezekiel chapter 7, open your Bible there please as we continue in our study of Ezekiel. And this is an important study to go through, I think there's a lot of people who understand that Ezekiel is an important book to study because of its prophetic importance. There's a great deal in the book of Ezekiel that is prophetically important to the future and yet there are several chapters in this book that are kind of difficult to wade through while you get to those later chapters that people like to quote and talk about and discuss as it relates to true end times kind of prophetic fulfillment.

And yet, the earlier chapters in the book of Ezekiel are important and it's important that we don't just skip over them and get to the stuff that we kind of think is exciting. But we go through and look at what these chapters are talking about and what God was saying to the nation of Israel, many of whom were already in exile in the Babylonian empire, even though at the time that these prophecies were given in the chapters that we are studying tonight, Jerusalem was still standing. The temple was still standing, Jerusalem had not been finally invaded by Babylon. They'd been invaded a couple of times, but not for the final time and that is how Ezekiel came to live in the Babylonian kingdom.

So Ezekiel is writing from exile, he's already in exile and he's writing primarily to the saints who are there also in exile but the words, many of the warnings that he's given by the Lord are for the people back home as well. And we're going to find, it's really interesting, Ezekiel was given incredible, visionary insights.

In fact, he gets to travel in a vision. He's in Babylon, but he gets to travel in the chapters that we're talking about tonight, all the way back to Jerusalem and see things that are going on in Jerusalem, because God is going to give him this spiritual ability just to be there and to see things that are happening. So fascinating stuff.

Ezekiel chapter 7, verse 1, let's get into it here tonight. It starts by saying, *“The word of the Lord came to me:”* And here's that word beginning in verse 2, *“And you, O son of man, thus says the Lord God to the land of Israel: An end! (He says) The end has come upon the four corners of the land.”*

³ Now the end is upon you, and I will send my anger upon you; I will judge you according to your ways, and I will punish you for all your abominations. ⁴ And my eye will not spare you, nor will I have pity, but I will punish you for your ways, while your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the Lord.” (ESV)

Can I stop you for just a moment? Have you ever thought about how this potentially affected godly people or at least people who maybe had not been godly, but decided that, “I think this guy is speaking the truth.” What happens to those people? Now we know that these prophecies are primarily given to the nation of Israel, but you know God cares just as much about individuals, right?

So have you ever thought about that? I mean, here's judgment coming to the nation of Israel, but what about the individuals who listen and hear the message? We know that's not going to be the leadership of Israel, but there certainly are people who hear the message and think, “this is true,” what about them?

What's God going to do to them, what's God going to do for them? Have you ever stopped to think about that? We're going to actually see here a little bit later on in our study tonight, hopefully if we get that far, that God is going to speak specifically about the individuals whose hearts are for the Lord. Because even though there's a collective judgment that is coming for the nation, there are people within that nation who very much desire to see good things and are ready to repent and recognize that this is in fact the word of the Lord.

So let's go on, verse 5, *“Thus says the Lord God: Disaster after disaster! Behold, it comes. ⁶ An end has come; the end has come; it has awakened against you. (that’s interesting language) Behold, it comes. ⁷ Your doom has come to you, O inhabitant of the land. The time has come; the day is near, a day of tumult, and not of joyful shouting on the mountains. ⁸ Now I will soon pour out my wrath upon you, and spend my anger against you, and judge you according to your ways, and I will punish you for all your abominations. ⁹ And my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity. I will punish you according to your ways, while your abominations are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the Lord, who strikes. ¹⁰ “Behold, the day! Behold, it comes! Your doom has come; the rod has blossomed; pride has budded. (interesting language, huh?) ¹¹ Violence has grown up into a rod of wickedness. None of them shall remain, nor their abundance, nor their wealth; neither shall there be preeminence among them.””* In other words, people aren't going to be treated any differently because of their standing in society.

“¹² The time has come; the day has arrived. Let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn, for wrath is upon all their multitude. ¹³ For the seller shall not return to what he has sold, while they live. For the vision concerns all their multitude; it shall not turn back; and because of his iniquity, none can maintain his life.

¹⁴ “They have blown the trumpet and made everything ready, but none goes to battle, for my wrath is upon all their multitude. ¹⁵ The sword is without; pestilence and famine are within. He who is in the field dies by the sword, and him who is in the city famine and pestilence devour. ¹⁶ And if any survivors escape, they will be on the mountains, like doves of the valleys, all of them moaning, each one over his iniquity. ¹⁷ All hands are feeble, and all knees turn to water. ¹⁸ They put on sackcloth, and horror covers them. Shame is on all faces, and baldness on all their heads.

