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THE CHERUBIM-IN HISTORY, TYPE AND PROPHECY

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Study 6: The Glory Returns

Reading: Ezekiel 43 verses 1 to 12

Thank you, brother Skip, and good afternoon brethren and sisters.

In Ezekiel chapter 3, Ezekiel saw the vision again. He'd seen the vision in chapter 1, and now in chapter 3, he sees it again. Verse 12, 'The Spirit took me up, I heard behind me a voice of a great rushing, saying, Blessed be the glory of Yahweh from His place. I heard also the noise of the wings of the living creatures that touched one another, and the noise of the wheels over against them, and a noise of a great rushing. So the spirit lifted me up, and took me away'. Why did Ezekiel see it again? Why did God give him this vision of the cherubim again, why repeat it before Ezekiel began to perform such unpleasant works as outlined in chapter 4? when he had to show the dramatization of the siege that was going to come upon the city of Jerusalem? Brethren and sisters and young people, it was to lift his morale, to see that vision of the future! It lifts our morale too, as we think about the day of the future, the cherubic host, the multitudinous saints, the bride of Christ, the rainbowed Angel, whatever we might like to call it by name, it's the day of the kingdom! and prophet after prophet, saw the day of the kingdom, and it lifted them up and they could go forward in the work, and here Ezekiel now, had to speak about what was going to happen to their city, the kingdom was coming to an end, was going to be the end of Jerusalem, they were going into captivity, that city would be burnt, **but** they were to look beyond that day! To us, of course, we have a similar responsibility, Ezekiel in particular was warned of his duty to Israel in verse 17, 'Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel'. We're all watchmen! it's not just our arranging group that are the watchmen in an ecclesia, we're all watchmen. We all have a responsibility, we're watchmen in our families, we're watchmen in our ecclesias, we have a duty and Ezekiel had this duty, therefore, 'hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me (he had to warn the people). He couldn't shirk that responsibility! and we have a responsibility one to another, to support, to encourage and sometimes it may be to warn, 'is this the way to go?'

We know at verse 18, 'When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand'. That's a pretty serious statement, it's saying that we have a responsibility to **warn**, and maybe if we do not warn in a situation that required us to, we could be held

accountable! So we really don't have a choice there, do we? If we warn someone Ezekiel was told, and they don't take any notice, then we're no longer accountable, but if we refuse or deny to take the opportunity to say, 'hey, is this the way?' that's not the way we go!' then it's now our fault as well.

The third occasion when Ezekiel saw the similitude of a man and the glory of the LORD commenced with the 8th chapter and we turn over to chapter 8. It really goes through from chapters 8, 9, 10, and 11 and the third time that Ezekiel saw the cherubic vision. Three times there was a completeness in what he saw; number 3 is the number of completeness; 1, 2, and 3 is the first time that you can draw a geometric figure, a triangle, there's something complete about the number 3. If you want an interesting exercise, look at number 3 right throughout scripture and you'll see the completeness in creation, in animal, vegetable, mineral; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the promises, lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, pride of life, the completeness of sin and the problems we battle with. Number 3 comes up all the time, well, here there are 3 times for the visions; and chapter 8 verse 1, 'And it came to pass in the sixth year now, (one year and two months after the first vision); it was in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house', and remember how although they were in exile, they lived in their own communities, and Ezekiel had his own house, 'As I sat in my house, the elders of Judah sat before me (there are the elders seated before him; Ezekiel's in a respectful position, they're learning from Ezekiel) and at the end of verse 1 as he sat there with those elders, 'the hand of God fell upon me'. He's now under God's influence again!

In verse 2, '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, the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber' (it's Ezekiel chapter 1 all over again), and in verse 3, 'He put forth the form of a 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 Elohim to Jerusalem'. B&S, he was taken in vision to Jerusalem, he was over there in exile, the river Chebar area, in Babylon, now taken in vision right over to Jerusalem. Although it is not stated, it is possibly maybe even quite likely that he spoke as he had that vision, and those seated before him, would hear what he was seeing. An added guarantee that it was a genuine vision, when all that were in captivity would have been told the visions.

Well, he was taken, we are told in visions to Jerusalem 'to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north where was the seat of the image of jealousy', so he was taken right to the very temple mount. Now the temple mount went from north to south with 3 groups of buildings; you had the temple, then you had the royal palace, and then you had the house of the forest of Lebanon. With the temple and with the royal palace that had their own inner court, their own courtyard area alongside those buildings, and then with the

there was a bigger outer court and there would have been several gates that came into the court of the temple. The precise position here is uncertain but the main entrance doubtless, was in the eastern wall, which implied that the temple had only one court that strictly belonged to it, the inner court with an eastern entrance. The incidents here, seen

by Ezekiel took place in that inner court and partly into an adjacent outer court on the eastern side of the temple.

