

# Bible Study #21

3/1/22

# Revelation 4 (Review)

From Father Sebastian's Parish Presentation

# Revelation 4 - Review (Cont)

- **Revelation 4:1-3** *“After this I looked, and lo, heaven an open door....and round the throne was a rainbow that looked like an emerald”*
  - The voice we heard speaking should remind us of **Revelation 1** which continues to be governed by “soon” and “near”
  - The first image is that of Jesus sitting on the throne of God (**Daniel 7**)
  - Father pointed out that this point our attention should shift to the imagery of **Ezekiel 1\***
    - The prophet Ezekiel, while in the exile in Babylon, had a vision of the throne of God
    - Many people, when reading this section, do not see what looks like a throne above which is sitting on the throne one like the son of man

# Revelation 4 - Review (Cont)

- Here, in **Revelation 4**, John is pointing out not just the ancient of days of **Daniel 7**, but Jesus sitting on the throne in **Ezekiel**
- This would be a strange image if we were not familiar with **Ezekiel**
- **(Brief look at the background of the Prophet Ezekiel)**



# PROPHETS

Biblical prophets were God's servants especially called to be his witnesses. God sent prophets to his people during times of crisis. Old Testament prophets were intermediaries between God and his people. They brought the word of God to people. As Scriptures says, *"Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets"* (Amos 3:7).


PROPHET	PROPHESED	DATE (BC)*	HOME/LOCATION
Samuel	To Israel	1060-1020	Ramah
Elijah	To Israel	870-845	Tishbe
Elisha	To Israel	845-800	Abel Meholah
Jonah	To Nineveh	781	Gath-hepher
Amos	To Israel	765-754	Tekoa
Isaiah	To Judah	760-673	Jerusalem
Hosea	To Israel	758-725	Israel
Micah	To Judah	738-698	Moreseth-gath
Nahum	Concerning Nineveh	658-615	Elkosh
Jeremiah	To Judah	650-582	Anathoth
Zephaniah	To Judah	640-626	Unknown
Ezekiel	To Exiles in Babylonia	620-570	Babylon
Daniel	In Babylon	620-540	Babylon
Habakkuk	To Judah	608-598	Unknown
Obadiah	Concerning Edom	590	Judah
Zechariah	To Judah	522-509	Jerusalem
Haggai	To Judah	520	Jerusalem
Malachi	To Judah	465	Unknown
Joel	To Judah	450	Jerusalem

\* Dates are approximate

# Israelite Kings Date Chart

(Based on the chronology of John Bright)

Dennis Bratcher

The United Monarchy				
Dates (BC)		Kingdom of the Israelites		
1020-1000		Saul		
1000-961		David		
961-922		Solomon		
The Divided Kingdoms				
Dates (BC)	Israel (Northern)		Judah (Southern)	Dates (BC)
922-901	Jeroboam I		Rehoboam	922-915
			Abijah	915-913
901-900	Nadab		Asa	913-873
900-877	Baasha			
877-876	Elah		Jehoshaphat	873-849
876	Zimri	Tibni		
876-869	Omri			
869-850	Ahab			
850-849	Ahaziah			
849-843	Joram (Jehoram)		Jehoram	849-843
843-815	Jehu		Ahaziah	843
			Athaliah (non-Davidic Queen)	843-837
815-802	Jehoahaz		Joash	837-800
802-786	Jehoash (Joash)		Amaziah	800-783
786-746	Jeroboam II		Uzziah (Azariah)	783-742
746-745	Zachariah		Jotham (co-regent)	750-742
745	Shallum		Jotham (king)	742-735
745-737	Menahem			
737-736	Pekahiah			
736-732	Pekah			
732-724	Hoshea		Ahaz	735-715
721	Fall of Samaria		Hezekiah	715-687
			Manasseh	687-642
			Amon	642-640
			Josiah	640-609
			Jehoahaz	609
			Jehoikim (Eliakim)	609-598
			Jehoiachin (Jeconiah)	598-597
			Zedekiah (Mattaniah)	597-587





# Ezekiel (Cont)

- Was deported at age 25 during the second Babylonian Exile in **597 BC** along with 10,000 members of the community
- Trained in the laws pertaining to the temple and to sacrifices
- Was married and had his own home in a colony of transplanted Judeans in Tel Abib by the *Chebar*, a canal of the *Euphrates* river south of *Babylon*
- Was forbidden by God to mourn his wife's death
- Received a call to serve Yahweh as a prophet in **593 BC**



# Ezekiel (Cont)

- Stood at a critical point between the old age and the new age in redemptive history
- Prophesied the end of the old temple and the beginning of a more glorious temple
- Offered a prophetic critique of the popular ideology that hoped for a speedy restoration to Israel
- From **593 to 571 BC** spoke God's word to thousands of deportees who were eking out a meager existence in Tel Abib

