

Ezekiel 11 - Judgment on Jerusalem's Civic Rulers; God Promises to Regather & Regenerate Israel

I. Imminent judgment upon Judah (Ezek 1:1—24:27)

- (2) Prophecies of coming judgment against Judah and Jerusalem (Ezek 4:1—24:27)
 - (A) Imminent judgment (Ezek 4:1—11:25)
 - (c) One vision showing cause of the siege (8:1—11:25)
 - (iv) The sin of the 25 rulers and God's glory departs (11:1-25)
 - (a) The 25 rulers (11:1-13a)
 - (1) Sin: violence and teaching judgment would not come (11:1-6)
 - (2) Ezekiel's predictions of judgment (11:7-12)
 - (3) Slaying of Pelatiah (11:13a)
 - (b) Restoration of the nation (11:13b-21)
 - (1) Ezekiel's concern (11:13b)
 - (2) Restoration to the land (11:14-17)
 - (3) Fulfillment of the New Covenant (11:18-21)
 - (c) The departure of God's glory (11:22-23)
 - (d) Ezekiel is returned to the exiles (11:24-25)

Ezekiel 11

- (iv) The sin of the 25 rulers and God's glory departs (11:1-25)
 - (a) The 25 rulers (11:1-13a)

In 11:1-12, as the story of the Shekinah's departure progresses, another scene is introduced that explains why God's glory had to leave not only the Temple but also the city. Up to this point, the Shekinah had left the Temple building and the Inner Court and was now standing over the east gate on the outer wall of the Temple compound, but at least it was still in the city. The reasons why it had to depart even further are provided in v1-12.

(1) Sin: violence and teaching judgment would not come (11:1-6)

1 Now the **Spirit lifted me up** and brought me to the east gate of the LORD'S house which faced eastward. And behold, *there were twenty-five men* at the entrance of the gate, and among them I saw **Jaazaniah** son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people.

1 Moreover, the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the LORD's house which faced eastward. And behold, *there were* twenty-five men at the entrance of the gate, and among them I saw Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, leaders of the people.

1 The Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the east facing gate of the LORD's Temple. At the entrance of the gate I saw 25 men. Included among them were Azzur's son Jaazaniah and Benaiah's son Pelatiah, who were princes of the people.

1 Moreover the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the LORD'S house, which looketh eastward: and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men; among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.

- "...Spirit lifted me up" - in 8:14 Ezekiel was lifted up by the Spirit at the north gate of the Inner Court; now in 11:1, He once again lifted Ezekiel up and brought him to the east gate of the Temple compound, where the Shekinah Glory was currently stationed

— This is an example of the Spirit unveiling something that has not been revealed before: the ministry of "revelation" of the Spirit in relation to Scripture

— See also 2 Sam 23:2-3; Ezek 2:2; 8:3; Micah 3:8; John 16:12-15; 1 Cor 2:9-10; 2 Peter 1:21. Also see [Holy Spirit](#) for a complete list of ministries of the Spirit.

- "...twenty-five men" - unlike the 70 elders (8:11) and the 25 priests (8:16), these were "princes of the people" or civil rulers

- "...Jaazaniah" - the leader of the 70 elders shared the same name, but had a different father (Shaphan instead of Azzur)

— The role of these leaders (Jaazaniah & Pelatiah) was to provide wise counsel and civic leadership to the city. They were supposed to serve as examples of men well-versed in wisdom and its application. But Ezekiel noticed that this was not the case.

2 Then He said to me, "Son of man, these are the men who **devise** wrongdoing and give evil advice in this city,

2 He said to me, "Son of man, these are the men who devise iniquity and give evil advice in this city,

2 Then he told me, "Son of Man, these men are plotting evil and are giving wicked advice in this city.

2 Then said he unto me, Son of man, these are the men that devise mischief, and give wicked counsel in this city:

- "...devise" - *chashav*, means "to think" or "to account"; it refers to deliberate and careful planning

— So instead of using their wisdom to carefully plan godly counsel, these men instead schemed wicked and troublesome things. Rather than offering wise guidance, they gave

wicked counsel.

3 who say, '***The time is not near to build houses. This city is the pot and we are the meat.***'

3 who say, '*The time* is not near to build houses. This *city* is the pot and we are the flesh.'