In verse 4, 'Behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plain', the cherubic vision was there! The future manifestation of the saints there! and that's something future and here's a vision of something still not completed, the manifestation of the saints in glory, there at a time in history when things were going to happen that are now past. So how can something that is still future, still yet to be seen, be involved with something that is history? because that's what happened that day. For Romans tells us that those things that be not as though they were! as far as God's concerned, what is to happen in the future is as good as happened! In His purpose, it's a fact, it will happen! so here we have something in the future linked with something in the past. The principle applies with regards to the saints that Paul says, 'all things are for your sakes', so the cherubim are there in this day of history.

Then in verse 5, 'Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold, northward at the gate of the altar, the image of jealousy', and Yahweh now began stage by stage to show Ezekiel the corruptness of the house of Israel. You'll recall how Ezekiel was contemporary with Jeremiah; Ezekiel was over in Babylon, Daniel was over in Babylon, and Jeremiah was back in Jerusalem, with the remnant, with the poorest sort left. There were the false prophets saying, 'ah, give it a couple of years and the captivity will be over, and they'll return home!'. Jeremiah said 70 years of captivity! Israel was supposed to have been a peculiar treasure unto their God above all other peoples, but they'd gone the way of the nations. Idolatry was rife and here God is showing Ezekiel the reasons why the kingdom was coming to an end.

Just last week, I exhorted at an ecclesia where brother Len Rittmeyer is now a member with his sister wife; you may know of the Rittmeyer's, both are professors of archeology and they've spent many, many years in Jerusalem and they are now in south Australia and he's teaching Hebrew and English at the heritage college school. Well, after the exhort which was on Jeremiah, when we were dealing with this same time period, he came up and said, 'we have dug in the area of Jerusalem that belonged to this time; from Josiah's day to the time of the exile, and when we went into the digs where the houses were, we found in that soil, in that debris, little idols. People had idols in their homes in that day, and it's there in the excavations. Things were so bad before the captivity. He said, 'when you go to the dig where they came back from the captivity, no idols. When they returned from the captivity, they were no longer idolatrous as a nation. There's the witness in the ground today!' A very interesting brother to talk to!

Well, we have listed here, for example, the image of jealousy and then he goes on in verses 6 to 12 and talks about the worship of the elders. All the abominations that they were worshipping and then he talks about the wailing for Tammuz in verses 13 and 14, the nation had gone the way of those about them, absolute idolatry, abominations, there in the capital, there in the temple area! Then we come down to verse 15, 'Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? how bad things are? then turn yet

again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. And he brought me to the inner court of Yahweh's house, right to the very temple, and behold, at the door (look at this, b&s) at the door of the temple of Yahweh between the porch and the altar, were about 5 and 20 men with their backs towards the temple and their faces towards the east worshipping the sun'. That's how bad it had got! greater abominations right in the very precincts of the temple, the inner court, either priests or Levites, senior rank in the priesthood there, not merely debasing the worship of Yahweh or linking it to other cults, but backs to the temple worshipping the sun. We're not told, but probably Shammaz the Babylon sun god, and so God said to Ezekiel, '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, will I not hear them', they had gone too far! So the judgments were to come!

Then in chapter 9 verse 6, 'Slay utterly old and young, maids, little children, and **women**', that's how bad things were! 'Begin, verse 6, 'at My sanctuary with the judgments', and as we've been reminded throughout the weekend, judgment begins at the household **first**. Same principle here, the judgments began at the household, right there at the sanctuary, and in the end, all old and young, children, women, maids all slain, even then, there's that little note there, 'but come not near any man upon whom is the mark'. As you go back through that chapter, we're told there back in verse 2, 'Behold, six men came, and there was one man there among them clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and he went in and the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherubim inside'. But here was one man clothed with linen, here were six men and in verse 4, 'Yahweh 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 cry for all these abominations that were going on'. There were still a few individuals that hadn't gone that way! So when we read through Jeremiah's record, we tend to think of it as a record of doom and gloom and yet all the way through there were individuals who were on the side with Jeremiah. We read of Shaphan's sons, he had 4 boys, 3 of those boys are mentioned in Jeremiah's record as on side with Jeremiah, there was one boy, Jaazaniah, who wasn't; he was one of them with his back to the wall worshipping the sun. That great family of Shaphan lost one of his boys! There were quite a few faithful mentioned: Baruch, there's another one, the scribe who wrote all the records of Jeremiah's prophecies and visions. There was a brother of Baruch, Seraiah, he took scrolls over to Babylon; there were the Rechabites, why were they still there hanging onto the truth? so there still were individuals and here God is saying, there's an individual here and an individual there, put a mark on them and touch them not when the judgments come! Still a little remnant there in the city!

