

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

EZEKIEL 1

There are some books of the Bible, you can turn to and the pages still stick together. They've been neglected. They're the *slighted* slices of the Scripture.

There'll be folks in heaven who bump into Ezekiel, and end up embarrassed. What if he asks you, "[Hey, did you like my book?](#)" And you have to tell him, "[Sorry, Zeke I never read it!](#)" That's not what you want to say!

You should be glad you're here tonight.

Ezekiel received vivid visions. He had practical insights. The Prophet was given a majestic glimpse of God's throne. He saw God's Shekinah Glory slowly, gradually, reluctantly leaving the Temple in Jerusalem.

In the book of Ezekiel we'll read several fascinating prophecies against various nations, that we can look back on today, and observe their precise fulfillment.

Ezekiel sees into the distant future and describes Israel's future restoration - events that were fulfilled in the 20th century - specifically in 1948 and in 1967...

Ezekiel's prophecies are amazingly contemporary, some of which are being fulfilled either at this very moment, or in the not so distant future! In fact, the book provides us with most of that background that helps us understand John's NT prophecy, Revelation.

It's interesting, Ezekiel was a contemporary of both Jeremiah and Daniel. Certainly, he knew both men.

Ezekiel lived in Babel along with Daniel. He mentions Daniel three times in his book... Tradition tells us while in Jerusalem, Ezekiel was a student of Jeremiah.

Remember, the Babylonians were used by God to judge Judah. Three times they invaded the city of Jerusalem and deported the Jews back to Babylon.

The first time was in 605 BC. Nebuchadnezzar took back several leading, Jewish young men to Babylon to serve in his royal court. One of which was **Daniel**...

The second deportation occurred in 597 BC when 10,000 Jews, including the Prophet **Ezekiel**, were taken captive along with their young king, Jehoiachin.

So while Jeremiah served the Jews left in Jerusalem, *and basically oversaw their collapse* - Daniel and Ezekiel served the Lord in Babylon. Daniel was given a position in the Babylonian palace. Ezekiel served in the Babylonian countryside, among the Jewish exiles.

Jeremiah looked thru *sobbing eyes*. Ezekiel saw through *surreal eyes*. Ezekiel was a visionary - a Hebrew mystic. He possessed a spiritual sensitivity, and a other-worldliness. His *head was in the heavens*.

Remember, the theme of **Isaiah** was *the salvation of the Lord... Jeremiah* spoke about *the judgment of the Lord... Daniel* will major on *the kingdom of the Lord...*

Hosea's story teaches *the faithfulness of the Lord*. But the theme of **Ezekiel** is *the glory of the Lord!*

The key phrase in the book of Ezekiel which is used 62 times in 27 of the 48 chapters, is the phrase: “They shall know that I am God...” Ezekiel saw the Almighty.

He saw firsthand the Shekinah, the indescribable glory of God! He begins with a description of the vision he saw when God first called him. He sees God’s throne - His throne-chariot - and the glory around it!

Chapter 1, “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, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God.”

Ezekiel dates his prophecy in the 30th year, and the question becomes, “*the 30th year of what?*” Most likely it was the 30th year of his life that he received His calling from God... *and he tells us where it happened.*

He was “*among the captives by the River Chebar.*”

This was a canal build by Nebuchadnezzar to carry ships between Babylon’s two major rivers, the Tigris and the Euphrates. The Chebar, in what is today modern Iraq, is 50 miles southeast of Babel, near the city of Nippur - a primary Jewish settlement at the time.

According to 3:15 Ezekiel’s hometown was “Tel-Abib” literally “Tel-Aviv” - a city in this same area.

In fact, the modern day Israeli city took its name from Ezekiel’s hometown in Babylon. Realize this region on the Chebar is 40 miles from the traditional site of the home of Noah, and 100 miles from Eridu, the traditional site of the

Garden of Eden. This may explain why Ezekiel mentions both Noah and Eden in his book.

Today, this whole region in Iraq is known as “Al Kilfi,” which is Arabic for “*Ezekiel*.” In fact, *the tomb of Ezekiel* is located in this region. Once cared for by Iraqi Jews, and visited by Jewish pilgrims, today it’s a Muslims holy site. All the Jews have been displaced.

And it was here that Ezekiel received, “*visions of God*.” Remember Psalm 137, it was written by Jewish exiles. They cried, “*By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept when we remembered Zion. We hung our harps upon the willows in the midst of it.*”

Apparently, the exiles were *weeping*, but Ezekiel was *peeping*... The eyes of his contemporaries were full of tears, but his eyes were on God. During the nation’s darkest hour God showed Ezekiel visions of His glory.