3 They keep saying, 'The right time to build families hasn't yet arrived. The city is the pot and we are the meat.'

3 Which say, It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh.

- Two examples of the wicked advice that these leaders were imparting:

- "...*The time* is not near to build houses" - this could mean two things:

(1) It may suggest that now was not the time to build homes, but rather prepare for war because God wants us to rebel against Babylon

(2) This counsel may have been intended to directly contradict the words of Jeremiah, who had written a letter to those already exiled in Babylon during the first and second deportations (Jer 29:1-7). In this letter, he told the exiles to not prepare for a quick return to Jerusalem, and that their captivity would last for 70 years (Jer 29:10). In fact, Jeremiah advised the Jewish exiles to settle in Babylon, build homes, marry and have children, and work the land (Jer 29:5-7).

— So it can be interpreted either as "Abstain from building homes in Jerusalem now and focus on preparing for war!" or "Abstain from building homes in Babylonia because a return to Israel is imminent!"

— "...*This city* is the pot and we are the meat" - the second counsel that these leaders were suggesting to the people was that they were safe in Jerusalem because it resembled a huge pot that would protect its inhabitants from destruction

— Pots (or cauldrons) were used for cooking over fire designed to shield meat from burning, thus these leaders were suggesting that Jerusalem resembled a huge pot that would protect them

— Their false sense of security may have stemmed from historical events. In 721 BC, the Assyrians invaded and conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel (2 Kings 17:5-6).

However, their assault on Jerusalem failed because an angel struck down Sennacherib's armies near the city gates (2 Chr 32:22; Is 37:36).

— The leaders in Ezekiel's time still believed that the Shekinah Glory was residing in the Holy of Holies, and since the Temple was still standing in Jerusalem, they presumed the city was invincible.

4 Therefore, **prophesy** against them, **prophesy**, son of man!"

4 Therefore, prophesy against them, son of man, prophesy!"

4 Therefore you are to prophesy against them. Prophesy, Son of Man!"

4 Therefore prophesy against them, prophesy, O son of man.

- "...prophesy" [2x] - the repetition underscores the emphasis of God's instruction Ezekiel obeyed the Lord's command. Verses 5-12 detail his prophecy of judgment.

5 Then **the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me**, and He said to me, "Say, 'This is what the LORD says: "This is how you think, house of Israel, for I know your thoughts.

5 Then the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and He said to me, "Say, 'Thus says the LORD, "So you think, house of Israel, for I know your thoughts.

5 Just then the Spirit of the LORD took control of me and told me, "You are to say, 'This is what the LORD says: "You've said, O house of Israel, that I know what goes through your mind.

5 And the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me, and said unto me, Speak; Thus saith the LORD; Thus have ye said, O house of Israel: for I know the things that come into your mind, every one of them.

- "...the Spirit of the LORD fell upon me" - only here is this expression used in Ezekiel. The prophet was enabled to prophesy while still in the trance.

— The prophesy spoken by Ezekiel were the very words of God

— "...I know your thoughts" - what they thought they said (v2-3)

— This is the point of the cherubim being full of eyes in every aspect of their being. God sees and knows all that goes on in every place.

6 You have multiplied your slain in this city, and filled its streets with them."

6 You have multiplied your slain in this city, filling its streets with them."

6 You've increased the number of fatally wounded in this city and you've filled your streets with the dead."

6 Ye have multiplied your slain in this city, and ye have filled the streets thereof with the slain.

- The leaders thoughts and counsel would lead to divine judgment—the massacre of Jerusalem's inhabitants

— Consequently, the leaders had made themselves guilty of murder by their reckless and ungodly guidance

(2) Ezekiel's predictions of judgment (11:7-12)

7 Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD says: "Your slain whom you have laid in the midst of the city are the meat and this *city* is the pot; but I will bring you out of it.

7 Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, "Your slain whom you have laid in the midst of the city are the flesh and this *city* is the pot; but I will bring you out of it.

7 'Therefore this is what the Lord GOD says, "The corpses that you've laid out in your midst are the meat, and this city is the cooking pot. But you'll be taken out from the middle of it.

