

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

Lesson 29 w/Answers

Ezekiel: Visions and Prophecies

With this lesson we conclude our brief look at Ezekiel by studying a few of his many visions and prophecies. It can literally take our breath away, as we consider what God is revealing to us about Himself, what is coming in the future, and Satan.

I have often asked beginning students in eschatology (the study of end-time prophecy) how they would tackle the challenge of describing the color blue to someone who has been blind from birth. I asked them this question because it is the closest comparison that I can come to regarding God's challenge of revealing things to us as human beings; our "blind" finite minds have a hard time visualizing things that are infinite. How can God describe what the Holy Spirit looks like, or how can He describe Himself to us, and how can we comprehend it when it is beyond our comprehension?

As we will see in our brief study today, God is able to accomplish this through the use of visions and symbols that we can understand or relate to.

So put on your Biblical thinking cap and let's take a look at God's Holy Word as we attempt to learn something new about God, Satan, and God's eternal plan.

1. Read Ezekiel Chapter 1, Revelation Chapter 4:1-11, and Isaiah 6:1-3. All of these reveal some similar aspects about God, heaven, and the Holy Spirit. After you have finished reading the above passages, jot down a list of common elements; and then write out a description of God, His Throne, and The Holy Spirit as pictured in these verses.
 - a. ANSWER: God's throne is so beautiful that it is beyond description; and it is surrounded by a brilliant rainbow and served by Angels who sing "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty". Fire, hot burning coals, torches and brilliant light all speak to God's purity and the refining power of His judgment. Four living creatures surround His Throne as illustrations of God's attributes: His omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, and sovereignty.
2. Now read Ezekiel 2:9 - 3:3 and compare it to Revelation 10:1-11 and Psalm 19:9-10. Describe the similarities and explain the difference between the picture of God's Word in Ezekiel and the one in Revelation and Psalms.
 - a. ANSWER: Psalm 19:9-10 tells us that God's Word is sweet like honey, just as the scroll was which was given to Ezekiel to eat. While it contained mourning and lamentation, it also contained a message of the future restoration of Israel. In Revelation Chapter 10, John's "little scroll" is the gospel message in the Tribulation Period, during which the "Good News" will be rejected as bitter by non-believers and will bring judgment and great disaster.
3. Next read Ezekiel Chapter 38. This prophecy closely parallels the timelines and prophecies contained in Revelation. For the purposes of this lesson, let's consider one "End Time" indicator - something that we can use to know that the coming end of the Tribulation Period and Christ's return are getting close. It is spelled out in Chapter 38. Since end-time prophecy centers on two key elements - the nation of Israel and Christ's return - we should keep our focus on events in Israel and study end-time prophecy. What one prevailing condition will exist in Israel, according to God in Chapter 38, which does not exist today?
 - a. ANSWER: Ezekiel 38:10-14 tells us that a day is coming when Israel will live in peace. In fact, based on the description in this chapter, it will be like a peace unseen in our day. Unwalled villages will be filled with peaceful and unsuspecting people living in homes without gates and bars. Just when Israel believes that it is at peace with the world and is not in need of walls, gates, or bars for defenses - then the enemy will strike, and Christ will return to defeat it.

4. Finally, read Ezekiel Chapter 28:11-19 and Isaiah 14:12-15 and list below what these passages reveal to us about Satan.
- a. ANSWER 1: These passages indicate that Satan was the model of perfection and "full of wisdom and perfect in beauty".
 - b. ANSWER 2: Satan was "in Eden, the garden of God"; and "every precious stone adorned [him]: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. [His] settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day [he was] created they were prepared."
 - c. ANSWER 3: Satan was "anointed as a guardian cherub" by God.
 - d. ANSWER 4: Satan was "on the holy mount of God" and he "walked among the fiery stones".
 - e. ANSWER 5: He was "blameless in [his] ways from the day [he was] created till wickedness was found in [him]".
 - f. ANSWER 6: He was "filled with violence, and [he] sinned. So [God] drove [him] in disgrace from the mount of God and [God] expelled [him], [the] guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones."
 - g. ANSWER 7: Satan's "heart became proud on account of [his] beauty, and [he] corrupted [his] wisdom because of [his] splendor. So [God] threw [him] to the earth; [and] made a spectacle of [him] before kings".
 - h. ANSWER 8: Satan has "fallen from heaven".
 - i. ANSWER 9: Satan has been "cast down to the earth".
 - j. ANSWER 10: Satan said in his heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."
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In this lesson, we compared the indescribable beauty and power of God and His throne with the incomprehensible description of Satan, his plan to destroy Israel and eventually all of God's creation, and God's prophecy of ultimate victory in such a way that every person will know that He is Lord. While we as mere mortals can hardly comprehend God's appearance, His throne, or Heaven itself, God does show us through His visions and prophecies to Ezekiel that He is the God above all gods, that He cares for each of us, and that He has an eternal plan for His people and His creation that even Satan himself cannot stop.

Today, unlike in Ezekiel's day, we have a risen Savior who is the very living proof of that hope and promise. He is described and revealed to us in the book of Revelation, and one day all of us who believe in Him will be reunited with Him and will see Him and will reign with Him! Let's promise to share that hope this week with someone we know who does not know Jesus, so that they can share that joy with us.

Thanks for studying with us, and have a great week everyone.

In Christ,

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