

<With a Writers Inkhorn>

Ezekiel 8:2 – 9:11

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~ If you want to test and discover who really loves the Bible and who doesn't – teach the book of Ezekiel. Everyone seems to believe their own *"dreams and visions"* – but they don't believe the Biblical prophet's message from God – in fact, most don't believe God. I know they profess belief; but it isn't in the True and Living God. Well, Ezekiel's visions were *"far out"* – as an old saying goes. Some of them are beyond comprehension; while others are basic and commonplace. Even so, the one thing these visions all have in common is that they reveal the glory of the Lord. The complete captivity of Israel by Nebuchadnezzar as slaves, the desolation of the land, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the crushing and burning of Solomon's Temple were all permitted by God in judgment for His glory. If that doesn't stop most people from reading this report – then I don't know what would? You are dismissed.

For those who actually love the Lord, read carefully: The withdrawal of the Shekinah Glory from the temple was a gradual process, in my estimation. My particular understanding of the Shekinah Glory leaving Solomon's Temple is that it happened during the fifty-five year reign of King Manasseh. Frankly, I recognize that very few of the best fundamental conservative Bible scholars will agree with me on that – but, nonetheless, that's my belief. Of course, I didn't just decide that was what I wanted the Bible to say; no, I can sustain my theology throughout Scripture – although it does take nearly a college dissertation to do so – and we don't do that type of thing in this Spiritual Safari. So, if you want to take the majority viewpoint that the Shekinah Glory left the Temple all at once, or at a different time than I have indicated – that's okay – you'll be in good company. However, if you want to be right, then I am sure you will agree with me....

VIII

2 Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber.

3 And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy.

4 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain.

5 Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry.

6 He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations.

7 And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall.

8 Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door.

9 And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here.

10 So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about.

11 And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up.

12 Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.

13 He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do.

14 Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the LORD'S house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz.

15 Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these.

16 And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD'S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.

17 Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose.

18 Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

~ When we see fire in verse two of this vision we know *more* judgment is coming. Fire speaks of judgment in Scripture; as does “*brass*,” by the way. This vision ties into the glory of God we saw in chapter one. Well, God put forth the form of a hand as the type; because God is a Spirit, and He doesn’t require a physical hand as you and I do. When David told us in Psalms that the universe was God’s “*finger work*” – I can understand that – because I can’t understand how God made the universe without a hand; even though we’re told God *spoke* it into existence. Either way, the Spirit of God lifted Ezekiel up between the earth and Heaven. In that space is where Ezekiel wound up in Jerusalem – in the temple. So, I am just not going to argue whether Ezekiel went bodily or not in this rapture; you’ll have to sort that understanding out with God in prayer.

One way or another, God took Ezekiel and revealed to him why the Shekinah Glory was withdrawing from the temple in Jerusalem and why God was going to destroy the city and temple. Since Ezekiel was not a prophet during the reign of Manasseh, this, necessarily, means time travel, too – way back – if you accept my understanding that the Shekinah Glory left the temple during the reign of Manasseh, that is. If you don’t accept my interpretation – then explain it any way you want to. I’ve heard many explanations, and none have been satisfactory to a Scriptural viewpoint. Candidly, this brings us to the brink of the mystical – and we’re going to become *HEAVILY* involved in the realm of the supernatural as we progress from here in this section of Scripture in our so-called safari.

If you continue to read these reports, I can promise you one thing: you’re going to make a decision about whether you believe the Bible is the Word of God or not. None of these principles found in Ezekiel are new to our Spiritual Safari. Elijah was taken up to that place by the Spirit, wither he knew not; and the sons of the prophets all said, “... *Elijah hath departed by the Spirit of the Lord.*” Then, in Acts chapter eight verse thirty-nine, we read, “...*the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more.*” Elijah and Philip were both removed bodily. We’re not considering a one-time phenomenon here in Ezekiel.

Alright, so Ezekiel is in Jerusalem, somewhere between the Heavens and the earth, specifically at the door of the North Gate of the temple where he

saw the *"image of jealousy."* This is a highly unusual phrase – and is one not found elsewhere in Scripture. We read a lot about images – and we read a lot about jealousy – but not an *"image of jealousy."* Remember, Manasseh placed a blasphemous idol in the temple, and God judged him for that. You can read the entire account in second Kings chapter twenty-one, and second Chronicles chapter thirty-three. Manasseh had some old idol somewhere in a corner that he had forgotten about – but when he found it again, he set it up — right there in Solomon's Temple. There is no question in my mind that this is what we are talking about in Ezekiel concerning the *"image of jealousy."*

There were many in Jerusalem that should have rebuked King Manasseh, repented, and turned away from his idol – but they didn't – they worshiped it alongside him. To be fair, Manasseh would have killed anyone who rebuked him for doing this – but that doesn't excuse them. They should have rebuked him anyways. Because of the permissiveness of idolatry, the temple was defiled in *MANY* ways. Instead of worshiping the True and Living God, Manasseh was causing the people to break the first two commandments – and probably all of them. That's when God showed Ezekiel all the sins these people had been committing in a hole in the wall — in the dark. The most egregious sin was they dismissed God by saying, *"... He doesn't see or care for us."* Two reports ago, we considered the statement from a famous Rabbi, who said, *"... God died in Auschwitz."* That's just another way of saying God isn't watching us, so we're not responsible to Him. That course of action would be to say we don't owe God anything, so we can act as we please; and that's what the children of Israel were doing under the reign of Manasseh.