7 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Your slain whom ye have laid in the midst of it, they are the flesh, and this city is the caldron: but I will bring you forth out of the midst of it.

- The Lord took up their reference to the pot (cauldron) and the meat and says, therefore, because of the leader's deeds in v5-6, the slain whom you have laid in the midst of the city would become the meat

— In other words, it is the dead to whom Jerusalem would become a cauldron or place of refuge. Yet the city would fail to offer security to the living, who would instead be brought forth out of the midst of it. They would be taken out of the cauldron and put into the fire.

— The Lord takes their counsel, as He expressed to Ezekiel in v3, and turned it around on them

8 You have feared a sword; so I will bring a sword upon you," the Lord GOD declares.

8 You have feared a sword; so I will bring a sword upon you," the Lord GOD declares.

8 You've feared the sword, but I'm bringing violent death in your direction," declares the Lord GOD.

8 Ye have feared the sword; and I will bring a sword upon you, saith the Lord GOD.

- Those who remained alive would not find protection in Jerusalem, but would encounter the sword

9 "And I will bring you out of the midst of the city, and hand you over to strangers, and execute judgments against you.

9 "And I will bring you out of the midst of the city and deliver you into the hands of strangers and execute judgments against you.

9 "I'm bringing you out from the middle of it and I'm going to deliver you into the hands of strangers, because I'm going to carry out my sentence against you.

9 And I will bring you out of the midst thereof, and deliver you into the hands of strangers, and will execute judgments among you.

- Those who remained alive would be removed from the city (removed from the pot/cauldron) and delivered into the hands of strangers

10 You will fall by the sword. I will judge you to the border of Israel; so you shall know that I am the LORD.

10 You will fall by the sword. I will judge you to the border of Israel; so you shall know that I am the LORD.

10 You're going to die violently, and I'll judge you as far as the borders of Israel. Then you'll learn that I am the LORD.

10 Ye shall fall by the sword; I will judge you in the border of Israel; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.

- This was fulfilled literally when the captives of Jerusalem were deported to Riblah in Syria and killed (2 Kings 25:18-21; Jer 52:8-11,24-27)

11 This *city* will not be a pot for you, nor will you be meat in the midst of it; I will judge you to the border of Israel.

11 This *city* will not be a pot for you, nor will you be flesh in the midst of it, *but* I will judge you to the border of Israel.

11 This city won't be your cooking pot and neither will you be the meat in it, because I'm going to judge you as far as the borders of Israel.

11 This city shall not be your caldron, neither shall ye be the flesh in the midst thereof; but I will judge you in the border of Israel:

- God reiterates, through Ezekiel, that Jerusalem would not be a "safe space" for them. If they survived the attack on Jerusalem, they would be taken to Riblah and killed there by Nebuchadnezzar (see note on v10)

12 So you will know that I am the LORD; for you have not walked in **My statutes**, nor have you executed **My ordinances**, but you have acted in accordance with the ordinances of the nations around you."""

12 Thus you will know that I am the LORD; for you have not walked in My statutes nor have you executed My ordinances, but have acted according to the ordinances of the nations around you."""

12 Then you'll learn that I am the LORD, because you didn't live by my statutes or obey my ordinances. Instead, you obeyed the ordinances of the nations around you."""

12 And ye shall know that I am the LORD: for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the heathen that are round about you.

- "...My statutes...My ordinances" - the Mosaic Law

— Instead of adhering to God's law, the people of Judah imitated the idolatrous practices of the surrounding nations

(3) Slaying of Pelatiah (11:13a)

(b) Restoration of thenation (11:13b-21)

(1) Ezekiel's concern (11:13b)

13 Now it came about, as I prophesied, that Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. Then I fell on my face and cried out with a loud voice, and said, "Oh, Lord GOD! Will You bring the remnant of Israel to a complete destruction?"

13 Now it came about as I prophesied, that Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. Then I fell on my face and cried out with a loud voice and said, "Alas, Lord GOD! Will You bring the remnant of Israel to a complete end?"

13 While I was prophesying, Benaiah's son Pelatiah died, so I fell on my face and cried out with a loud voice. "Ah, Lord GOD," I said, "are you going to put an end to the survivors within Israel?"