¹⁹ They cast their silver into the streets, and their gold is like an unclean thing. (and then He tells why) Their silver and gold are not able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord. They cannot satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs with it. For it was the stumbling block of their iniquity. ²⁰ His beautiful ornament they used for pride, and they made their abominable images and their detestable things of it. Therefore I make it an unclean thing to them. ²¹ And I will give it into the hands of foreigners for prey, and to the wicked of the earth for spoil, and they shall profane it. ²² I will turn my face from them, and they shall profane my treasured place. Robbers shall enter and profane it.

²³ “Forge a chain! For the land is full of bloody crimes and the city is full of violence. ²⁴ I will bring the worst of the nations to take possession of their houses. I will put an end to the pride of the strong, and their holy places shall be profaned. ²⁵ When anguish comes, they will seek peace, but there shall be none. ²⁶ Disaster comes upon disaster; rumor follows rumor. They seek a vision from the prophet, while the law perishes from the priest and counsel from the elders. ²⁷ The king mourns, the prince is wrapped in despair, and the hands of the people of the land are paralyzed by terror. According to their way I will do to them, and according to their judgments I will judge them, and they shall know that I am the Lord.””

So chapter 7 is not a real uplifting sort of a chapter as you can see. It's really kind of a big fat downer because the prophet is repeating, the Lord, I should say, is repeating through the prophet over and over that He will indeed bring judgment against the nation of Israel and against their many abominations. We'll talk a little bit more here as we go on about why these judgments were so necessary and what had brought them on.

Chapter 8 goes on, not a terribly long chapter, but it begins by saying, *“In the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house, with the elders of Judah sitting before me, the hand of the Lord God fell upon me there.”* So it's kind of interesting that Ezekiel is sitting in his house, the elders of Israel, at least now, these are the elders who are there in exile and this really just kind of means, the heads of the families or the tribal heads, if you will, they're there with Ezekiel. Which kind of makes you wonder, are they there to listen, are they there because they think Ezekiel has a message to bring?

Because we're going to find out that the elders back home are not listening and that's what he's about to find out. Look what it goes on to say, in verse 2, Ezekiel's about to have a vision, he says, *“² Then I looked, and behold, a form that had the appearance of a man. ...”* Now you remember, that's what we call that language of similarity. It's not the image of a man; it has the appearance of the form of a man. And he says, *“² ... Below what appeared to be his waist was fire, and above his waist was something like the appearance of brightness, (and he says, it's like, something) like gleaming metal.”* And so again, you see those “like” words; it wasn't gleaming metal, that's the best he can come up with.

“³ He put out the form of a hand (notice that, he doesn't say, “he put out his hand,” he says, “he put out a form or the form of a hand”) and took me (look at this) by a lock of my head, and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem, to the entrance of the gateway of the inner court that faces north, where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provokes to jealousy.”

And he's going to tell you in just a bit what that is. But the point here is that Ezekiel has been lifted up in a vision from where he is in his home now in the Persian Kingdom and he is lifted in the spirit. He says initially, *“up between heaven and earth.”* Kind of reminds me of like Google Earth. Have you ever gotten onto Google Earth and you put in an address and it takes you up and then brings you down? And I always get this weird feeling like I'm falling every time I start Google Earth because you're going so fast, I'm like, “slow down.” I'm not afraid of heights, I'm just afraid of falling from them.

But anyway, so, it's kind of this picture of, he zooms down then into Jerusalem, and he actually can see that he is brought to the entrance of the gateway of the inner court that faces north. Now, this is significant, A lot of what's going to be going on in these visions is in either gateways or doorways or something facing north. And the reason that's going to be very important is because of the pagan imagery that Ezekiel is going to be made to understand.

Because Jerusalem and the elders of Jerusalem had so given themselves over to pagan idolatry and thinking, that because they knew they were in trouble, they knew that Babylon presented a threat, so everything they were doing was in the north gateway or was facing north because that's where Babylon was.

It was to the north and pagan thought always faces the problem or the threat, okay. Pagans believe that if you've got an enemy coming from the north, then you need to appeal to your gods while facing north. It sounds a lot like superstition and really it is, pagan thinking and superstition are actually very close. They're close, they're almost first cousins and that's why, superstition is something that we Christians really got to be careful about because it's very close to pagan thought. We've talked about pagan thought before, but you're going to notice here this issue of the north.

