

## IMMERSE: PROPHETS

Week 11 – Ezekiel: “So that all may know that I am the LORD”

August 13, 2023

Ezekiel’s name means “strengthened by God” – and indeed he was for the prophetic ministry to which God called him (Eze. 3:7-9). Ezekiel and his wife (Ez. 24:15-27) were among 10,000 Jews taken captive to Babylon in 597 BC (II Kings 24:11-18). Ezekiel was 25 when taken captive and 30 when called into ministry. Contemporaries of Ezekiel: Jeremiah and Daniel.

The glory of the LORD is central to Ezekiel. God’s holiness and sovereignty are focused upon in contrast to the despicable backdrop of Judah’s sins (1:26-28). God’s glorious triumph is noted throughout the book of Ezekiel in the phrase, “**so that all may know that I am the LORD**” which is mentioned over 60 times!!

God displayed graphically to both Israel and the Gentile nations that He is the LORD!

Eze. 1:1b – *as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God!*

The whirlwind and fire speak of God’s judgment. Within their context, there are passages that graphically picture fire and torches which appear to convey God’s glory and pure AND burning justice.

The intense, relentless/non-stop motion in Ezekiel chapter 1 signifies God’s constant work of judgment. The wheels depict God’s judgment as a war machine.

The four living creatures are thought to be angels, most likely cherubim (Eze. 10:5). Their wings seem to signify the speed with which they performed God’s will. There are four faces on each cherub: man-intelligent; lion-powerful; ox-servile; eagle-swift.

Eze. 3:17 - God made Ezekiel a watchman for the house of Israel. While the ministries of Habakkuk, Jeremiah, and Isaiah were more national than individual, Ezekiel’s ministry was more personal... focused on individuals and their responsibility to trust and obey God (Eze. 18:1-20).

Eze. 5:5, 8-9, 11 – *Thus says the Lord God: This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations...therefore I will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations...because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore, I will also diminish you.*

Eze. 6:8-10 - *Yet I will leave a remnant, so that you may have some who escape the sword among the nations when you are scattered through the countries. Then those of you who escape will*

*remember Me among the nations where they are carried captive, because I was crushed by their adulterous heart which has departed from Me, and by their eyes which play the harlot after their idols, they will loathe themselves for the evils which they committed in all their abominations. And they shall know that I am the Lord.*

Eze. 8:1- The hand of the Lord fell upon Ezekiel and the Spirit lifted him up and brought him in visions of God to Jerusalem.

The glory of God departed from the Temple! WHY?

Eze. 8:4-10 – And behold, *the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision that I saw in the plain.* <sup>5</sup> Then He said to me, “Son of man, lift your eyes now toward the north.” So I lifted

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*my eyes toward the north, and there, north of the altar gate, was this image of jealousy in the entrance.* <sup>6</sup> Furthermore He said to me, “Son of man, do you see what they are doing, the great abominations that the house of Israel commits here, to make Me go far away from My sanctuary? Now turn again, you will see greater abominations.” <sup>7</sup> So He brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, there was a hole in the wall. <sup>8</sup> Then He said to me, “Son of man, dig into the wall”; and when I dug into the wall, there was a door. <sup>9</sup> And He said to me, “Go in, and see the wicked abominations which they are doing there.” <sup>10</sup> So I went in and saw, and there—every sort of creeping thing, abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed all around on the walls.

God’s route out of the temple to . . .

Eze. 9:3 - *Now the glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub, where it had been, to the threshold of the temple.* The glory of God resided between the cherubim above the mercy seat (I Sam. 4:4).

Eze. 10:4 - *Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and paused over the threshold of the temple; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD’s glory.* The Lord departed from the temple slowly, gradually – pausing – perhaps indicating a sorrow/reluctance on His part.