13 And it came to pass, when I prophesied, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel?

- No sooner than Ezekiel finished delivering his prophecies in v5-12, he began to witness the beginning of their fulfillment in the death of Pelatiah (one of the civic leaders, Cf. v1)
- Pelatiah was probably the ringleader of the scorners. His death was an earnest deposit on the destruction of the rest of the 25, as Ezekiel had foretold, and also of the general ruin.

- Pelatiah's death unsettled Ezekiel. He cried out in shock at the prospect of the full end, or complete destruction, of those who had so far survived the Babylonian attacks against Judah

- As in 9:8, Ezekiel interceded for his people—the remnant, or survivors, of Israel

(2) Restoration to the land (11:14-17)

14 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

14 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

14 Then this message came to me from the LORD:

14 Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

- In response to Ezekiel's plea, God provided the first glimmer of a brighter future

- Up until this point, Ezekiel had only received negative visions of judgments. He had seen images of his people's impending death by the sword, wild beasts, pestilence, and famine. He had observed the first stages of the Shekinah's departure, with more to come by the end of this chapter.

- However, for a brief moment here, God granted the prophet's soul comfort through a fleeting vision of Israel's future restoration in v14-21

15 "Son of man, your brothers, your relatives, your fellow exiles, and the entire house of Israel, all of them, *are those* to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, '**Keep far from the LORD; this land has been given to us as a possession.**'

15 "Son of man, your brothers, your relatives, your fellow exiles and the whole house of Israel, all of them, *are those* to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, 'Go far from the LORD; this land has been given us as a possession.'

15 "Son of Man, your brothers, your other relatives, your fellow exiles, and the entire house of Israel are the people to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, 'They've abandoned the LORD. This land was given to us for an inheritance.'"

15 Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and all the house of Israel wholly, are they unto whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, Get you far from the LORD: unto us is this land given in possession.

- God explained to the prophet why the judgment of the surviving remnant in Judah at the hands of the Babylonians in 586 BC was inevitable

— The remnant had developed a sinful attitude toward those who had already gone into exile during the first and second deportations. Among these captives were godly men like Daniel and even members of Ezekiel's kindred, such as his brethren.

— When they were forcibly removed from their homeland, these people were stripped of their belongings. Over time, those left behind seized control of these possessions.

- "...Keep far from the LORD" - worse yet, the surviving remnant in Judah developed a sense of superiority over those who had already been exiled. This is reflected in this mockery of the exiles.

— Since it is impossible to physically distance oneself from God's omnipresence, this phrase refers to God's limited, visible presence in the Temple. In other words, the Judahites were telling the exiles, "Get far away from the place where God dwells in *our* Temple"

— The mockery here cannot be missed. The surviving Judahites falsely believed that their continued residence in Jerusalem was an obvious and definite sign of their favored standing with God.

— And they wrongly assumed that the exiles were inferior and more sinful, and that the exiles spiritual loss had led to material gain for themselves

- "...this land has been given to us as a possession" - rather than showing compassion, those who remained in Jerusalem derided them like children ("Finders keepers, losers weepers!")

The Regathering of Israel

16 Therefore say, 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "Though I had removed them far away among the nations, and though I had scattered them among the countries, yet **I was a sanctuary for them for a little while** in the countries where they had gone."

16 Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Though I had removed them far away among the nations and though I had scattered them among the countries, yet I was a sanctuary for them a little while in the countries where they had gone."

16 "Therefore you are to say, 'This is what the Lord GOD says, "Although I've removed them far away to live among the nations, and although I've scattered them throughout the earth, yet I've continued to be their sanctuary, even for the short time that they will be living in the lands to which they've gone."

16 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come.

- "...I was a sanctuary for them" - they had lost access to the "sanctuary," the temple in Jerusalem, but God promised Ezekiel that He Himself would be a sanctuary for them outside the Land

— This promise has proven true. What started in the Babylonian Captivity has continued throughout the period of the *Diaspora* that began in 70 AD

— It was YHWH who removed His people far off among the nations and scattered them among the countries, yet throughout it all, He has been their sanctuary

— Other dispersed nations have undergone assimilation into the societies where they settled. In contrast, the Jews have maintained a separate and recognizable identity. God has guaranteed both their continued survival as a nation and the preservation of their identity over the past 2600 years since this promise was given.