We’ll discover that Ezekiel was not only a prophet, but a Jewish priest. And according to Numbers 4:3 a priest couldn’t begin his ministry until the age of 30.

Think of what this meant for Ezekiel... He had trained his whole life for the priesthood, to serve God in the Jerusalem Temple. Now the day comes when he can finally ply his trade and be used of God, but now he’s 600 miles from Jerusalem. *It would be like turning 16 only to learn they’d change the driving age to 21.*

It could’ve been a depressing year for Ezekiel had he not had his eyes on God. But God takes this priest and makes

him a prophet. He'll be God's mouthpiece to God's people, and it all begins with a vision of God.

And this is the starting point for every man or woman of God. You can't serve God until you see Him clearly.

Ezekiel learned that when it comes to our lives with God *seeing comes before service - knowing before doing*. Many new Christians get excited about serving the Lord, without realizing the primary reason God saves us is for us to know Him. Service is secondary.

Remember, Martha was busy running around preparing dinner for Jesus, while her sister Mary left the kitchen to sit at His feet. Luke 10:40 sums up the situation, "*Martha was distracted with much serving.*"

And when she asked Jesus to rebuke her sister for shirking her duties, Jesus told her, "*Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.*" Always remember, in our relationship with Jesus, *seeing and knowing* always come before *serving and doing*.

Verse 2, "*On the fifth day of the month, which was in the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the River Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was upon him there.*"

The book of Ezekiel will be very specific about dates. This vision occurred on what we call, July 31, 593 BC.

“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.” Ezekiel sees a celestial fireball descending from the **north**. And though it’s hard for us Southerners to admit it’s true... Whenever heaven is spoken of in Scripture it’s location is said to be in the “**North**.”

Isaiah 14:13 and Psalm 48:2 are examples.

Psalm 75:6 says, “For exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south. But God is judge...” The implication is that God is in the North.

Ezekiel sees a heavenly fireball with an explosive center. Flames are shooting out of its core and lapping up over the cloud. Imagine, a brush fire contained in a capsule. It’s blowing in from the north. It’s pulsating, palpitating, and throbbing. It’s a fireball with a pulse.

Ezekiel mentions an “**amber**” color. The Hebrew word refers to a brilliant, burnished medal - a silver and gold compound. The cloud looked like polished brass.

Let me give you an overview of what Ezekiel was seeing. He was beholding a vision of God’s throne. But not the type of throne you probably imagine when I say the word. This wasn’t a stationary, ornate, elevated chair. God’s throne is *part throne and part chariot!*

God’s throne has wheels that are supported by angels with wings. His throne moves - it travels on the backs of angels

called cherubim. You've heard of *horsepower*. Well, *angel-power* propels God's throne.

Remember, the gold box that sat in the Holy of Holies in the Temple, the Ark of the Covenant, was a replica of God's throne in heaven. It's interesting that in 1 Chronicles 28:18 the Ark is called a "chariot."

When we go to Israel, and visit the Galilean city of Capernaum there's a carving of the Ark, on wheels.

Remember how Elijah was taken to heaven. This wasn't just an Uber driver in an angelic limo. God's own fiery chariot came in a whirlwind. God revved up His throne and swooped in to pick up Elijah personally.

I like Deuteronomy 33:26, "There is no one like..God.. who rides the heavens to help you, and in His excellency on the clouds." 2 Samuel 22:11 says of God, "He rode upon a cherub, and flew; He was seen upon the wings of the wind." God is always on the move. He rides the heavens on His throne-chariot!

And Ezekiel saw this amazing site. He saw it in a vision. What's important for us to realize that one day we'll see it too... *not in a vision, we'll see it in reality!*

He continues in verse 5, "Also from within it came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man."

I'm sure Ezekiel figured nothing could exist in this raging incinerator he was seeing... yet suddenly from the midst of the fireball came four living creatures.

It's interesting this is also what John the Revelator describes in Revelation 4 - four living creatures accompanying God's throne. The description John gives is very similar to what we have here in Ezekiel.

We also know from Ezekiel 10:15 that these living creatures were a brand of angel known as "cherubim." Angels come in different ranks, and roles, and types.

The first mention of a cherub is Genesis 3:24, where a cherub was stationed by the tree of life to block man's entrance. The Bible tells us that the Devil, or Lucifer, was once "the anointed cherub." We also know two gold, molten cherubs adorned the top of the Ark.

