

THE BIG PICTURE OF SCRIPTURE THROUGH THE MAJOR AND MINOR PROPHETS  
Week 10 – Ezekiel: “So that all may know that I am the LORD”  
March 26, 2024

After God delivered the children of Israel from Exodus following the first Passover in Egypt, God told Moses that He desired to dwell with His people. God gave Moses instructions re: constructing the tabernacle in the wilderness with a place where He would dwell. And in that tabernacle there was a tent that housed the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies (see pics on last page of handout).

Ex. 40:34, 38 - when Moses had finished the work of constructing the tabernacle, <sup>34</sup> *Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle...*  
<sup>38</sup> *For the cloud of the LORD was above the tabernacle by day, and fire was over it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel, throughout all their journeys.*

**The glory of the LORD...**”glory” in the Hebrew means weightiness – ALL of Who God is – the totality of His attributes – the character traits of God as He has revealed them to us in Scripture. God is holy, just, righteous, immutable, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, gracious, merciful, faithful, love, eternity, goodness, immanence, immortal, infinite...

God is ALL of His attributes, SIMULTANEOUSLY, ALL at of the time.

Eze. 1:1 – Ezekiel, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote, *Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, (in Babylon [v. 3]) that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.* Ezekiel was taken captive to Babylon with his wife (Eze. 24:15-27) along with 10,000 Jews from Judah (II Kings 24:11-18). God called Ezekiel as a Prophet at age 30...when he saw visions of God. Visions - unveilings of God; images like dreams while awake. In visions, God transported Ezekiel to Jerusalem (past/future) while NOT physically leaving Babylon!

God called Ezekiel to bring His message to the kingdom of Judah in exile in Babylon. Ezekiel means “strengthened by God.” God called Ezekiel as a “watchman” – a lookout. Ezekiel took upon himself God’s desire that the wicked not die but turn from their wicked ways and live. In Eze. 3:16-18 we’re told that if God’s message was not delivered to the wicked by the watchman...the watchman would be held accountable! The focus in Ezekiel 3 is on the faithful declaration of God’s message! If the wicked man dies in his wickedness because the Prophet did not warn him, the Prophet is considered guilty. He needed to be strengthened by God!!! This passage is not speaking of the loss of eternal life concerning the Prophet. Operative phrase: the watchman would be held accountable as in giving an account of himself to God (rewards or no rewards [I Cor. 4:2, 4]).

While many of the Prophets, as we’ve read thus far, spoke to the nation of Israel, Ezekiel called out to individuals (Eze. 18:4, 9, 19-23). Ezekiel reflected God’s own sorrow over the people’s sins.

Ezekiel was a real man who lived in a real place and on a real day had remarkable visions of God....

Eze. 1:4 - Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

2

The *cloud* by day and *fire* by night was the manifestation/the display of God's presence with Israel through the wilderness (Ex. 13:21-22).

A *raging fire engulfing* itself is a reminder of the burning bush that Moses saw, which burned but did not consume itself (Exodus 3:2).

Eze. 1:5-9 - <sup>5</sup> Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man.... (read through v. 9).

Eze. 1:15-16 - Now as I looked at the living creatures, behold, a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces. <sup>16</sup> The appearance of the wheels and their workings was like the color of beryl, and all four had the same likeness. The appearance of their workings was, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel. ???

What's with the wheels?? And the rims of the wheels had EYES!?

It's been suggested that the spirit (life) of the living creatures was in the wheels (Eze. 1:20-21). The creatures were able to move in any direction the wheels moved. It's been suggested that the mobility of the wheels speaks to the omnipresence of God (God is everywhere present); the eyes on the rims of the wheels speak to God's omniscience (God is all knowing); and the elevated position speaks to God omnipotence (God is all powerful).

God moves in the affairs of the world to work out His unseen plan which is intricately designed. And God is always at work.

Eze. 1:26-28 - And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it. <sup>27</sup> Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with **brightness all around.** <sup>28</sup> Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of **the glory of the LORD.** We see the God of all creation assuring Ezekiel that no matter how great Babylon and her gods seemed to be...our God is the Most High God Whose MAJESTY is BEYOND OUR COMPREHENSION!!!

Brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst: This radiating brightness is an expression of the glory of God.

The four living creatures are thought to be angels, most likely cherubim (Eze. 10:5 - And the sound of the wings of the cherubim was heard even in the outer court, like the voice of Almighty God when He speaks.) Their wings seem to speak of the speed with which they performed God's will. There are four faces on each cherub: man-intelligent; lion-powerful; ox-servile; eagle-swift.

**The glory of the LORD** is central to Ezekiel. God's holiness and God's absolute authority/ God's sovereignty are focused on in the book of Ezekiel in contrast to the sins of Judah, the children of Israel. God's desire is seen throughout the book of Ezekiel. We read the phrase, "**so that all may know that I am the LORD**" 63 times! God has revealed Himself and He has provided the way to Himself. God displayed graphically to both Israel and the Gentile nations that He is the LORD!

3

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.

Eze. 8:4-10 - *And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there....* God revealed to Ezekiel that great abominations were occurring in God's house, in "My sanctuary" (v. 6). These great abominations are noted in v. 10 – *every sort of creeping thing, abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed all around on the walls.* The interior of the temple was supposed to have cherubim surrounding God's throne portrayed on the walls, and instead had filthy idols. And so we see...

#### The Departure of the Glory of God:

Eze. 9:3 - The glory of the God of Israel had gone up from the cherub to the threshold of the temple. The departure of the glory of the Lord from Israel is of significant impact; therefore, Ezekiel traces it carefully in its different stages (Eze. 9:3; 10:18-19; 11:23).

Eze. 10:18-19 - ...from the threshold of the temple to the door of the east gate.

Eze. 11:23 - *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.* In Ezekiel's vision, we are left viewing the glory of the LORD hovering over the Mt. of Olives. How are we comprehending this departure? Did God pause on the Mt. of Olives with great sorrow?

On "Lamb Selection Day," Jesus, the glory of God,\* returned to the Mt. of Olives enroute to Jerusalem. He did not enter the Temple (beyond the court)! The religious leadership of Israel rejected Jesus as the Messiah. Jesus wept over Jerusalem! NOTE: Jesus entered Jerusalem via this route at His triumphant entry on "Lamb Selection Day" days before His crucifixion.

BUT, Jesus, the glory of God,\* will return – in the future – at His Second Coming to the Mt. of Olives. And His feet will stand on the Mt. of Olives! (Zech. 14:4) And He will establish the Millennial Kingdom and reign for 1,000 years seated on King David's throne from Jerusalem – the Kingdom of God on earth. BIG PICTURE!

\*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.*

Why do we see so much turmoil particularly in the Middle East?

What's up with ISRAEL? GOD! God is protecting Israel. God has chosen Israel for His purposes. God has guaranteed Israel's survival. Therefore, Israel remains in existence today –

and will remain so (Isa. 14:1; Isa. 66:22). God chose Israel to accomplish His purposes. This does not mean that all Jewish ppl will be saved. BUT GOD has always promised a remnant (Rom. 11:5) who will come to faith in Jesus.

God's end times plan – which culminates in RESTORATION and with 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!

Eze. 5:5 - Thus says the Lord GOD: 'This is Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. God has placed Jerusalem in the eye of the storm – so that God can be glorified – because HE will intervene and protect Israel.

God's name is in Jerusalem - II Chron. 6:6 - I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there. Jerusalem is where God's plan of redemption – of salvation – is anchored! Jesus will rule and reign from Jerusalem for 1,000 years (Isa. 2; Zech. 14; Rev. 20). Is it any wonder why God would tell us to pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psa. 122:6)?

4

In the last days, the Bible tells us, a series of events will take place in the lands of Israel and Syria. One of these events is the DESTRUCTION of Damascus, the capital of Syria (Isa. 17). NOTE: there is no listing of nations. Isa. 17 speaks to some of Israel's cities being destroyed, but not by name. Isa. 17 speaks of the glory of Jacob/Israel fading (the northern part).