So in chapter 9 verse 1, 'He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, every man with his destroying weapon in his hand'. Then that one man clothed in linen, a specific purpose is mentioned; and then in verse 3 we have, 'The glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, to the threshold of the house'. Now that's not chapter 1 of Ezekiel, that's Exodus 25; this is the glory between the cherubim of the mercy seat, this is the

Shekinah glory now; not the cherubic glory but the Shekinah glory, the Shekinah glory of the God of Israel **left the mercy seat area!** and the glory that had gone up was about to leave, and in verse 6 as they began that judgment, but didn't touch those with the mark; he said unto them, verse 7, 'defile the house, fill the courts with the slain, go ye forth! They went forth and slew in the city.'. Then in verse 1 of chapter 10, Ezekiel looked and behold, 'In the firmament that was above the head of the cherubim; (so the cherubim were there!) there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne; (there's the vision of Christ on the throne-He's there that day!) and he spake with the man clothed in the linen and said, Go in between the wheels even unto the cherub and fill thy hand with coals of fire from between the cherubim, and scatter them over the city. And he went in my sight' (Ezekiel saw it). We remember the coals of fire, the symbol of the consuming sacrifice, acceptable in an offering of Yahweh or it could devour and destroy; the two aspects, and here was a time of destruction, the passing judgment on Judah, to purify that area at last, to remove these abominations.

Also in verse 3, there is the cloud! 'The cherubim stood on the right side of the house, and the man went in, and the cloud filled the inner court'. Here's the cherubic glory of Ezekiel 1, **so the cherubim are there, the Shekinah glory is there, the two of them are there together.** We find then, that the glory of Yahweh, verse 4, went up from the cherub, stood over the threshold of the house. The house was filled with the cloud, the court was full of the brightness of Yahweh's glory. And the sound of the cherubic wings was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of Almighty God when He spake. It came to pass, that when he had commanded the man clothed with the linen saying, take fire from between the wheels from between the cherubim, then he went in and stood beside the wheels'. What a vision Ezekiel was seeing, both glory there together, here was the glory, the cherubic glory leaving the mercy seat and outside the cherubim were there; and what did Ezekiel see? He saw the cherubim take away the Shekinah glory! **There's the Shekinah glory, the direct representation of the glory of Yahweh** finally leaving the dwelling place. Here was **the cherubic glory which would be a glory of the manifestation of the saints, the multitudinous manifestation, not the direct representation like the Shekinah glory, this is God seen in a multitude,** the cherubim of the future, the saints, and they carry that Shekinah glory away out over the mount of Olives to the east. As Ezekiel saw it, it saw that cherubic vision move away over the mount of Olives taking the Shekinah glory with it!

God had left His nation, He was no longer in their presence! All that time, from Sinai, the tabernacle, right through the great era of David and Solomon, now that kingdom was coming to an end, as such as it was constituted at Sinai. God said, 'that's it!' So in chapter 11 verse 1, 'Moreover the Spirit lifted me up and brought me unto the east gate of Yahweh's house, which looketh eastward: and behold at the gate 5 and 20 men; and among them Jaazaniah. Then he said unto me, Son of man what are these men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city?' The place was full of rottenness! so down in verse 22, 'Then did the cherubim lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. And the glory of Yahweh

went up from the midst of the city, stood upon the mountain on the east side of the city', and so it left!

We really need to appreciate the total picture of Ezekiel's prophecy. We saw the initial vision where the glory appeared - chapters 1 to 3, the cherubic vision. And now the glory departs, chapters 4 onwards and it's a time period of all the difficulties there and the glory has left. Then we get to chapter 25 and there's a section in the scripture there through to chapter 32, nothing, the glory is hidden. Chapters about nations and so on, nothing about the glory of Yahweh mentioned, and then we come to chapter 33; when we turn to chapter 33 what do we find? In chapter 33 verse 21, 'It came to pass in the 12th year of our captivity, in the tenth month, in the 5th day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, the city is smitten' (Jerusalem has been conquered). Now the hand of Yahweh was upon me in the evening, afore he that was escaped came; and he opened my mouth (remember how Ezekiel had been dumb other than when God wanted him to speak, and now he was no longer dumb-Jerusalem had been smitten, the event was now a crisis in his life and now there was a change, now he was able to speak freely about the future). All the false prophets and their words were finished, Jeremiah's words were true! There would be a long captivity, and now Ezekiel's free to speak, and chapters 33 to 39, we speak of as the restoration prophecies. What those prophecies are saying, is that this is all about a time period now where **the glory is preparing to return!**