When anyone adopts the line of thinking we're examining in this report, they automatically become idolaters. If you want to talk about secret lodges in government – they had one in the temple in Jerusalem, also. Unfortunately, and almost unbelievably, verse thirteen tells us there are greater sins than that! The women were engaged in worshipping the Babylonian god of spring, Akitu – or Adonis – a.k.a. Tammuz – the god of spring vegetation. This god died and went to Hades in the fall and winter, but then revives again and flourishes in spring and summer. The Phoenicians also practiced this worship and spread it all over the then-

known world. These women were weeping because their god had died *again*. Naturally, this is the worship of nature; which is what they were doing it in the temple during the reign of Manasseh. In short, they were worshipping the creature rather than the Creator; and, my friends, we have a *whole lot* of that going on today with our social gospel professors of prosperity – and so on.

These things Ezekiel is writing represent the lowest, most debased level of living a man can descend to. They repudiate the Lord Jesus Christ while saying, “.... *we’re worshipping Him.*” They’re not worshipping Christ, though. One can claim “Jesus, Jesus, Jesus” until they sound like they’re reading a telephone book in Mexico – doesn’t change a thing. Jesus isn’t going to be claiming them in that day. They’re pitiful souls who are stuck in a blasphemous heresy. One cannot go any lower than they do. Remember, in Romans chapter one, Paul says, “.... *when they knew God they glorified Him not as God....professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*” See, religion is not man at his best; no, religion is man at his *absolute* worst, most degenerate state. That’s what Egypt was doing in the days of Moses and Aaron, too. They worshipped everything that moved. That’s why all the plagues of Egypt were aimed at those gods; mainly insects, animals and nature itself. There’s nothing new under the sun.

Alright, so the nation Israel had sunk even lower than the pagan, heathen nations surrounding them – which means they were no longer a witness for the True and Living God in the world. When God’s chosen people reached that base-level, judgment was all that was ahead for them. So, God decimated the land, destroyed the holy city of Jerusalem, sent the people into Babylonian captivity, and razed the temple. It’s serious business, friends. Even so, the greatest abomination was the worship of the sun in verse sixteen. Here, we see twenty-five men all crammed into the Holy of Holies worshipping the physical sun. Frankly, it’s like a man coming home and catching his wife in bed with three different men at the same time. It’s safe to say God was disgusted and angry with them. The children of Israel had very definitely stepped over the line with God.

God loves us, and will save anyone who will turn to Him and accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior from sins; but, my friends, God *still* judges

sin. When the judgment of God breaks forth upon a life, in the form of problems, sickness, disease, broken families, financial ruin, heartache, loneliness – and He might even call you home – then, it’s too late. I *KNOW* that is not popular theology; but it just happens to be sound doctrine taught by God’s prophet – just ask the children of Israel as they sat there dejected by the rivers and canals in Babylon, with their hearts and harps hung up on the willow tree, crying out to return to Zion. This is what’s real. This is the way it is; irrespective of whether you believe it, understand it, agree with it, accept it, like it – or not.

God is righteous; there is no unrighteousness with God — even in judgment. God is right in *everything* He does. When He judges – it’s right – and just, too, by the way. And if you think God is wrong, then I have bad news for you: *YOU’RE* wrong. Our modern generation thinks God is so wrong for allowing the flood and allowing little baby Amelekites to be slaughtered and people made slaves and women raped – and I am sure many Jews thought God was wrong for allowing the Holocaust to happen in Germany under Hitler – but God is *STILL* right. Man is wrong. Man doesn’t know God. That’s the whole problem. And you can just write it down – again....

IX

1 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.

2 And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a 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 brasen altar.

3 And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side;

4 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 the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.

5 And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity:

6 Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.

7 And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city.

8 And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem?

9 Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not.

10 And as for me also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head.

~ **READ CAREFULLY:** God is merciful, friends; and the way I understand Scripture, the Shekinah Glory withdrew *slowly* from the temple during the reign of Manasseh – and He may have even left and returned from time to time in that historical period. Either way, God doesn't act in a puerile, petulant manner, giving people up when He is in a spiteful mood. God is longsuffering — not willing that any should perish. God has sent *MANY* men to write and tell us all about Him throughout the ages. I believe the six men in verse two of this chapter are angels; because angels are always connected with judgment. Angels are always connected with the nation

Israel, too; but angels are *NOT* connected with the church. On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon men – not a bunch of angels! When Christ returns to rapture the church – there are no angels with Him. However, when Christ returns to establish His earthly Kingdom, a great company of angels are with Him. Remember, in Revelation chapters one through three, it's all about the church. After chapter three, the church is not mentioned again in Revelation, and angels take over the earth in judgment.

Those who love the Word of God, hear His message, and love the Lord Jesus Christ are *marked on their foreheads* by those men in verse two. See verses four through six of this chapter, also. We're talking about those who do *not* receive the mark of the beast. Obviously, this is a *different* mark. I don't think it could be made any clearer than this. Paul said we are a savor of life to them who are saved, but a savor of death to those who perish. Many people refuse to read this Spiritual Safari – and I don't blame them – because I don't make the mark of the beast on their foreheads. I make the mark of God on those who hate unrighteousness, sigh, and cry for the abominations that are done in the midst of them, and praise God for their life.

Satan will make his own mark on his own children – those who forebear God's message. The mark of the beast is what men want; and they reject Christ, my friends. See verse ten of this chapter. God is not dead. Man wants to say God has forsaken the earth because *THEY* have forsaken God. Well, God rides triumphantly in His chariot forevermore – with or without any of us. This is all extremely important for the serious student of Scripture to understand. This Spiritual Safari is literally trafficking in the supernatural now....

11 And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side, reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me.

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Matthew 13: *41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear ~*

Matthew 16: *27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works ~*

2 Thessalonians 1: *7...you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Savior and Lord Jesus Christ ~*

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