Alright, it goes on, verse 4, *“And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision that I saw in the valley. ⁵ Then he said to me, “Son of man, lift up your eyes now toward the north.” So I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and behold, north of the altar gate, in the entrance, was this image of jealousy.””*

Now again, these are things are all in the north gate and looking toward the north because that's where the enemy is supposed to be coming from. *“⁶ And he said to me, “Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel are committing here, to drive me far from my sanctuary? But you will see still greater abominations.””*

All right, so this image of jealousy is a pagan idol that they've set up facing north to be their protector. Rather than turning to the God of their fathers, the God who revealed Himself to them through Moses in the wilderness, they're turning to pagan idols. They've set up these idols in these gateways and even close to the temple area because they believed that these things, these gods, small “g” are how they will be protected and so forth.

And God says, “but even though you see them doing this terrible thing, you're going to see even greater abominations than these.”

Verse 7, *“And he brought me to the entrance of the court, (now we're at the entrance of the court of the temple) and when I looked, behold, there was a hole in the wall. ⁸ Then he said to me, “Son of man, dig in the wall.” So I dug in the wall, and behold, there was an entrance. ⁹ And he said to me, “Go in, and see the vile abominations that they are committing here.””*

Now I want you to stop for just a moment because you can see what's happening with Ezekiel. The first abomination that he sees is kind of out there in broad daylight, it's for anybody to see. But God says, "it's gets worse than that because there are things behind closed doors and behind walls that maybe the common men might not even see, but some of those who would go into those inner areas and so forth we're, we got to dig a little bit to find these things." And so He literally shows him this hole in the wall and says, "dig, dig into this wall and you're going to get below the surface and you're going to see the junk that's going on behind there."

He says in verse 10, *"So I went in and saw. And there, engraved on the wall all around, was every form of creeping things and loathsome beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel. ¹¹ And before them stood seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing among them. Each had his censer in his hand, and the smoke of the cloud of incense went up."*

And I did a little research and I found out that in this case, in this sort of a pagan influence, this incense was intended to ward off dangerous demonic spirits and yet they're inviting that same stuff by their pagan idolatry. And yet they think that this incense is going to ward off demonic spirits.

But you can see that what Ezekiel is shown behind this wall that he has to dig through to find an entrance, is images of all these animals, creeping things and so forth that were part of pagan worship rituals and this is what's going on. But you'll notice who he sees there, he sees 70 elders. Where did we start hearing about 70 elders, do you remember? It was in the wilderness wanderings, do you remember? You remember when Moses, basically his father-in-law, Jethro watched him for a few days ministering to the people and he said, "dude, you can't do this, you cannot keep going this way from morning until night, standing before the people judging between their issues, you need to raise up some men to help you." And so Moses did, he raised up 70 elders to help carry the burden. Well, that became a tradition in Israel of 70 elders to lead the people and so forth. And that's essentially what the Sanhedrin, later on in the time of Jesus was patterned after, was the 70 elders of Moses.

But anyway, what's happening with these elders? They're involved in pagan worship, so the elders of the people are involved in pagan idolatry and that's a pretty serious thing. *"¹² Then he said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, each in his room of pictures? For they say, 'The Lord does not see us, the Lord has forsaken the land.'" ¹³ He said also to me, "You will see still greater abominations that they*

commit.”¹⁴ Then he brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the house of the Lord, (now you see we’re getting closer into the temple) and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.”

Now, let me stop you there for a moment and tell you that Tammuz was a pagan deity that was believed by the pagans to be responsible for the fertility of the land. In fact, even beyond the fertility of the land, just responsible for fertility. But the pagans believed that every year Tammuz would die and then he would be resurrected later on through the ritual mourning ceremonies that women would perform. Women were told to mourn for Tammuz and by their mourning, they would actually hasten his resurrection from death, which would then bring back the fertility of the season. So in other words, they believed that when spring came back and things began to become fertile again in the land, they thought that was because of Tammuz coming back to life. That's pagan thought, okay, so there you are. So now you kind of see what's going on.

So what Ezekiel is shown here are these women who are literally weeping for Tammuz to hasten the return of the fertility of the land and you can see what's going on. And like I said, this is pagan thinking. They had a deity for everything, not just for fertility. I mean, good crops, bad crops, there was a deity for that. Good weather, bad weather, there was a deity for that. Health, sickness, there were deities for all those things.

And you had to appease those gods somehow. If things weren't going your way, there were deities of warfare. Hopefully your god is stronger than your neighbor's god, because if you go to war against them, it's going to come down to the gods fighting against one another and so on, and so on and so on.

And that kind of ignorance might be excusable, might be excusable for some other nation, but I want to remind you that this is going on in Jerusalem. This is going on in the nation of Israel and I know it's specifically Judah at this point, but you know what I mean by that. This is the one nation on earth that God has revealed Himself to. The one nation on earth that God spoke and gave His law, understanding His holiness, who He is, what He is, and there's a responsibility that goes along with knowledge and understanding. Do you guys know that?

