



Ezekiel 9-10

Tape #7317
Ezekiel 9-10
By Chuck Smith

Ezekiel the ninth chapter as we continue our journey through the Bible. Now in our last study in Ezekiel, which seems like it was eons ago, Ezekiel was brought by the Lord in a vision, to the temple in Jerusalem to see the abominations that were being committed.

You remember the women were weeping for Tammuz. The men, the priests were there in the temple, facing the east, worshiping the rising sun. So God said, "Is it a light thing that, what the house of Judah is doing as they commit these abominations right here? And they have filled the land with violence, they've provoked me to anger, and they turn up their nose at me. Therefore", God is declaring, "I'm going to deal with them in my fury, my eye will not spare. I will not have pity, and though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them." That was the end of the previous chapter.

So this chapter picks up right at that point. So though they cry, the Lord said, "I'm not gonna hear them." But then...

He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate [which was the gate to the north] which lies toward the north, and every man had his slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar(9:1-2).

So now God is commanding these angels that have been set for judgment, to destroy the city, to come forth for the slaughter. He looked, and here towards the north, symbolic because the destruction was to come from Babylon, he saw these men, these six with their weapons of slaughter, and one clothed in linen who was among them. With a writers inkhorn by his side.

Now it is interesting that Daniel had a vision of this same angel, with the inkhorn, and Daniel records that for us in the tenth chapter of Daniel. He said, beginning with verse five, "I lifted up my eyes, and looked, and, behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with the fine gold of Uphaz: His body also was like the beryl, his face was at the appearance of lightening, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like the colour of polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell on them, so that they fled to hide themselves. And I was left alone, and I saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my beauty was turned into corruption, and I retained no strength."

So Daniel speaks of this vision of the One clothed in linen. From the description it would appear that this was none other than Jesus Christ, and one of the manifestations of Jesus Christ to the prophets of the Old Testament.

The glory of the God of the Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with the linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side; And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all of the abominations that are done in the midst thereof (9:3-4).

Now the Lord is beginning to leave the sanctuary. He will be leaving Jerusalem, and as we get into chapter eleven, we find the glory of the Lord departing from the nation as the judgment of God comes upon Israel. This glory of the Lord's presence will not return until a yet future date that we read about in the forty third chapter of Ezekiel, when the glory of the Lord returns to the temple, and that is after Jesus has returned to the earth. But now, the glory of God's presence leaving, and it is a gradual leaving. First of all to the, here we find, gone up to the threshold of the house. Next it will be to the east gate, then to the mount of Olives, and then, away. As though God is reluctant to leave, and yet He does leave. Over the temple will now be

inscribed, “Ichabod”, “the Lord has departed”. So he sees the Lord as He leaves the Holy of Holies, goes to the threshold, and there, commands the one who has the inkhorn to go through and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh, and cry.

Now the word translated “mark”, is not really even a word. It is a Hebrew letter “tau”, it is a last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. In the ancient Hebrew, the tau was written in the form of a cross. Interesting! The Lord is actually saying, “Set a cross”, the mark, meaning, the word translated “mark” is “the tau”, “Set the tau”, or, “the cross upon those who are sighing and crying for all the abominations, the mark of the cross.”

It is interesting that when God brought His judgment against the Egyptians, and that final plague of the death of the firstborn of all of those that were in the land, the families of those in the land, that God again discriminated in His judgment. He commanded the Israelites to take a lamb of the first year out of their flock, without blemish, and they were to slay this lamb, put the blood in a basin, and then with a hyssop bush, sprinkle the lamb on the lintels, and the doorposts of the house. The lintels, of course, were the top and the bottom. The doorposts were on the upper sides. In sprinkling the blood with this hyssop bush on the lintels and the doorposts, they were actually sprinkling the blood in the shape of a cross.

Here God tells them, “Put the tau upon those that sigh and cry because of the abominations.” Early God began to indicate that the distinction that would be made would be through the cross. Through the cross of Jesus Christ, we have been separated from the world, from our sins, from that life of sin. It is through the cross of Jesus Christ that we have our refuge. It is our place of safety. In the time of coming judgment, the cross of Christ will be our place of refuge. So here it is, God giving hints in the Old Testament of the cross. This is one of those Chuck Missler kind of things that he likes to dig out, and I find it very fascinating that the Lord told them to put the tau.

