

“Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance: they had the likeness of a man.” Ezekiel 1:5.

Now in order to properly understand our passage we need to include the whole, rather lengthy Text, which we will present now.

1:4-. “And I looked, and behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire. Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance, they had the likeness of a man. And everyone had four faces, and every one had four wings. And their feet were straight feet, and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf’s foot, and they sparkled like the color of burnished brass. And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides, and they four had their faces and their wings. Their wings were joined one to another, they turned not when they went, they went everyone straight forward. As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion on the right side, and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle. Thus were their faces; and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of everyone were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies. And they went everyone straight forward whither the spirit was to go, and they went and they turned not when they went. As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures, and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning. And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning. Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces. The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the color of beryl; and they four had one likeness; and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel. When they went, they went upon their four sides. And they turned not when they went as for their rings (felloes), they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings (felloes) were full of eyes round about them four. And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them, and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go, and the wheels were lifted up over against them, for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels. When those went, these went, and when those stood, these stood, and when those were lifted up from the earth the wheels were lifted up over against them for the spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels and the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the color of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above. And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other, every one had two which covered on this

side and everyone had two which covered on that side. And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings' like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, and the noise of an host, when the stood, the let down there wings. And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when the stood, and let down their wings. And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone, and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. And I saw as the color of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from appearance of his loins, downward. I was as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about. As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice on one that spake. And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered in to me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me..."

We will now attempt to clean this passage up with a simplified version of what this says, hopefully without doing too much damage to the Sacred Text and it's meaning. The scene opens with Ezekiel standing along the bank of the Chebar River as a captive of the Babylonian Empire. As he stands there, suddenly a noisy whirlwind carrying dust up from the ground appears from the north. As in Psalm 48:2, the North appears at times to be the direction in which God dwells: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great king." Thus, the direction of North is associated with the dwelling of God, and this idea is brought into the vision of Ezekiel, here, that the whirlwind comes from God's dwelling place. Rather loosely associated to this idea is the fact that all amateur astronomers are aware of is that when one looks up to the North Star area of the sky, one is looking out of the Milky Way Galaxy. There generally appears to be very few stars in that area, almost a hole in the sky, without a strong telescope, quite empty. As one looks down into the ecliptic one looks into the Milky Way Galaxy and there's countless stars. This vision of Ezekiel is as he saw it and is therefore described exactly as it became clear to him, in detail, though uncertain detail since he wasn't sure of what he was looking at. Because of this, he uses the words, "appearance" and "likeness," often in his vivid descriptions. Let us at this point before we go any farther, state that we do not hold to the idea that we have just read a description of the "Chariot of the Gods," or as some others like to think, we have just read proof of mankind's future time travel, or an historic visit of an ET. We hold to what the Text demonstrates that it is. Ezekiel has just described a "theophany," here and it reappears in chapter ten. A theophany is an appearance of God to man. Now, immediately one is struck with the difference of this