Do you know the more you sit in church, maybe, I don't want to discourage you from coming to church, but the more you sit in church, the greater the responsibility you have, because you know things. You know things that some people out there don't know, you know them. And there's a responsibility that goes along with that knowledge to listen and obey and that's the way it was with

Israel. They had received a unique, direct and very specific revelation of God, and yet they had turned to paganism.

Verse 15, *“Then he said to me, “Have you seen this, O son of man? You will see still greater abominations than these.”¹⁶ And he brought me into the inner court of the house of the Lord. ...”*

Now they are, they are right close, this is about as close as you can get to the Holy of Holies without actually going in there and this is that area where the priests are told to be. *“¹⁶ ... And behold, at the entrance of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men, with their backs (and this is significant) to the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east, (because in this case, they were) worshiping the sun (or if you will, the sun god) toward the east.”*

And this last, this fourth, and what seems to be the worst example of idolatry that Ezekiel is being shown in this vision, is taking place in this inner courtyard of the temple. He sees 25 men in this vision and they're worshiping the sun god. We don't know whether they were priests or not, really, only the priests were supposed to be there, who knows, all bets are off at this point, it could be anybody. But Ezekiel noted, as we saw there, that their backs were to the inner sanctuary, their backs were to the Holy of Holies and that seems to be symbolic of them having turned their back on the true and living God and going on and worshiping other things. Didn't Paul talk about this? Do you know? Let me show you a passage from Romans chapter 1, this is what was happening here in Ezekiel.

Romans 1:25 (ESV)

...they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever!

That's what's happening here in Ezekiel and we do it today, people do it today, they were doing it then. The sun was created by God, right? The sun was created by, why are we worshiping the sun, (s u n) when it was created by God rather than the God who created that light in the sky?

The point is, mankind's propensity to “exchange,” as Paul says, “exchange the truth for a lie” is absolutely enormous. Why do we do it? Convenience, pleasure, stupidity, deception, ignorance, all of the above? And yet it is our strong propensity as human beings.

I get a lot of, I get a lot of people writing me questions, asking, “how God is going to judge people who have not been given a direct revelation of God.” And sometimes people will word it in such a way as to say, “I know that God revealed himself directly to the nation of Israel and now to the church” and we've accepted that revelation through Jesus Christ, the final revelation of God, of course, is Jesus. But they'll say, “what about people who weren't in a one of those favored nations back in the Old Testament, are they just going to rot in hell because they were never given a revelation of God?”

Well, they were given a revelation of God, Paul talks about it in Romans chapter 1. I would encourage you, if that's ever been a question that you've had or one that you've wanted to get an answer to for someone else, I would encourage you to go back and study, not just read, but study Romans chapter 1 because the Apostle Paul lays out how God is going to judge mankind by the indirect revelation of God. And what he says very clearly in Romans chapter 1 is that, “God has revealed himself in creation and he even goes on to say it's plain to them and there's no language that doesn't get it because it has been given to all languages because it is a revelation of nature.”

But more than that it is a revelation of God in nature and it actually goes on in Romans to say that, “His attributes are clearly seen, clearly seen, so that men are without excuse,” okay. So Romans chapter 1, make a mental note of that to really go through and study those chapters or that chapter to be able to answer that question if people were to bring it up to you. “How's God going to respond to judge others who just have never heard.” Or they might even say, “well, how's God going to judge people who've never heard the gospel?” Romans chapter 1 gives you the answer, so there you go.

Verse 17 and 18 finishes the chapter saying, *“¹⁷ Then he said to me, “Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it too light a thing for the house of Judah to commit the abominations that they commit here, that they should fill the land with violence and provoke me still further to anger? ...”* So you see, there was a whole lot more than just idolatry going on in the land, there was violence and bloodshed that was also happening. People were using other people dreadfully, there was oppression and terrible, terrible behavior.

“¹⁷ ...Behold, they put the branch to their nose. ¹⁸ Therefore I will act in wrath. 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.” But look how Ezekiel 9 begins, *“¹ Then he cried in my ears with a loud voice, saying, “Bring near the executioners of the city, each with his destroying weapon in his hand.””*

Now stop there, please, for a moment. Let me explain what's going on because, not only has Ezekiel been shown a vision of the state of spiritual decline that has now prevailed in Jerusalem and Israel as a nation, but now he is going to be shown in visionary imagery and language about how God is going to bring a destroying work against the city and he's going to see it in pictures, all right?