- "...a little while" - 70 years vs. the several thousand in the subsequent *diaspora*

17 Therefore say, 'This is what the Lord GOD says: "**I will gather you from the peoples** and assemble you from the **countries** among which you have been scattered, and **I will give you the land of Israel.**"'

17 Therefore say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel."

17 "Therefore you are to say, 'This is what the Lord GOD says, "I'm going to gather you from among the nations, assembling you from the lands among which you have been dispersed. I'll give you the land of Israel.

17 Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.

- As long as the dispersion lasts, the Jews will survive as a distinct people until the nation undergoes a final and complete restoration. This final restoration is detailed in v17-20.

- Israel's return from the Babylonian Captivity did not fulfill the specific prophecies outlined in this passage. Instead, the verses contain prophecies of a distant future: the tribulation period and the Messianic Kingdom age.

- The Bible Knowledge Commentary states: "A partial restoration took place after the Babylonian Captivity (Cf. Ezra; Neh), but v17-20 go beyond that return and points to a future gathering of Israel at the beginning of the millennium (Cf. 36:24-38; 37:11-28)."
- In this distant-future context, the phrase "for a little while" in v16 takes on a special meaning. The Hebrew term used [*meat*] means "a little," "fewness," or "a few." This noun acts as a "minimizing modifier" for *lemikdas* ("a sanctuary") in this verse.
- It could be interpreted as an adjective: "a little sanctuary." Alternatively, the term could function as an adverb, modifying either the time ("for a little while") or the quantity ("to a limited extent"). The translators of the ASV emphasized the temporal aspect.
- For millennia, God has ensured the survival of His people. His protection will continue even into the Tribulation period, a special time of judgment directed against the Jewish people
- In the final three-and-a-half years of this period, the entire world will turn against the Jews, prompting many to seek refuge in Bozrah/Petra (Micah 2:12). During that time, for a little while, or exactly 1,260 days, the Lord will be a very special sanctuary for His people. Then, Israel will experience her final restoration.
- "...I will gather you" - the same God who scattered them has every intention of regathering them
- "...peoples...countries" - not just Babylon, but all of the peoples and countries (plural) to which they would be scattered
- This "scattering" was only to Babylon, but the scattering unto all peoples and countries that began shortly after Pentecost through the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, is what is referred to here
- "...I will give you the land of Israel" - in keeping with the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 15:18) and the Land Covenant (Deut 29:1–30:20), this future worldwide regathering of the Jewish people will include the restoration of the land itself

(3) Fulfillment of the New Covenant (11:18-21)

- 18 When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it.
- 18 When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it.
- 18 When they return from there and cast away all of their loathsome things and detestable practices,
- 18 And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abominations thereof from thence.
- This highlights the external purification of the Land. During the future Tribulation period, there will be a huge increase in false prophets in Israel (Cf. 13:1-7), which will require a

massive cleansing. However, the Land will ultimately be rid of all idolatry (Cf. Zech 13:2-6).

The Regeneration of Israel

19 And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,
19 And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,
19 then I'll give them a united heart, placing a new spirit within them. I'll remove their stubborn heart and give them a heart that's sensitive to me.
19 And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh:
- Israel, in the future, will become a saved nation
- "...I will give them...I will remove...give them" - Israel's regeneration will originate from God Himself
- "...one heart" - symbolizes the faith of the Jewish people
- "...new spirit within them" - refers to their regeneration; every Jew alive will experience a spiritual rebirth, and they will all have a personal knowledge of God (Cf. Jer 31:31-34)
— Only God can bring about this internal change, complementing the external cleansing of the Land mentioned in v18
- Nicodemus asked Jesus about being born again and Jesus rebuked him for not knowing these things as he was a teacher (John 3:1-10)
— The concept of being born again is not a NT idea; it is in the OT: Deut 30:6; Is 53:2-6; Jer 31:31-33; 32:37-40; Ezek 36:24-26; Zech 7:11-12

20 so that they may walk in My statutes, and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.

20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.

20 When they live by my statutes and keep my ordinances by observing them, then they'll be my people and I will be their God.