appearance of God and the brief description of God back in Genesis 3:8 and 9, “And they (Adam and Eve) heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where are thou?” There is a tragic difference in the appearance. One, God is freely walking in the cool of the day in the pleasant garden of Eden looking for the familiar fellowship He shared with His human creation, made in His likeness. In the second scene in Ezekiel, He appears as a stranger from elsewhere in some sort of contraption, and man doesn’t even know or recognize Him as familiar. Even with Ezekiel, the familiar fellowship that Adam once had is gone, and he must fall upon his face in fear. The difference points out the situation to be truly sad. Before we go any farther in this Text’s description, we must discover the reason for this appearance. Why is God here before Ezekiel? Is the obvious question that needs immediate resolution. Chapter two gives us the answer, and it’s quite obvious. God is here before Ezekiel to give him warnings of coming events and judgments. This does not mean that as we approach to the end of the Church Age that God will reappear to someone and give warnings, because we already have the warnings written out for us in the New Testament. So beware of false prophets. They are all liars, each and every one of them. The last of the true prophets of God ended with the death of the last Apostle, who was named John. A “fire infolding itself,” describes a constant, controlled burn fire that has a center drawing inward through a suction. It would appear as a fire burning inward, as if it were being drawn into a consuming engine. Amber comes in different colors, but 70% of natural amber is yellow. There is red and blue amber, but those are more rare. The likeness of the four living creatures came out of the whirlwind, not the fire. The fire was what Ezekiel noticed first after the whirlwind, now he sees the four figures having the stature of mankind. This would imply two legs, but as described, the legs are quite straight, with no bend to them, and end in calf hooves, not human feet. Modern critics point out that this sounds like trans-species bioengineering, and as we get further along into the Text, trans-human AI engineering that joins humans with various animal species and mechanical machines as one for intergalactic travel, however if one takes a close look at this, this is nothing of the kind. One merely needs to compare this with the Revelation chapter four scene to know what is being referred to. We are looking at what has been called “seraphim” and in places, perhaps referred to as “cherubim” that ever surround the Throne of God. Ezekiel now sees them before his own eyes while standing here on earth. Sadly, the vain mind of fallen man has associated this idea of being incorporated into one as a “Star Trek” colony of the “Borg” being the New Jerusalem. We are reminded that verse one states that “the heavens were opened,” and this either is simply what Ezekiel saw or what came out of heaven. The faces of the man, the ox, the lion and the eagle are not said to be alive or

animated, and it has been theorized that they may only be representations much like the images that were once displayed on the sailing ships of ancient times either on the front mast or on the front bow, however in Revelation four, they actually appear as part of the living beast, or "Zoa." These living beasts appear in two different kinds or two species; a four winged version we will term "Quattuor Alis" Seraphim, and the six winged version "Sex Alis," Latin designation as they appear in Isaiah chapter six. This image was able to travel suddenly as lightning does, in straight, yet a zig-zag manner, having four wheels pointing in the direction of the lead face with a auxiliary wheel within it that when the vehicle leaned much like a motor cycle does going into a curve, it falls upon the inner auxiliary wheel which comes into play for the immediate change in direction. This would therefore not be a description of form of a turbo engine as some have thought. The question is, why the mechanical device? The answer is that this may not be actually a fully mechanical device. The living creatures, beasts, Zoas, or cherubs hove close to God at all times. The four faces is a symbolic way of saying that God's living creatures are ever before Him, and He is constantly providing and watching over them. It is not just man but all are precious and particular to Him. He is aware of the fall of a sparrow as the Lord has once told us. How much more is He aware of our needs than a sparrow. His regard for us is described elsewhere as love.

Now, there are practical applications for the passage that we have thus far. First of all, God has given us a warning, written in His Word that Judgment is coming and therefore repentance is needed, one and all. The Gospel is to be preached first with the Law so that conviction by the Holy Spirit comes into play, followed by the stern warning that unless one turns from sin, God's severe wrath will fall. God is gracious to those who obey His call, but exacting on those who don't. Many in church, and those who grew up in church sometimes can be heard saying, "I get tired of hearing the same old thing over and over. Jesus Died on the Cross, I already know that." There's a reason that it's repeated, over and over aside from the fact that some have not heard or understand yet. The reason you hear the Gospel over and over again, is that you sin over and over again. It's a reminder that His grace is open to you, still. Do not be hardened in your heart toward it. Don't deny your sin, either. "Oh, I'm too big of a sinner," some say. "I'm too awful". Jesus died the lowest, worst death for the lowest and worst person. So if you feel that describes you, you can come to Jesus, repenting and leaving that nasty, trash far behind and out of our life. It's not the fact that He wants you to give your life to Him that is important, what is important is that He will give you a new life, so that you can leave the old one behind. Someday, in the not too distant future, you will then see the heavens open for you like Ezekiel did, and this time it will be you that steps into the paradise of Heaven, and you will see wonders that you could not even imagine. From then on it will be a fellowship with the Love of your life.