And so it begins by saying in verse 2, *“And behold, six men came from the direction of the upper gate, which faces north, ...”* And there you have north again and that's where the Babylonian army is coming from. Now, obviously the Babylonian army is a whole lot more than going to be six men, but for some reason, Ezekiel is shown six men coming, which is hard to know exactly what that six means, except that six is the number of man and seven is God's perfect number. But anyway, well, there you go.

So it says here that, ² *“...each with his weapon for slaughter in his hand, and with them was a man clothed in linen, with a writing case at his waist. And they went in and stood beside the bronze altar. 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, (this is the one with this writing thing) who had the writing case at his waist.*

⁴ *And the Lord said to him, (and now I want you to note this, this is very important) “Pass through the city, through Jerusalem, and put a mark on the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed in it.”*” Isn't that fascinating? This angelic thing, person, that Ezekiel is seeing in this vision is told by God to go through the city and mark the people who are grieved by the idolatry of the people. They're to mark them on the forehead. So how does God see the individual? Like I said at the very beginning of these prophetic words, they were given and some of the people hearkened to these messages.

Some of the people heard it, some of the people said “yes” and they saw the depth of iniquity and they were grieved in their heart. And I know that's the case with many believers today in the church. In fact, I would hope most believers in the church, when we look at the world or when we look even at our nation here in the United States of America, we're grieved, we're grieved by what's going on.

I got a note just today from someone who said, “how do we deal with the grief and the anger and the fear that is presented to us by just looking at the world and seeing how evil it has become?” Well, the answer to that, by the way, in case you might be interested in it, is to get your eyes off the evil of the world

and onto the Lord, that's the answer. And to build up your faith in the word of God.

The more you look at something, the more fearful it's going to become. So you need to look at the Lord, especially when right in front of your eyes is something that is pretty bad to look at, you need to look to the Lord and to His strength and power and so forth. But I love the fact that we see here, this individual touch of God upon those people whose hearts were broken because of what was happening in their country.

Do you think God sees your heart of grief over what's happening in our nation? I think He does, I think He sees your grief. He knows exactly how you feel and we've already been marked by the way, we're marked with the Holy Spirit, that the Bible says.

So, God, He's not wondering who you are and who are those people. But anyway, you can see that this is interesting that they were given a mark. Verse 5, *“And to the others he said in my hearing, “Pass through the city after him, and strike. Your eye shall not spare, and you shall show no pity.”⁶ Kill old men outright, young men and maidens, little children and women, but touch no one on whom is the mark. And begin at my sanctuary. ...”* That reminds me of that statement that judgment begins with the house of the Lord. (1 Peter 4:17)

“⁶ So they began with the elders who were before the house. ⁷ Then he said to them, “Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain. Go out.” So they went out and struck in the city. ⁸ And while they were striking, and I was left alone, 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?”

⁹ Then he said to me, “The guilt of the house of Israel and Judah is exceedingly great. The land is full of blood, and the city full of injustice. For they say, ‘The Lord has forsaken the land, and the Lord does not see.’ ¹⁰ As for me, my eye will not spare, nor will I have pity; I will bring their deeds upon their heads.” ¹¹ And behold, the man clothed in linen, with the writing case at his waist, brought back word, saying, “I have done as you commanded me.””

Now, chapter 10, excuse me, goes on with this and you'll see this man dressed in linen again. *“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.”* And once again Ezekiel is seeing the throne of God above the cherubim.

“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.”” I love that, this is great. It's called “the whirling wheels,” isn't that great?

“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.”

And so what we're seeing is, we're seeing a picture of the glory of the Lord departing and that's the point of this chapter; the Glory of the Lord departs from the temple because judgment is coming.

We're going to stop there and we're going to pick it up in chapter 11 next time, so let's pray. Heavenly Father, we are so thankful for the ministry of your Holy Spirit whereby your word is made to come alive in our hearts. This happens by no man or no woman, but by a work of your Spirit alone. By your Spirit, Lord God, we are enlightened and fed, and nourished, and we need your Holy Spirit every day to lead us and guide us.

We need your Spirit every time we open up our Bible, we need your Holy Spirit every time we pray, we need your Holy Spirit when we talk to other people about the Lord, we need your Holy Spirit when we deal with the issues and challenges of life, we need your Holy Spirit to guide us and direct us every day.

Be with us Father, strengthen us and equip us to do your will. We look to you to accomplish every purpose for which you have placed us on this earth. For surely, Lord, you have a plan for each of our lives. We submit to that plan Father God, in Jesus' precious name we pray, amen.