# Son of Man

- The term “son of man,” could be understood in the following five different ways:
  - A human being
  - The son of Adam (man)
  - A prophet (Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel)
  - The messiah
  - The divine figure and messiah from **Daniel 7:13-14**
- The key to understanding the importance of the term “Son of Man” can be seen in the often used phrase, “He who has ears to hear let him hear,” which allowed everyone to interpret “son of man” from his own point of view (**Mt 13:43 \***)

# Ezekiel (Cont)

- **Ezekiel 1:1-3 \***

- The prophet experiences a vision in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Exile (in which **King Jehoiachin exiled**) while living by the *Chebar* River in Babylon (**600 BC**)
- At that time **Zedekiah** was on the throne in *Jerusalem* and the Prophet **Jeremiah** was pleading with him not to rebel against *Babylon*

# Ezekiel (Cont)

- **Ezekiel 1:4-14**

- The book continues with a magnificent awe-inspiring vision of the “glory” (Hebrew *kabod* abundance, honor, glory) of God
- In his vision **Ezekiel** sees a windstorm, an immense cloud, flashing lightening, and brilliant light coming from the north
- In this “great cloud” he sees God upon His “cherubic” throne with animal-like angelic images of a man, lion, eagle and ox

# Ezekiel (Cont)

- These are the four graded symbols of the creative power of God
  - Man is a symbol for wisdom
  - Lion is a symbol for ferocity
  - Ox is the symbol for brute strength
  - Eagle is the symbol for speed
- The four **cherubim** could move like lightening in any direction the Lord wanted them to move
- The differences in the four denote the sovereignty of God over the “four corners” of the earth (that is all of creation)

# Ezekiel (Cont)

- **Ezekiel 1:15-25**
- The wheels within the wheels remind us of the moving chariot
- This is one of the images **Ezekiel** is so famous for presenting
- This vision shows the coming of the Divine Warrior
- *Yahweh* is approaching on his chariot of war to bring judgment on his people
- It reflects the power of God upon his throne to include his wisdom, ferocity, strength and speed beyond imagination

# Ezekiel (Cont)

- He heard a voice from above and sees God sitting on a “movable chariot” throne
- In the ancient world kings often traveled about their kingdom and into battle on very elaborate chariots
- So here is the image of God on a similar chariot throne which would have been understood by the people



# Ezekiel (Cont)

- **Ezekiel 1:26-28**

- When *Ezekiel* looks up he sees one in a human form sitting on the throne of God
- This is obviously God speaking to him
- Some see this as a vision of the *Incarnation (the word becoming flesh)*
- We are beginning to see images of God in this human association
- This vision of God's glory will remain with **Ezekiel** throughout the rest of his ministry

# Ezekiel (Cont)

- God's appearance to him in a foreign land confirms His sovereignty and freedom which cannot be restricted to any one place, including the temple
- The glory of God speaks of the uniqueness of God's revelation as He reveals to the prophet what He is about to do to the temple in Jerusalem

# Revelation 4 (Cont)

- **Revelation 4:4-6** *“Round the throne were twenty-four thrones,...full of eyes in front and behind”*
  - The seven torches should remind us of **Revelation 1**
  - This language should suggest the temple or even the meeting place between God and man with Moses
  - God is on His throne with the seven-branch candle stand and outside the holy place is the sea of glass which was the bowl for washing and purification
  - John is seeing the heavenly throne room which is the holy of holies of the heavenly temple

# Revelation 4 (Cont)

- This is why we get the imagery of the altar, the fire of the sensor, and the bowl for purification filled with water
- Father suggested we go back and read **Exodus 25** through **40** dealing with the “tent of meeting” and **1<sup>st</sup> Kings 6-8** describing “Solomon’s temple”

# Revelation 4 (Cont)

- **Revelation 4:7** *“The first living creature like a lion,...and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle”*
  - Again, from **Ezekiel**, we know that God’s throne is made up of *cherubim* who have ultimate power of creation
  - The ox represents strength, the lion ferocity, the eagle speed, and man wisdom
  - We saw this same imagery in **Ezekiel 1**
  - At this point in **Revelation**, the imagery turns to that in the **Book of Isaiah**

# Revelation 4 (Cont)

- **Revelation 4:8** *“And the four living creatures,...who was and is and is to come!”*
  - The four living creatures sound like the *Seraphim* and *Cherubim* from **Isaiah 6:1-5\***
  - The singing of the angels is from *Isaiah*
  - God is three times holy
  - Even in the layout of the temple, there are three parts
    - The precinct
    - The holy place
    - The holy of holies
  - This means that this temple is completely set apart, unique, and different from the world