Eze. 10:18-19 - *Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim.* <sup>19</sup> And the cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels were beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD’s house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

Eze. 11:16-23 - Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “Although I have cast them far off among the Gentiles, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet I shall be a little sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone.” ’<sup>17</sup> Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “I will gather you from the peoples, assemble you from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.” ’<sup>18</sup> And they will go there, and they will

*take away all its detestable things and all its abominations from there. <sup>19</sup> Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, <sup>20</sup> that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God. <sup>21</sup> But as for those whose hearts follow the desire for their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their deeds on their own heads,” says the Lord GOD. <sup>22</sup> So the cherubim lifted up their wings, with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel was high above them. <sup>23</sup> And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood on the mountain, which is on the east side of the city.*

The glory of God moved to the Mt. of Olives to the east of Jerusalem. Jesus, the glory of God will return to the Mt. of Olives at His Second Coming (Zech. 14:4)

John 1:14 - *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* (John is referring to having seen Jesus in His glory on the Mount of Transfiguration)

NOTE: Jesus entered Jerusalem via this route at His triumphal entry on “Lamb Selection Day” days before His crucifixion.

NOTE: The glory of God departing from the temple is temporary. Ezekiel, in the visions from God, sees the glory of the Lord returning to the temple. This is the message of Eze. 43:1-7.

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Turn to the following passages:

Eze. 11:24

Eze. 12:15-16

Eze. 13:23

Eze. 14:6, 8c

Eze. 16:2, 5-9

Eze. 16:15

Eze. 20:33-38, 41-44

Eze. 35:5-6 – God addressed Esau’s descendants (living in Edom; Mt. Seir). Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob whose name was changed to Israel and who became the Father of the 12 tribes of Israel.

Eze. 35:5-9 - *Because you have had an ancient hatred, and have shed the blood of the children of Israel by the power of the sword at the time of their calamity, when their iniquity came to an end, <sup>6</sup> therefore, as I live,” says the Lord GOD, “I will prepare you for blood, and blood shall pursue you; since you have not hated blood, therefore blood shall pursue you. <sup>7</sup> Thus I will make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it the one who leaves and the one who returns. <sup>8</sup> And I*

*will fill its mountains with the slain; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines those who are slain by the sword shall fall. <sup>9</sup> I will make you perpetually desolate, and your cities shall be uninhabited; then you shall know that I am the LORD.*

Eze. 35:10-12

Eze. 36:17-27, 32, 35-36, 38c

Eze. 37 – In the future, God will make of the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah one nation again with ONE KING!

### EZEKIEL 38

Why do we see so much turmoil particularly in the Middle East? God is protecting Israel. God has chosen Israel to accomplish His purposes; therefore, God has guaranteed Israel's survival. God's choosing of Israel is based on GOD'S SOVEREIGN CHOICE! Choosing Israel (Deut. 7:7-8), the least of all nations, is a glorious way in which God displays HIS POWER!! And, God chose Israel as the instrument of blessing for the world (Gen. 18:18). And the world seeks to eliminate Israel!? Spiritual warfare rages! BUT GOD's "end times" plan – which culminates in RESTORATION and the knowledge of the glory of God filling the earth – surrounds ISRAEL. And so God has placed Israel in the CENTER of history and in the CENTER of Bible prophecy! And so, Israel continues to exist against all odds. God has placed Jerusalem in the eye of the storm so that God can be glorified. All eyes in the world are on Israel – on Jerusalem! We are seeing God work out His plan as the conflict continues!

Let's consider the first war of Gog and Magog in Scripture in Ezekiel 38 & 39. There's more speculation regarding the timing of this first war of Gog and Magog than speculation concerning the timing of the rapture! (second war mentioning Gog and Magog – Rev. 20:8-following Satan's release at the end of the Millennial Kingdom).

I'm suggesting that the main participants of this war, Russia and Iran will form an alliance. . . Turkey is included....