In the future, the enemies of Israel will view her suffering as an opportunity to invade. The enemies' goal is to destroy Israel forever. However, God has a different plan in mind...OF COURSE HE DOES...and He will destroy these invaders Himself.

In Psa. 83, Israel is crying out to God...

Psa. 83:1-5, 13-18 - Do not keep silent, O God! Do not hold Your peace, and do not be still, O God! <sup>2</sup> For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; and those who hate You have lifted up their head. <sup>3</sup> They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, and consulted together against Your sheltered ones. <sup>4</sup> They have said, "Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more. <sup>5</sup> For they have consulted together with one consent; they form a confederacy against You... <sup>13</sup> O my God, make them like the whirling dust, like the chaff before the wind! <sup>14</sup> As the fire burns the woods, and as the flame sets the mountains on fire, <sup>15</sup> so pursue them with Your tempest, And frighten them with Your storm. <sup>16</sup> Fill their faces with shame, that they may seek Your name, O LORD. <sup>17</sup> Let them be confounded (through an ambush??) and dismayed forever; yes, let them be put to shame and perish, <sup>18</sup> That they may know that You, whose name alone is the LORD, are the Most High over all the earth.

Can Psa. 83 be describing the same scene envisioned in Isaiah 17? Note how the intentions of Israel's enemies in both Isa. 17 and Psa. 83 are described:

- **Plunder & Destruction are noted in Isa. 17 and in Psa. 83.**

- **Fate of the Enemies – both Isa. 17 and Psa. 83 speak of the enemies being blown away as chaff in the wind.**

From the description of their fate alone, perhaps we can conclude that the armies noted as the many people in Isa. 17:12 are the same nations that sign a treaty against the Lord in Psa. 83:5-8. These surrounding nations – surrounding Israel are wiped out!

Could the events predicted in Isaiah 17 and Psalms 83 be a catalyst for the war of Gog and Magog prophesied in Ezekiel 38-39? Russia will then see an opportunity to seize the upper hand in the oil-rich Middle East. Russia/Iran/Turkey go after the spoils.

Eze. 38 & 39

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

**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.

5

Eze 38

Several nations will come against Israel led by Russia with Iran, & Turkey, coming from the far north (Eze. 38:6). What about the enemies of Israel directly surrounding her? 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. God has wiped them out.

Gog has been turned around – by God – and is 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"? Hebrew word for safely is *securely*. Root word – confidence! Perhaps following defeating the surrounding Arab nations (Psa. 83; Isa. 17), Israel will not need walls! Even currently, Israel exhibits confidence.

Are we grasping that God is going to cause this? The Lord is bringing about this invasion? WHY? Eze. 38:23 - *Thus I will magnify Myself and sanctify Myself, and I will be known in the eyes of many nations. **Then they shall know that I am the LORD.***”

Where does this War of Gog and Magog fall in light of the Tribulation? Through the War of Gog and Magog, the world will witness GOD defending Israel! Notice that 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 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 will occur 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 under the antichrist!! In light of such developments, we should, as we rest in Jesus, share Jesus to all who will listen. The hour is late, and the return of Jesus is at any moment!

#### Ezekiel's vision of the Millennial Temple

Eze. 43:1-5 - *Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. <sup>2</sup> And behold, **the glory of the God of Israel** came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. <sup>3</sup> It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw—like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. <sup>4</sup> And **the glory of the LORD came into the temple** by way of the gate which faces toward the east. <sup>5</sup> The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and **behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple.***

Eze. 48:35 - *...and the name of the city from that day shall be **'THE LORD IS THERE'**!*

#### QUESTIONS:

So??? What impacted you from the book of Ezekiel?

6

Discuss your observations, questions, answers!

What have you learned about Ezekiel? Any V8 moments?

Who do you know who would love to hear what we discussed from Ezekiel today?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread the Week 10 handout with Bible verses/passages.

Continue noting observations, questions, answers in your journal.

Pray about sharing what you've learned with someone whom God has laid on your heart!

Invite them to the Passover Seder (4/16).

Read the Week 11 handout when you receive it.