1 Samuel 4:4 refers to God as "The LORD of hosts, who dwells between the cherubim." Other passages for your study include Psalm 80:1, 99:1, and Isaiah 37:16.

These living creatures, or cherubim, are always associated with God's throne. They're His attendants.

Verse 6, "Each one had four faces, and each one had four wings." You've heard of someone being two-faced... well, these angels were four-faced... But as we'll see they weren't concealing truth, but revealing it.

And they had wings - but not just two. They had four. This represented the best in aerodynamic technology.

"Their legs were straight, and the soles of their feet were like the soles of calves' feet. They sparkled like the color of burnished bronze." *Why the mention of feet?* According to Leviticus 11:3 the shape of an animal's hoof was a way to

designate between clean and unclean. The split hoof of a calf was a mark of a clean animal. Perhaps Ezekiel is noting their feet to let us know that these four angels were pure and holy.

Could it be that *the evil Satan* has a whole hoof?

He continues their description in verse 8, “The hands of a man were under their wings on their four sides; and each of the four had faces and wings. Their wings touched one another.” On top of the Ark of the Covenant in the Tabernacle, the wings of the two golden cherubim touched over the middle of the box.

Every detail resembled God’s actual throne.

And “The creatures did not turn when they went, but each one went straight forward.” Since each cherub had four faces, each looking in a different direction, they never had turn, or back up... When I taught my kids to drive I always stressed never back-up - use your reverse only if mandatory. It’s true, *in life and in driving* bad stuff tends to happen when you back up.

So any direction these angels moved they were going forward. This means God’s throne-chariot has an omni-directional drive train (*with an eternal warranty no doubt*). It moves suddenly in any direction. It can stop on a dime, and shift directions without a turn radius.

So these living creatures each had four faces, and four wings, and human-like hands under their wings, and they sported a shoeshine. Their hoofs sparkled like polished bronze. Ezekiel sees an amazing site!

And verse 10, “As for the likeness of their faces, each had the face of a man; each of the four had the face of a lion on the right side, each of the four had the face of an ox on the left side, and each of the four had the face of an eagle. Thus were their faces.” Each of the cherubs had the face of a *man, lion, ox, and eagle*.

And all four faces represent an attribute of God...

Man is the smartest creature on earth and represents **God’s intelligence...** The **lion** is the king of beasts. He speaks of **God’s majesty...** The **ox** is a pack animal, a servant, and is a picture of **God’s faithfulness...** Whereas the **eagle** soars through the heavens, and is a reminder of **God’s sovereignty.**

It’s interesting, in the wilderness God’s glory dwelt in the Tabernacle, but was surrounded by twelve tribes...

Four of the tribes were camped on the **east** side of the Tabernacle under the banner of **Judah, the lion.** **Westward** were the four tribes camped under the banner of **Ephraim, the ox.** To the **south** were tribes associated with **Rueben, the man.** And on the **north** were the tribes under the banner of **Dan, the eagle.**

So again, you have God surrounded by a lion, an ox, a man, and an eagle... *And we see it again in the NT...*

John 1:14 tells us, “**The Word became flesh and dwelt among us...**” The Greek word translated “dwelt” means “**tabernacled.**” Like the tabernacle of old, Jesus was God’s presence on the earth... and He also was surrounded by four faces... a lion, ox, man, and eagle.

Four Gospels recount Jesus' ministry, and picture him in four ways: **Matthew** was written to the Jews and portrays Jesus as Messiah, king of the Jews, the **lion**...

Mark sees Jesus as the ultimate servant. He was the picture of faithfulness - the **ox**... **Luke** focuses on the humanity of Jesus. He is the **man** all men were meant to be... And **John** focuses on the deity of Jesus. He is the Son of God over all men, the sovereign **eagle**...

On earth and in heaven God is surrounded by these four faces... the lion, the ox, the man, and the eagle...

And speaking of these four cherubim there's motion, "**Their wings stretched upward; two wings of each one touched one another, and two covered their bodies.**

And each one went straight forward; they went wherever the spirit wanted to go, and they did not turn when they went." "**Wings**" imply great speed, yet these speedy angels can stop and start on a dime.

The operate in perfect synchronization.

And they possess a unique steering mechanism. Wherever the Holy Spirit wants them to go, they go!

And God has equipped us with this same steering mechanism. In the NT we're told to *walk in Spirit - be filled with the Spirit - be led by Spirit - never quench or grieve the Holy Spirit. We too should be Spirit-driven.*

The problem with us isn't the mechanism - the steering - it's the wheels. Human wheels like you and I are more fragile and inefficient than angelic wheels.