20 That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

- The result of God's transformative work on the hearts and spirits of His people...
— It is important to remember that v17-20 contain far-distant prophecies. Hence, the "statutes" and "ordinances" mentioned in v20 do not refer to the Mosaic Law, which became obsolete with the death of Christ and will never be reinstated
— Ezek 40-48 will show that the statutes and ordinances received after Israel's final regathering refer to the Millennial Law. Just as the Law of Christ (Gal 6:2), which rules the

conduct of believers in the Church Age, differs from the Mosaic Law, so will the Millennial Law differ from the Mosaic Law

— Ezek 36:27 explains what will make obedience to God's law possible: the Holy Spirit will indwell the Jewish people, empowering them to walk in the commandments of the Lord

With this promise from God of regathering and regeneration, the window of hope that began in v16 is closed again, and will not be re-opened until Ezek 33, when Ezekiel receive a more comprehensive explanation of the promises that he had just heard.

21 But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their conduct down on their heads," declares the Lord GOD.

21 But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and abominations, I will bring their conduct down on their heads," declares the Lord GOD.

21 But to those whose hearts delight in loathsome things and detestable practices, I'll bring the consequences of their behavior crashing down on their own heads," declares the Lord GOD."

21 But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD.

- This verse addresses Ezekiel's plea from v13...

— The Jews of his time were deeply immersed in idolatry, their hearts following after detestable things and abominations. Therefore, they must be judged.

— They would reap the harvest of what they had been sowing. Judgment was inevitable for the surviving remnant because of the abominable state into which they had descended.

(c) The departure of God's glory (11:22-23)

22 Then the cherubim lifted up their wings with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them.

22 Then the cherubim lifted up their wings with the wheels beside them, and the glory of the God of Israel hovered over them.

22 Then the cherubim arose, with their wheels alongside, and the glory of Israel's God remained above and over them.

22 Then did the cherubims lift up their wings, and the wheels beside them; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.

- This is the beginning of the third stage of the departure of the Shekinah Glory...

- Ezekiel's attention in his vision returned to the cherubim and the Shekinah, which were positioned above the east gate in the Outer Wall of the Temple compound

23 The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood over the **mountain which is east of the city**.

23 The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood over the mountain which is east of the city.

23 The glory of the LORD went up from the middle of the city and stood on the mountain, east of the city.

23 And the glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.

- The Shekinah Glory now moved from the Outer Wall to its fourth position: the mountain east of the city (the Mount of Olives)

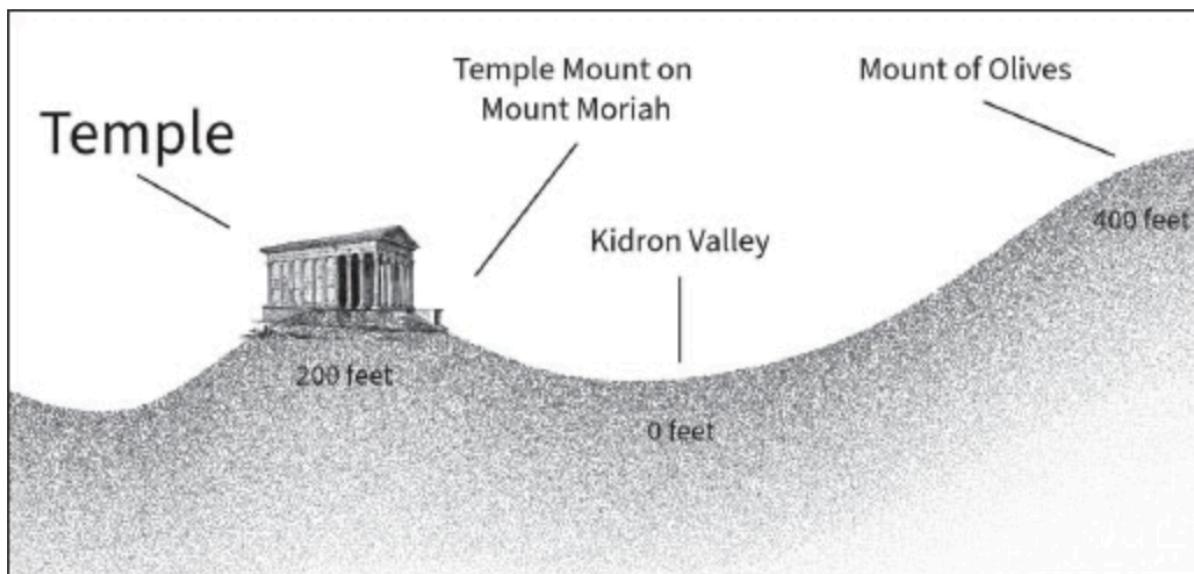
— There is no biblical account of the fourth stage of its departure, but it had to have left the Land because in order for it to be the manifestation of God's presence, it has to be visible