Now you remember in the book of Genesis, when Cain killed his brother, it says, “God put a mark on Cain’s forehead”. That Hebrew word for “mark” is a completely different word. Here, the Lord is just saying, “put the tau”, the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Which as I said, in the early Hebrew was written in the shape of a cross. So the Lord said to set this mark on the foreheads of those that sigh, and cry for all of the abominations that are being done in the midst. The other angels are soon going to be released, and they’re going to begin the slaughter of the inhabitants. But first of all, God marks those that are His. He discriminates, and does not allow the judgment to fall upon them.

In the book of Revelation, chapter seven, John saw the four angels holding the four winds of the earth ready to unleash them in a tremendous hurricane judgment, or a tornado type judgment that will strike the earth during the great tribulation, and destroy much of the earth. But the Lord said to those four angels that were holding these four winds ready to release them upon the earth, “Do not release them until we have marked the servants of God in their foreheads”. John saw the number that were marked, and it was a hundred and forty four thousand. Twelve thousand from each of the tribes of Jerusalem. Those who were faithful unto the Lord, and would be His witnesses during this last great tribulation period. So God again separating and discriminating His keeping them from the judgment that was to come. “For the Lord”, Peter says, “knows how to deliver the righteous, but to reserve the ungodly for the day of judgment”.

As a child of God, the scripture says, concerning us, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus”. The cross of Jesus Christ is our protection. In the cross of Christ, I find my place of refuge, my place of strength. When that day of judgment comes, I will be sheltered as the result of the cross of Christ, marked, discriminating by God, to protect from the judgment, the judgment of God that’s going to come on the earth. So...

He said to the others [verse five] in my hearing, Go after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, and neither have pity (9:5).

As the Lord said in eight, verse eighteen in the previous chapter, “I will not have pity, and though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them”. They’ve gone too far, they’ve crossed over the line. So God says, “Go through”...

Slay utterly the old and young, both the girls, and the little children, and the women: but come not near any man upon whom is the tau, the cross; [They are to be spared this judgment of God, and God said,] begin at my sanctuary (9:6).

It was there in the sanctuary that He saw the abominations. It was in the sanctuary where the women were weeping for Tammuz. It was in the sanctuary where the twenty men were facing towards the east, away from the Holy of Holies, and worshiping the sun. So the judgment was to begin there in the sanctuary. As Peter said, "The time is come that judgment must begin in the house of God." If it begins in the house of God, then where shall the ungodly stand? If God starts judgment in His house, by the time you get out into the corruption of the world, there will be that fierce judgment that shall come. So they...

Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. [Those that were worshiping towards the east.] And God said to them, Defile the house (9:6-7),

Now under the law, a dead body was considered unclean, and if you touched a dead body, you could not go into the temple of God for seven days, and only then, after you'd gone through purification rituals. So God is, so here is the temple of God, which a person could not enter if he had touched a dead body, because he was defiled spiritually, by the touching of the dead body. But now the Lord is saying, "Fill the house with carcasses, with dead bodies". So, "Defile the house with these dead bodies"...

fill the courts with the slain: [And then the command to] go forth. And they went forth, and they slew in the city. And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell on my face, and cried (9:7-8),

Here's Ezekiel, he's watching this carnage as the judgment of God is now being poured out, and they're going through and slaying, and not sparing, no pity. He sees this, but then he makes the statement, "And I was left". That is, the judgment did not come upon him, and that wonderful, "I was left". "Though God's judgment fell upon the whole city, I was one of those distinguished by God, and discriminated by God to escape the judgment, I was left. And I fell upon my face, and I cried"...

and said, Ah Lord God! will you destroy all the residue of Israel in your pouring out of your fury upon Jerusalem (9:8)?

"Is this the end of the nation, are you gonna wipe out all of them?" His cry unto the Lord, as he, as he saw this horrible, horrible destruction of the city, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

Then the Lord answered him, and said, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city is full of perverseness: and they say, The Lord has forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not (9:8-9).