Oh, that we'd be more like the wheels on God's throne-chariot. Sensitive to the Spirit and willing to move where God sees move - *to start where God says start, and stop when God says stop*. Is it your tendency to move at the slightest twitch of God's will?

Whenever you analyze the steering on a car you check *the play* in the steering. How far do you have to move the steering wheel to steer the car. And this is the question for us, "how much play is in our steering?" We all need to let the Holy Spirit tighten our steering.

Ezekiel says in verse 13, "As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, like the appearance of torches going back and forth among the living creatures. The fire was bright, and out of the fire went lightning." These living creatures looked like hot coals in a barbecue grill.

"And the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning." Talk about a burst of speed - these angels move like lightning bolts.

General Electric estimates that the average bolt of lightning carries 100 million volts of electricity and a current of 100 thousand amps. That's enough energy to keep your house lighted for the next 35 years!

Apparently, the living creatures that propel God's throne-chariot are tremendously quick and powerful.

Ezekiel gives us more detail on the drive chain of God's throne-chariot in verse 15, "Now as I looked at the living

creatures, behold, a wheel was on the earth beside each living creature with its four faces.

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.”

Let’s define a few terms, the Hebrew color “*beryl*” is a pale green. At times it appears as an emerald color.

The term “*workings*” could be translated “*operations*.” The wheels moved like a wheel within a wheel - *like a gyroscope*. Ezekiel saw a vertical wheel spinning in the center of a horizontal wheel which was also spinning.

And this provided God’s throne-chariot with unlimited aeronautical maneuverability... It could turn at 90 degree angles - come to sudden halts - make vertical descents and climbs - it had instant acceleration.

I hope in eternity God lets me take it for a spin! (*pun intended*) I’m asking God if I can borrow the keys.

Verse 17, “*When they moved, they went toward any one of four directions; they did not turn aside when they went.*” Ezekiel must’ve been a mechanical guy, he watches with amazement how the chariot handles.

And “*As for their rims, they were so high they were awesome; and their rims were full of eyes, all around the four of them.*” Wheels have rims. Guys love rims. And God’s throne-chariot has huge rims. Ezekiel calls them “*awesome.*” God’s ride has both wheels and rims.

And these rims were full of eyes, not spokes.

The imagery speaks of God's omniscience. He sees all, knows all. Don't think you can do something behind God's back. His eyes are pointed in all directions.

Verse 19, "When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. Wherever the spirit wanted to go, they went, because there the spirit went; and the wheels were lifted together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels." The spirit of the angels directed the wheels. They spun in sync with God's will.

"When those went, these went; when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels."

Before I go further I want to discuss a subject that comes up whenever we study the vision of Ezekiel 1. And that's the possibility of UFOs and alien spacecraft.

There are folks who try to attribute some of the Bible's stories to extraterrestrial appearances and alien involvement... Some people have asserted that Elijah was taken up in a UFO, not a fiery chariot... wise men saw a UFO, not an actual star... Jesus ascended to heaven in a UFO... And the light that blinded Paul on the road to Damascus was that of a UFO...

And of course, there are folks who want to equate what Ezekiel saw to a UFO. The fireball was the blast of the spaceship's engines... the spinning wheels was a flying saucer... *"the hand of the Lord"* was the pressure of a

shoulder strap... The eyes in the rims of the wheels were portals in a revolving saucer.

When Christopher Columbus sailed through the Bermuda Triangle, he wrote in his diary of a sighting - a phenomena that had “the appearance of a torch.” It was like “a small wax candle that rose and lifted up.”

Some people insist the Spanish explorer witnessed a UFO sighting that fit the description of Ezekiel’s fireball.

A 2012 poll by Kelton Research revealed that 36% of Americans believe that UFOs are real. One in ten say they seen something that they thought was a UFO.

Over the years, many supposed UFO sightings have been explained away as natural phenomena. There’re lots of spurious sightings that can be easily dismissed.

But there are some very credible reports. Military and NASA sources have bolstered the belief in UFOs...

Fighter Jet pilots from countries all over the world have reported following UFOs until they disappeared in a burst of supernatural speed of impossible turns...

UFOs were supposedly sighted on two of the Apollo missions, two of the Gemini missions, and on three Skylab missions... *Here’re two photos taken of an unidentified flying object on April 30, 2015 from the International Space Station.* ... There’re many more...