— This departure signaled Jerusalem's doom. The city would be devoid of God's blessing till the glory will return via the Mount of Olives (Ezek 43:1-3)

— It is no coincidence that Christ ascended to heaven from the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:9-12), and promised to return to the same place (Acts 1:11; Zech 14:4)

— From this mountain Jesus wept over Jerusalem during His Triumphal Entry (Luke 19:37-44; Ezek 10:19; 43:1-4)

- From this position, the Shekinah looked back at the city from the Mount of Olives, which is a higher elevation than the city itself



A Jewish rabbinic legend claims that the Shekinah stayed on top of the Mount of Olives for three-and-a-half years, waiting for Israel to repent [*m. Eikhah Rabbah, Petichta 25*].

When the Jewish people built the Second Temple, the Shekinah glory did not inhabit it. This absence fulfilled the prophecies found in Deut 31:17 and Hosea 9:12. However, Haggai 2:9 declares that the glory of the Second Temple would surpass that of the First Temple in a unique manner: the latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, says YHWH of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, says YHWH of hosts.

John 1:14 explains that when the Word became flesh, He dwelt among His people. The Greek term for "dwelt," *eskēnōsen*, comes from the root *skēnoó*, which refers to dwelling as in a tent or tabernacle. It is the translation of the Hebrew term *shekhinah*, meaning "to settle," "to inhabit," or "to dwell." Hence, when Jesus became flesh, He "shekinah-ed" among His people. He was the visible manifestation of God's presence in the form of a Man.

The many times that Jesus worked and taught in the Temple compound fulfilled Haggai's prophecy. Haggai had foretold that YHWH would give peace in this place, and indeed He did because Messiah is called *Sar Shalom*, the Prince of Peace, in Is 9:6.

At His first coming, Jesus provided spiritual peace, but at His second coming, He will establish physical peace. The Second Temple was destroyed in 70 AD, and so Haggai's prophecy had to be fulfilled prior to that date. In this context, the rabbinic legend contains a further, albeit unintentional, element of truth: in the Person of Jesus Christ, the Shekinah glory ministered to Israel for a period of three-and-a-half years, waiting for the people to repent. However, when they failed to do so, the Shekinah glory, embodied in the Person of Jesus, departed from the Mount of Olives after three-and-a-half years of ministry (Acts 1:9-12).

(d) Ezekiel is returned to the exiles (11:24-25)

24 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God to Chaldea, to the exiles. Then the vision that I had seen left me.

24 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God to the exiles in Chaldea. So the vision that I had seen left me.

24 Then in a vision from the Spirit of God, the Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the exiles in Chaldea. At that point, the vision that I had been observing ended.

24 Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me.

- Now the Spirit lifted Ezekiel up, as at the beginning of this vision (8:1), and brought him back to the captivity in Chaldea

— Note this was not a physical transfer of Ezekiel, but a visionary journey. The prophet still had to lie on his left side in his bed for another 10 days to fulfill his commission.

25 And I told the exiles all the things that the LORD had shown me.

25 Then I told the exiles all the things that the LORD had shown me.

25 Later, I spoke to the exiles concerning everything the LORD had spoken that I had witnessed.

25 Then I spake unto them of the captivity all the things that the LORD had shewed me.

- The vision was now complete, and Ezekiel communicated all that he had seen and heard from the Lord to the exiles in the captivity, shattering any hopes that they might have had a soon return to Jerusalem

— By this, Ezekiel accomplished God's very purpose for this vision, which was to reveal the immediate future of Jerusalem to the exile community