What are the restoration prophecies about? What's Ezekiel 37 and 38 and so on, all about? **Our day!** the glory is preparing to return, and there was Ezekiel speaking to the people in that day, and in verse 30, 'Thou son of man, the children of thy people are talking' (and it has 'against' in the AV but in the margin you'll notice it's 'of thee') 'they're talking of thee by the walls and in the doors of the houses, and speak one to another saying, Come, I pray you, and hear the word that cometh from Ezekiel'. He's speaking these great prophecies that are to come, and they come unto him and God is saying, 'the people come and sit before you, they hear your words'. Verse 32, 'Thou art unto them as a lovely song, one that has a pleasant voice, can play well on instruments; they hear thy words', b&s, we're just like that. We have a special effort or a campaign, we come, we sit here, we hear the words of God, we're excited about them; that's what it was like in Ezekiel's day! They wanted to hear! tell us Ezekiel more about this, but God said, **they hear the words** (oh, they're a lovely song, great speaker) **but they will not do them!** They will not do what you're speaking about! We can be like that, we can come, we can sit at a bible school or a special effort or a campaign and so on, but do we go away and do them? put those principles into our lives? Or is it when we go out of that room or out of that hall, we're back in the world, and the world's thinking takes over? That's what was happening with the exiles! So then, we have the restoration prophecies, then we come to Ezekiel chapter 40.

Now it's the 25th year of the captivity, and in the 25th year of the captivity, 14 years after the fall of Jerusalem, Ezekiel again we are told, in verse 2, 'in visions of Elohim, he was brought into the Land of Israel once more, he came into the Land again. The last

time he'd gone to the Land to see **the destruction**, now he's taken in vision to see the **future**. So Ezekiel was taken by vision toward Jerusalem, verse 3, 'He brought me into the Land and set me upon a very high mountain (it really should read 'near a high mountain', he wasn't actually on the mountain, he was near a high mountain) 'by which was the frame of a city'. He came up and there was this great valley area and at the end of that, there was a frame of a city, and Ezekiel was brought up from the **south** to that frame of the city. There was the temple and the prophet was brought in from the south and he was taken around to the east and he went in through the east gates and there was a man standing in the gate, a measuring reed in his hand, and a line of flax in the other hand, and there that one took him on a tour of that temple. He went into the outer courts, he went into the circular buildings, he went up to the altar, he saw all the aspects and we read in the record, verse 4, 'Son of man, behold with thine eyes, hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall show thee'. He would see things, he would hear things and he would be moved by what he saw and heard, 'for the intent that I might show them unto thee art thou brought hither; Ezekiel declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel'. How much do we know about the temple? It's going to be our home for 1,000 years! we build a home and we think about all the things in that home, where the switches are going, the doors which way they'll swing, where we're going to put furniture and so on; we pour over the plans of our homes. We spend months and months thinking about what we're going to do, and where things are going to be, yet we're going to live in this place for 1,000 years! ought we not to be pouring over these chapters as well? we're going to leave this, our homes, careers, we're going to just walk away from that! and Ezekiel was told, you declare everything you see here; everything you see, everything you hear, how you feel, you tell it to the people. We say, 'it's too hard, it so hard to read!'

This man in the gate took him on a tour, and on that tour in chapter 41, after he'd been in the outer court and buildings, he came inwards and in verse 17, he came into the circular range of buildings. To these buildings, in verse 18 mention was made of cherubim; in this inner house there were cherubim and palm trees so that a palm tree was between a cherub and a cherub; and every cherub had two faces; So that the face of a **man** was toward the palm tree on the one side, and the face of a young **lion** toward a palm tree on the other side: it was made through all the house round about. From the ground unto above the door were cherubim and palm trees made' (palm like pillars, not literal palm trees) Pillars with a carving on the top like a palm, it said there was a pillar and then a cherubic figure here and then another pillar. One face looked at this pillar and one face looked at that pillar, and when you went to the next one, the same thing; all around that circular building, about 700, 80 90 of them, huge massive cherubic figures.