Even President Jimmy Carter reported seeing a UFO from his seat on Air Force One (*photo is actually fake*).

So, *are UFOs real?* I believe there've been legitimate sightings of extraterrestrial phenomena, but I also believe the objects haven't been properly identified!

Here Ezekiel sees a saucer-shaped flying vehicle, but it's not a *unidentified* object, we know exactly what it is... It's God's throne-chariot propelled by angels.

Ezekiel knows exactly what he's seeing... *cherubim!*

The reason people like to suggest that Ezekiel saw a UFO is because his description resembles the sightings of what people have seen today. *But could the reverse be true?* I believe what some people are reporting as UFOs, *and assume are alien spacecraft,* is actually what Ezekiel saw... cherubim or angels!

I believe the UFO sightings that we find today are actually physical manifestations of fallen angels.

Remember, Satan is a fallen cherub. I would imagine many of his demons are also cherubs. [Could it be that Satan and his allies are involved in a global deception?](#)

What better way to explain away the rapture of the Church - the sudden disappearance of millions of Christians. I can hear it now, ["Aliens have invaded."](#)

One author writes, ["The old Angel of light is back in the sky with new aerial phenomena geared to capture \(and deceive\) a culture jaded, yet credulously hunting for supernatural wonders in the heavens."](#)

Allen Hynek was an astronomer at Northwestern and an Air Force investigator on Project Blue Book.

In the 1970s he believed UFOs were manned by aliens from other planets. But by 1982 Mr. Hynek had changed his mind. A biographer writes, “Hynek submitted that perhaps UFOs were part of a parallel reality, slipping in and out of sequence with our own.

This was a hypothesis that obviously pained him as an empirical scientist. Yet after 30 years of interviewing witnesses and investigating sighting reports, radar contacts, and physical traces of saucer landings no other hypothesis seemed to make sense to him.”

Hynek thought UFOs were more *inter-dimensional*, than *inter-planetary*. Rather than from outer space, they were indigenous to Earth. He equated them with “*poltergeist*” since they behaved like ghosts or demons.

In the book “*Close Encounters: A Better Explanation*” authors Clifford Wilson and John Weldon pinpoint the aerodynamic problems that exist with UFOs. In their movements UFOs violate basic laws of physics...

A physical craft traveling at their speed would cause a supersonic boom, yet most often UFOs fly silent.

UFOs have been clocked at 18,000 mph. At that speed a quick turn would splatter whatever passengers are inside, against the walls of the spacecraft. *Yet this fits Ezekiel’s cherubim. They had other-worldly mobility.*

UFOs also change shape, size, and color in mid-flight. They disappear instantly - nullifying mass and gravity. They form chains, merge into one, and are deft at avoiding being filmed. All these traits are similar to powers associated with demons in occult literature.

It's also interesting to note the similarities between UFO sightings and occult rituals - *the smell of sulphur (a rotten stench), astral projection, levitation, weird noises, mysterious fires, sexual contact (even rapes)*.

Some contacts have been given the number 666.

Other aliens have been described as wearing a uniform with a serpent on the chest. Alien abductees have told horrible stories of treatment by ETs that sound eerily similar to tales of demon possession.

And invariably aliens deliver an unbiblical message.

A man named Albert Bender once founded a UFO group, but later mysteriously dropped out. A reporter later explained his reason why, "He became victim of strange paranormal experiences that left him drained and frightened. His house became haunted, he heard rapping on the walls and strange footsteps at night.

Later three men in black visited him and informed him there was no life after death, no God in heaven, Jesus was not God, and the resurrection was false."

Albert Bender's story was the inspiration for the comic book series and movie entitled "Men In Black."

A UFO message is typically unbiblical, anti-Christian, and filled with reincarnation and New Age propaganda.

Again, I believe the whole ET phenomena is a satanic set-up to deceive people and ultimately provide an explanation for the rapture. If the world thought they were under attack by

an alien invasion they would quickly come together under a one-world government.

Perhaps this is what will give rise to the Anti-Christ, the global ruler spoken of throughout the Scriptures.

Today, there're cults that believe *alien saviors* are the planet's only hope. They've built alien landing pads, and hope to make contact with extraterrestrials. In San Diego a group has a sign, "[Welcome Space Brothers.](#)" In the end all the world may fall for this Satanic ruse.

Well, back to the text, verse 22, "[The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures was like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads.](#)" Ezekiel had been looking under the hood of God's throne-chariot - it's wheels within the wheels.

Now he looks at the throne itself. The chassis of the chariot - *or base of the throne* - was like a crystal.

