

Ezekiel 10:1–22 – When the Glory of God Begins to Depart

1. The Throne Above the Cherubim

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

(Ezekiel 10:1, NKJV)

Ezekiel once again sees the glorious throne of God, similar to the vision he saw by the River Chebar in Ezekiel chapter 1. Above the cherubim—these awe-inspiring heavenly beings—he sees the likeness of a throne, symbolizing God’s sovereign rule over all things, including the judgment that is about to fall.

God is not reacting in anger from a place of chaos. He judges from a place of perfect authority, holiness, and righteousness.

2. Coals of Fire and the Coming Judgment

“Then He spoke to the man clothed with linen, and said, ‘Go in among the wheels, under the cherub, fill your hands with coals of fire from among the cherubim, and scatter them over the city.’” (Ezekiel 10:2, NKJV)

The man clothed in linen—who represents the holy servant of God—takes coals of fire from amidst the cherubim and scatters them over Jerusalem. Fire in Scripture often represents both purifying and judging work. Here, it is clearly judgment.

Jerusalem, which should have been a place of worship, truth, and light, has become filled with idolatry and violence. The coals of fire symbolize that God will allow the city to burn under Babylon’s attack as a consequence of the people’s stubborn rejection of Him.

3. The Glory of the Lord Begins to Move

“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.” (Ezekiel 10:4, NKJV)

This is both beautiful and heartbreaking. The temple is filled with the cloud and brightness of God’s glory—but that glory is moving out. It had dwelt in the holy of holies above the ark. Now it moves to the threshold (doorway) of the temple.

Later in the chapter:

“Then the glory of the Lord departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim... And the cherubim lifted their wings... and the glory of the God of Israel was high above them... at the door of the east gate of the Lord’s house.” (Ezekiel 10:18–19, NKJV)

This is the slow, grieving departure of God’s manifest presence from the temple. It is not sudden. It is measured, deliberate, and deeply sorrowful. The people have persistently driven Him out through their idolatry and unrepentant hearts.

4. The Cherubim and the Wheels

Ezekiel again describes the living creatures—cherubim—and the wheels associated with them:

- Each cherub has four faces (cherub, man, lion, eagle).
- Each has four wings.
- The wheels appear like a wheel within a wheel, sparkling like a beryl stone.
- The bodies, wings, and wheels are full of eyes, representing awareness and insight.
- Wherever the cherubim move, the wheels move with them, for *“the spirit of the living creature was in them.”* (Ezekiel 10:17, NKJV)

Ezekiel identifies them clearly:

“This is the living creature I saw under the God of Israel by the River Chebar; and I knew they were cherubim.” (Ezekiel 10:20, NKJV)

He is wrestling with language to describe heavenly realities using earthly words. The main point is this:

- God is not absent,
- His rule is not shaken,
- His actions in judgment are carried out with perfect awareness, authority, and order.

Practical Application

1. God’s presence is precious—and can be grieved.

In Ezekiel, the glory of God does not disappear instantly. It moves step by step—from the holy of holies, to the threshold, to the east gate, and then away. This shows us that God does not abandon people casually. But when He is continually resisted, His manifest presence can withdraw.

2. Judgment is often the result of long-ignored warnings.

The coals of fire scattered over Jerusalem did not come without reason. The people had rejected God’s Word, defiled His temple, and hardened their hearts. The fire of judgment is the final stage after mercy has been repeatedly refused.

3. What God does, He does from the throne.

The vision begins with the throne above the cherubim. Even in times of shaking, God remains on the throne. The world may look out of control, but the Lord is not confused, outmaneuvered, or overruled.

4. Heavenly realities are greater than we can fully express.

Ezekiel strains language to describe the cherubim and the glory of God. This reminds us that God is far greater, more glorious, and more wonderful than anything we have yet experienced. We live by faith now, but one day we will see clearly.

A Challenge for Believers

- Have you taken the presence of God in your life for granted?
- Are there patterns of compromise, idolatry, or disobedience that you tolerate, assuming that God will simply “overlook” them?
- Is your heart still tender toward God, or have you grown used to things that once would have grieved you?

Ezekiel 10 calls us to value God’s presence above everything else.

Ask yourself:

“Am I welcoming the Spirit of God, or grieving Him?”

Pray honestly:

“Lord, I do not want anything in my life that pushes Your presence to the ‘threshold.’ I want You at the center of everything. Show me anything that displeases You, and give me the courage and humility to turn from it. Draw me closer to You.”

Jesus shed His blood on the cross to reconcile us to God, not just to forgive our past, but to bring us into a living, daily relationship with Him. His resurrection declares that He is God, Savior, and Lord—and that He is worthy of our full devotion.

An Invitation to Non-Believers

Ezekiel 10 shows us what it looks like when people persistently reject God and His presence begins to depart. It is tragic, but it is also a warning given in love.

The same holy God who judged Jerusalem is the God who loves you and wants you to know Him. Our sins separate us from God, but He has made a way back.

Jesus Christ came into this world, lived a sinless life, and willingly went to the cross. He shed His blood to save us, taking upon Himself the judgment our sins deserve. When He rose from the dead, His resurrection declared forever that He is God, Savior, and Lord.

You do not have to live at a distance from God.

You do not have to face judgment alone.

You can come to Him today.

You might pray something like this:

“Lord Jesus, I know that I have sinned and that I am separated from God. I believe that You shed Your blood on the cross to save me, and that You rose again as God, my Savior, and my Lord. Please forgive me, cleanse me, and make me new. I give my life to You. Help me to follow You from this day forward.”

If you truly turn to Him, He will not turn you away.

He will forgive you completely.

He will bring you into the very presence of God—not in fear, but in grace.

And for all of us who belong to Him, may we live with a deep awareness of His glory, a holy reverence for His presence, and a growing desire to walk in His ways.