Gog - title of the leader (like a Pharaoh or Czar)

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**Magog** - connected with Japheth (Noah's son); becoming the Scythians, per Josephus (a Jewish historian & Roman citizen). **The Scythians settled north of the Baltic Sea in what is now Russia and the former Soviet republics**

Rosh - "chief"

**Persia** - Iran

**Cush** - Sudan, Ethiopia, and possibly Eritrea in Africa (east of Sudan and north south of Ethiopia)

**Put** - Libya, Algeria, and Tunisia

**Gomer, Meshech, and Tubal - Turkey (and possibly Germany and Austria)**

**Togarmah - Turkey, Armenia, Turkish-speaking people of Asia Minor & Central Asia**

Eze. 39:1-12

Several nations (not all nations; this is NOT Armageddon) will come against Israel – Russia with Iran, Turkey, Ethiopia, and Libya, and others – coming from the FAR NORTH (Eze. 38:6).

Is there a notable omission in Ezekiel 38? Not one of the Arab nations immediately surrounding Israel is listed as participating in this campaign against Israel. Perhaps it's because they've been crippled by the recent Arab-Israeli war - ?? Perhaps. (Read Isa. 17 re: the destruction of Damascus in Syria. Read Psa. 83 re: a LARGE confederacy of Arab nations surrounding Israel wishing to take out Israel permanently)

READ EZEKIEL 38:1-23

Gog has been turned around by God – and led out with his armies. . . .

Russia's motive in invading Israel – to take plunder and booty – to take Israel's wealth (Eze. 38:12ff)

Israel – living without walls and dwelling “safely”? That might very well be the way of life in Israel following an Arab-Israeli war based on Psa. 83 in which Israel scores VICTORY!

Safely/securely – could mean they are living confidently – which Israel is today.

The Lord clearly tells us that the nations will know and understand that this has happened by God's hand. Many will know that God is the Lord! Many will come to know Jesus amid judgments and catastrophes that are rampant during end times. Many will not.

Where does this War of Gog and Magog fall in light of the Tribulation?

The timing of the War of Gog and Magog is debated MORE than the timing of the rapture! Through the War of Gog and Magog, the world will witness GOD defending Israel! Israel will stand ALONE when attacked by the massive northern military coalition. BUT GOD fights for Israel!!! Wouldn't the world, following Israel's victory, desire to make peace with Israel? What a seemingly perfect time for the antichrist to step onto the scene and solve all the problems by brokering a seven-year peace treaty with Israel (Dan. 9:27).

In Rev. 6:2 when Jesus opens the first seal Jesus on the scroll, the rider on the white horse with no arrows in his bow appears. This is the antichrist! And at that time the seven-year Tribulation will begin. The peace treaty initiated by the antichrist will launch the seven-year Tribulation (Dan. 9:27 tells us that the peace treaty begins a 7-year period).

I'm suggesting that the War of Gog and Magog that we find in Eze. 38 and 39 happens perhaps AFTER the Rapture of the Church but BEFORE the Tribulation. I'm suggesting that it is this war of Gog and Magog that precipitates/leads to the peace treaty. (See NOTE below concerning the time frame of Eze. 39)

Typically, those who invaded would bury their own dead. However, all the invaders will die. The task of burial – to cleanse the land - will fall to the house of Israel. Burial will take a full seven months (Eze. 39:12).

Following God's destruction of the northern military coalition, the Israelites will gather and burn enemy weapons for a period of seven years (Eze. 39:9).

IF the seven years of burning weapons coincides with the seven years of the Tribulation, how can Israel take flight from Jerusalem in the middle of the Tribulation?

In Matthew 24 Jesus urges the Jews living in Jerusalem to take flight when the antichrist sets up his headquarters in Jerusalem in the middle of the Tribulation (Dan. 11:41; II Thess. 2:4; Rev. 12). How will the Jews be able to continue the task of burning weapons if they have to take flight from Jerusalem in the middle of the Tribulation? The seven years of burning weapons cannot coincide with the seven-year Tribulation period. And why would the burning of the weapons go into the Millennial Kingdom timeframe? Burning weapons for fuel?? In the Millennial Kingdom?

If the Ezekiel invasion takes place at least 3.5 years prior to the beginning of the Tribulation, the burning of weapons will be completed by the midpoint of the Tribulation.