John provides us a similar description in Revelation 4:6, "[Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures.](#)" The cherubim were under the chassis - a crystal expanse was out in front.

["And under the firmament their wings spread out straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body. When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still,](#)

they let down their wings.” As Ezekiel takes all this in, he hears the throne-chariot crank up! It’s a roar like a waterfall.

Imagine, the noise of marching troops, and the rumbling of heavy equipment. The sound of angel’s wings isn’t a soft fluttering. *Think a Top Fuel Dragster.*

And when they drop their wings it kills the engine.

In Revelation 1:15 this is how John described the voice of the glorified Jesus, today, in heaven. **“His voice (was) as the sound of many waters.”** Imagine, standing on the beach in a storm, and listening to the sound of the crashing waves. Or think of the deafening roar at the bottom of an enormous waterfall.

This is how Jesus sounds today, in heaven. His voice is booming, overwhelming. It fills the heaven’s halls from wall to wall. His voice drowns out all others.

Remember when Elijah tucked-tail and ran from the evil Queen Jezebel. He went to the mountain of the Lord, Mt. Sinai, and there God appeared to him.

At first a great wind busted the face of the mountain - rocks crumbled - but God was not in the wind...

Next, an earthquake shook the mountain, but God was not in the trembler... After that, a fire scorched the mountain side, but again the Lord was not in the fire...

Finally, Elijah heard **“a still small voice”** - God spoke in a whisper. God was in the whisper, not the noise.

And today a big part of Christian discipleship is learning how to quiet our spirit and listen for this still small voice. We live in a high-decibel world.

We have so many voices commanding our attention.

This is why we need the discipline to quiet our hearts and cultivate a familiarity with God's still, small whisper.

And yet, it's also exciting to know that one day God's voice will drown out all other voices and noises. That when Jesus speaks we'll hear nothing else but Him!

Verse 25, "A voice came from above the firmament that was over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings. 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." Ezekiel finally sees God's actual throne. And it was like a sapphire *or bluish* color.

Put it all together and Ezekiel saw a kaleidoscope of color in this vision. It made for a magnificent sight.

And here, He sees the most stunning, jaw-dropping aspect yet... Ezekiel looks to see who's sitting on God's throne, and He sees the appearance of a man.

I believe this was a pre-incarnate sighting of Jesus.

Ezekiel doesn't say a man was sitting on God's throne, but the person appeared to be a man. In the days of Ezekiel, Jesus had not yet taken on human flesh, but here our Lord is already appearing as a man!

You get the impression Jesus was chomping at the bit to start His mission. He could hardly wait to come to earth as one of us and perform God's redemptive work.

“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.”

In Revelation 1:14 this is how John pictures Jesus, “His eyes (were) like a flame of fire... His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace... And His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.”

The visions of John and Ezekiel are similar.

Verse 28, “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.” Again Revelation 4:3 also depicts a rainbow arching above God's throne.

But I love the detail Ezekiel adds, it was like “*a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day.*” This fallen world we live in is full of rainy, dreary days. But all those who know Jesus can look forward to a glorious future. One day we'll gather with all the saints from all ages around God's throne, and sing praise to our Lord and Savior.

Lastly, Ezekiel tells us his reaction to the vision he'd received. “So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking.” He fell on his face!

This is how John responded to his vision of Jesus. In Revelation 1:17, “When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.” A vision of God and His throne will wipe you out! It’s always a life-altering experience.

Remember, when Jacob met God at Penuel he wrestled with Him all night long, and was injured in the process. The angel touched Jacob’s thigh and crippled him. Jacob walked with a limp for the rest of his life.

When Paul saw the Lord Jesus on the road, the light was so bright it blinded Paul, and caused an debilitating eye problem he battled the rest of His life.

When Moses encountered God on Mt. Sinai, he came down the mountain with *a divine shine*. His skin glowed and radiated with the glory of God - so much so, he had to wear a veil when he was with the people.

Suffice it to say, a vision of God is not a trivial, run-of-the-mill matter. God’s presence changes us. His fiery countenance melts us. His glory rubs off on us.

This is what Paul teaches us in 2 Corinthians 3:18, “But we all... beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

Realize it’s *spending time with God that shapes a life for God*. The more we’re exposed to God’s glory, the more we become like Him. *Vision* always comes before *instruction*. **We see then serve! We know then go!**

Ezekiel saw God on His throne; then fell on His face... *and God speaks to him...* What He says, we'll begin to explore next week. *Same time, same channel.*