What's the symbol of the palm? because the whole temple was of palms, palm like pillars everywhere, and each pillar was linked to the next pillar; the pillar is a symbol of a saint, a brother or a sister, palm like pillars, pillars in the ecclesia like we read in scripture; characteristics of a pillar - upright, foliage at the top, you go out in the desert you see the palms where they grow straight up. So there's the foliage at the top, the

fruits at the top, withstanding great gales and forces and so on of the desert, but they still stand straight. Symbol of the **saint**, well, there in the temple these symbols are there; pillar to pillar, these are joined together, all the saints are **one** in that day! one in Christ, there in the temple, all these aspects of the temple and here are the **cherubim**. In the day when the people come up to worship, you can imagine the scene; I mean these are huge pillars, there are people down here going up the steps, and as they walk up the steps and they see these great cherubic figures, they're going to say, 'what are these?' 'what are those faces?' We're not told but, they might even be covered in gold! Nothing is said in Ezekiel's prophecy about any gold in the temple - Solomon's temple was filled with gold and this will outshine Solomon's temple and from Isaiah we read that the nations are going to pour in their silver and their gold for the temple, for the work in the temple in the kingdom age. You wonder where would the gold be? maybe these cherubic figures are of gold or they could even be solid gold, after all, man for 6,000 years has dug gold out of the ground, the great vaults are full of ingots all around the world, they probably will finish up in the temple. Man's been digging it out for the day of the temple.

They could say, 'what are the faces?' We could go through, how in Israel in times past, the four square tribes, they had four faces, but there are only **two** here, and two are missing! There's no **eagle**, there's no **ox**, the man is there, the lion is there but no eagle, and no ox. Why are they missing? The ox is a symbol of labour; now today as service, but brethren and sisters, in that day, finished! We're in the kingdom, the time of labouring is over, there will be no mortality. The eagle's not there, the lofty eagle in the great thermals high up, visions, no need to have them, we're there! we made it. But the face of the man and the lion remain, the face of the lion - we're kings; the face of the man - we're priests; the cherubim are there as king-priests in the kingdom, so those two faces are still there. Also all around that temple, in the temple, the multitudinous Christ, the cherubim in very fact! Wonderful days, b&s, ahead of us!

So Ezekiel saw these cherubic figures. Then later on in his tour, he finally came back to the east gate where he had begun the tour. We read about that in that chapter we considered this afternoon, chapter 43. There we read in verse 1, 'Afterward this man with the measuring reed in his hand, the builder of the temple we're told, brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh toward the **east**.' As Ezekiel stood there with that man, and he looked and **the glory came in by way of the east**, 'Behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: His voice was like the noise of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory. It was according to the appearance of the vision that I saw, even according to the vision that I saw when I came to **destroy** the city', it is a cherubic vision, 'the visions were like the vision I saw by the river Chebar (Ezekiel 1) 'I fell upon my face at that time', and here the glory of Yahweh came into the house, b&s, it's the **saints**. All the saints coming into the temple with Christ. **The glory has returned! The glory of Yahweh!**

So when you look at Ezekiel's prophecy over all, it's all about the theme of **the glory of Yahweh**. It appeared, it departed, it was hidden, today it's preparing to return, and in

the very near future, it will return into the temple, into the house of prayer, into God's dwelling place, no longer to move; 1,000 years of the reign of Christ! Tabernacle, temple and finally the kingdom age, and the glory will remain! We're told in the record that speaks of the Prince, Christ, and it says that when that glory came into that temple from the east, that the outer gates of that temple were then **shut** (chapter 44 verse 1 and 2), and that is saying that Christ does not leave that temple, He remains there in the eastern section of the temple. The saints will come and go; we'll come back to our areas, no doubt, to work and to preach and teach, and from time to time we may well go back, like the 24 orders that they had under the Law, we'll go back from time to time, and we'll sit back with Christ, we'll fellowship with Him, kneel with Him, the bread, the wine, **but Christ doesn't leave the temple!** He's the King-Priest, 'out of Jerusalem shall go forth the Law'; the Word will go forth and there is Christ sitting on David's throne, King-Priest, and the multitudinous Christ, kings and priests with Him. That's the vision we have, can we see it? try and visualize it! We need to, it will help us!

So each one of us have received an invitation to a marriage! and it's an invitation something like this:

That the Most High God, Creator and Sustainer of the universe,
requests the pleasure of your company
for the marriage of His only begotten Son,
Jesus Christ
to
His multitudinous bride.

The bride composed of those faithful men and women, who have entered into the everlasting covenant by baptism, into His saving Name, and having continued patiently in well doing, are accounted worthy to receive glory and honour and immortality, eternal life. There's our invitation! **Dress!** - only those wearing an appropriate wedding garment, consisting of fine linen, clean and white will be in attendance. What a vision!

So we wait for that day! the house of prayer to be built, the cherubim, and finally the bow, and the glory of God will be in the earth, there in Jerusalem!