A philosophy that was developed, because of the patience of God, and the longsuffering of God, who the scripture said, "is slow to anger, and is plenteous in mercy". Over, and over again through the history of these people, they had turned their backs upon God. They had begun to worship other gods, and as the judgment would begin to come, then they would cry unto the Lord, they would repent, they would turn back to God. And, God would deliver them! They would come into a period of prosperity, and all as they put God again at the center of their national life. But then, before long, in their prosperity, they would begin to forget God and turn to these other things, and be drawn away. Then, again judgment would begin to come, and God would be merciful, and He'd forgive them.

This was a repeated practice. It was a cycle that went on throughout their entire history! But now the time has come when they, they've crossed the line, they've gone too far. God now is, is just going to forsake them, and to forsake the nation, and He's going to leave them desolate.

There's an interesting prophecy in Deuteronomy, chapter thirty one. As Moses came to the time when he was dying, or getting ready to die, and in verse fourteen of Deuteronomy thirty one, "The Lord said unto Moses, Behold, the days approach that you must die. So call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I might give him a charge. And Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation. And the Lord appeared in the tabernacle, in the pillar of a cloud, and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle. And the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, you will sleep with your fathers, and this people will rise up and go awhoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them. And will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured. And many evils and troubles shall befall them, so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us? And I will surely

hide my face in that day for all of the evils that they shall have wrought, in that they have turned unto other gods. Now therefore, write this song for you, and teach it to the children of Israel, put it in their mouths that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel.”

So this song is a prophecy of the failure of the people, and of their turning to the other gods, and the judgment that follows. It became sort of a folk song, so that it was just you know, they sang it but they didn't really realize what they are singing, until the time that they were forsaken of God, and in captivity. Then, as they sang the song, the words struck home. “It's because we have forsaken God that this calamity has befallen us.” But God predicted that this would happen! He declared that He would not hear their cries.

So that day has now come in which the city is being destroyed. It's too late, they cry now, but it's too late. There does come that time when, when the cries to God are too late. You've, you've gone too far. In the days of Noah, “And God brought Noah into the ark, and God shut the door.” It was too late for those that were outside of the ark, though they cried out to God, and, and though they fell down before God it was too late. The judgment had begun. Now the judgment of God had begun, and though they cry, God's not gonna have any pity. It's too late.

There is a day coming, a day of God's wrath upon the earth. It is told of in the scriptures. Jesus speaks of it, and the book of Revelation details it. “And when that day comes, though men call it will be too late.” They have crossed the line, and God's judgment will be visited.

Now the philosophy was, “God doesn't see, and God doesn't care. It doesn't really matter to God what we do.” That, “God is so far removed that He really doesn't pay any attention to what man is doing. He has forsaken the earth, and He cannot see, or does not see.” That is a bad philosophy, and it leads to all kinds of evil. In the next chapter, as he sees the vision of the cherubim they have eyes all over the place, on all sides, and that is symbolic of the omniscience of God who sees everything! The psalmist in Psalm one thirty nine said, “Oh Lord, thou knowest me. You know my down sittings, and my uprisings. You understand my thoughts afar off.” He realized that there was nothing hid from Him. Paul the apostle said, “In Him we live, we move, we have our being”. It is so important for us to come into that consciousness of God's presence!

When I was a little kid in the church that I attended, one of the things that we pledged not to do was to go to movies. I don't know that that's such a bad thing. In our case, it was sort of a legalistic thing, and I had a problem with that in my spiritual walk, because I was basing my righteousness upon the fact that I didn't go to shows, or dances, or smoke cigarettes. But yet, I can remember the Sunday school teacher saying you know that, “If you went to the theater, you really couldn't ask Jesus to go in with you. So He would remain outside.” The idea was, if the Lord should come while you were there, you'd be left. That was a rather awesome thought!

I'll never forget when I was in high school, and under peer pressure, I went to the first movie. I remember the name of it, but I don't remember anything of the movie. But it's “Stars and Stripes”. I was so worried that the Lord was gonna come while I was sitting there, that I had the most miserable night of my life sitting in that theater! I prayed the whole time, “Lord don't come tonight! Wait till I get out of this place you know!” I felt miserable!

Yet, in watching the junk that is being given as entertainment, could you sit down comfortably in your living room and watch those programs on television that you are prone to be watching? If the Lord was sitting there with you, could you turn and say, “Oh Lord wasn't that cute?”, or, “Wasn't that funny! Did you see that? Man! He really wiped him out didn't he! Did you see the way he...? Man that guy's great!” I mean, could the Lord really enjoy these things with you?” Or, could you enjoy them knowing that the Lord is sitting there with you? Say, “Oops, sorry Lord, wow!” You know, think about it!

You see, this attitude that, “the Lord doesn't see”, was a dangerous attitude. Because it led them into all kinds of abominable practices. It allowed them to become perverted, “and the city was filled with perversion, and the city was filled with blood”. That is, the shedding of innocent blood. They had begun to destroy the unwanted babies by throwing them in the fires that they built in the valley of Hinnom, to their god Molech, their god of pleasure. These babies were born as a result of their seeking pleasure through the sexual experiences. The unwanted babies were then destroyed. Innocent blood. “The city was filled with blood, and abominations, and perverseness.” Because this philosophy was prevailing, “God doesn't see. God doesn't

know. It doesn't really matter what you do." But it does.

God is answering the prayer of Ezekiel. He said, "Lord are you gonna wipe em' all off the face of the earth?" God says...

As for me also, my eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their ways upon their head. [The day of judgment is come, and there is no slacking of the judgment, and there is no turning from the judgment.] And, behold, the man who was clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side, reported the matter, saying, I have done as you have commanded me (9:10- 11).

So the judgment upon Jerusalem.

Chapter 10

So then I looked, and, behold, in the firmament [Or in the air, the sky] that was above the head of the cherubims [So here are the cherubims, he sees them now, and in the sky above them,] there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne. [Again a vision of the throne of God above the cherubim there in the sky.] And he spake unto the man that was clothed with linen, [This same one that had the inkhorn] and he said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill your hand with the coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in my sight (10:1-2).

So the command of the Lord. He saw the throne. He didn't see God. But he hears the voice of God commanding the angel with the linen robe to take these coals from the altar, that are between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city.

Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, [That is, the temple] when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court. [The cloud of, of that, it was the sign of God's presence with them.] And the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the house was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory (10:3-4).

At this time the presence of God had not yet left. But there is that brightness of God's presence, and the glory of God there within the house, the temple.

And the sound of the cherubims' wings was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaks. [So this sort of a roaring noise, the wings of the cherubim.] And it came to pass, that when he had commanded the man that was clothed with linen, saying, Take the fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubims; that he went in, and he stood beside these wheels. And one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubims unto the fire that was between the cherubims, and he took from it, and he put into the hands of him that was clothed with linen: who took it, and went out. And there appeared in the cherubims a form of a man's hand under their wings. And when I looked, behold the four wheels by the cherubims, one wheel by one cherub, and another wheel by another cherub: and the appearance of the wheels was as the colour of a beryl stone. And as for their appearances, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel. And when they went, they went upon their four sides; they turned not as they went, but to the place whither the head looked they followed it; and they turned not as they went (10:5-11).

So he's describing this, and it's really hard to follow in your mind. As he sees these cherubim, these angelic type creatures, and, and these wheels, like within a wheel. Sort of like a gyroscope. Their movement seemed to be in straight type of movements because they have four heads that looked in the four directions, and they just went, as they looked.

And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, even the wheels that they the four had. As for the wheels, it was cried unto them in my hearing, O wheel. [Or, "whirl wheel"] And every one had four faces: the face was as of a cherub, [In the earlier vision, he said as of an ox, but upon closer examination perhaps from another angle, it looks now more like a cherub.] the second had the face of a man, the third face of a lion, and the fourth face was like an eagle (10:12-14).

As we mentioned here, we see the, see Christ as He was manifested in the gospels. As a servant, as the lion of the tribe of Judah, as the divine Son of God, and as the Son of man, in the gospel of Luke.

And the cherubims were lifted up. And this is the living creature that I saw by the river Chebar. [He recognizes now this is the same vision he had in chapter one of the cherubims by the river of Chebar.] And when the cherubims went, the wheels went by them: and when the cherubims lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them. When they stood, these stood; when they were lifted up, these were lifted up also: for the spirit of the living creature was in them (10:15-17).

So they are somehow related to the cherubim, controlled by the cherubim. But they seem to be methods of propulsion for the cherubim.

Now as we move on in Ezekiel, we will find that Satan was at one time, a cherub. He was among this particular angelic class. He is called “the anointed cherub that governed”. Thus as Ezekiel is describing here these wheels, and their movements and all, one wonders about the appearance of these UFOs that are often times described by people who are sort of on that edge. Of, you know, sort of spiritual kind of ooze!

It surely causes one to wonder with all of the described sightings of these UFOs with the wheels, with the sound of them, the whooshing sound and so forth. As Ezekiel is describing the cherub as he saw them, the fact that Satan was a cherub, is it possible that some of these sightings that people have, are actually spiritual experiences in which they are seeing into the spirit realm, and are seeing perhaps beings from the spirit realm that are rather bizarre, as far as our concept of, of a living creature.

In mythology, and in the art forms of the ancient world, the pictures, the idols, the images that are portrayed are often images of half man, half beast. Is it possible that, say before the time of Noah, when the sons of God saw the daughters of men, and came unto them, and there were born these abnormal creatures, the Anakims. Is it possible that there was a genetic engineering that produced unusual type of beings? Where do they get the ideas? How is it that spread out throughout the ancient world, are similar drawings? A world that did not have the same kind of communication that we have today. Yet, there in the temples of India, are similar drawings to the creatures that you find in Egypt, or you find in Persia.

I am certain that there are a lot of things that we do not understand and I don’t know that I want to understand them. It isn’t necessary for my salvation, or walk with the Lord. But they do leave interesting questions in a person’s mind. Is it possible that the demons have different forms, different shapes?

Several years ago, I read a fascinating book entitled, “Through Forbidden Tibet”. It was written by a U.S. newsman, who went to Tibet and disguised himself as one of these religious men, and went into this annual meeting of the religious leaders where they would call forth the various demons. One chapter titled, “I saw the king of hell”, was a very awesome chapter, as he describes this appearance of this creature. It, it was a fascinating book, that particular chapter was reprinted in Harper’s magazine several years ago. But interesting types of beings!

Is the world being prepared for some kind of weird genetically formed being that would be again, half animal, half man? A creature that we could not really describe, we would have the same kind of problems that Ezekiel has, as he is trying to describe the cherubim. I don’t know. There’s, there’s a lot of things we don’t know. But the possibilities are there.

The cherubims lifted up their wings, mounted up from the earth in my sight: and when they went out, the wheels also beside the, every one stood at the door at the east gate [So now they’ve left the threshold of the door, and they’ve gone now to the east gate of Jerusalem, “the east gate”] of the Lord’s house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them, and above them. And this is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubims. Every one of them had four faces, every one had four wings; the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings. And the likeness of their faces was the same faces which I saw by the river of Chebar, when appearances and themselves: they went every one straight forward (10:18-22).

“They’re the same creatures that I saw there. Now I know”, he said, “they are the cherubim.”

John saw them. He describes them in the fourth chapter of the book of Revelation. Same description, or similar description of the four faces and all, of these living creatures. So there are a lot of interesting surprises in store in the future, as we begin to understand all of the various creations of God, and their place, and their part. Much to think about!

As we come into chapter eleven next week, we will see now where the glory of the Lord departs

completely from Jerusalem. God leaves the place desolate. So we'll be studying chapters eleven and twelve for next week. Read ahead, study them now, and we'll join together in our journey through the word next Sunday night.

Shall we pray?

Father, we thank You for the cross of Jesus Christ, whereby we have been separated from the world. We have been made your children, and you have placed your mark upon our lives. For You have sealed us with that Holy Spirit, which is the earnest of our inheritance until you redeem Your purchased possession. But Lord, as we wait for that day, we groan as we see the conditions of the world in which we live. As we see Lord, the innocent blood being shed. As we see the perversion in our streets. Lord our hearts groan over the iniquity, and the evil, and the abominations that are being committed. Lord we cry out to You for Your help, and for Your strength, that we might stand Lord against the evil onslaught of the enemy. The flood of evil that is overwhelming our society. Lord our hearts cry out to You for help, and for guidance in these days. Lord may we stand in the power of Your Holy Spirit, as we wrestle against these principalities and powers, these forces that control the high places of the world today. Lord we realize that this is a spiritual battle, and we need Your help, and Your strength to survive. But we thank You Lord that, "Greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world". That Jesus through His cross, has triumphed over the principalities and powers. Mark us Lord, as Yours. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.