

Ezekiel 10:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the cherubims went, the wheels went by them: and when the cherubims lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them.

Analysis

The synchronized movement—"when the cherubims went, the wheels went by them"—demonstrates perfect coordination between heavenly agents and divine providence. The Hebrew indicates the wheels moved simultaneously with the cherubim, neither lagging nor rushing ahead. This synchronization illustrates that God's purposes in heaven and earth operate in perfect harmony.

The lifting of wings to mount up signifies ascent and departure. The glory of God is beginning its exit from the temple, accompanied by its attendant cherubim and wheels. That 'the wheels also turned not from beside them' emphasizes faithful attendance—the providence of God accompanies His manifest presence. Where God's glory goes, His sovereign governance follows.

From a Reformed perspective, this passage illustrates the inseparability of God's transcendent holiness (cherubim) and His immanent governance (wheels). God's character determines His actions; His actions reflect His character. The departing glory means departing blessing, protection, and covenant favor—a terrifying prospect for Jerusalem, soon to face Babylonian siege without divine defense.

Historical Context

In ancient Near Eastern theology, a deity's presence guaranteed protection for their city and temple. Enemies could not conquer where gods dwelt. Ezekiel's

vision revealed something unthinkable—Yahweh Himself was abandoning His temple. This meant Jerusalem's fall was certain, not because Babylon's gods were stronger, but because Israel's God had withdrawn His protection due to covenant violation.

This would have been shocking for the exiles. Many assumed Jerusalem's walls and temple guaranteed safety (Jeremiah 7:4). Ezekiel's vision demolished false security—religious externals without covenant faithfulness provide no protection. God's presence is not controlled by ritual or architecture but by His sovereign will and response to His people's spiritual condition.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What false securities (religious activities, heritage, morality) might you be trusting in place of genuine relationship with God?
2. How does the departure of God's glory warn against presuming on His patience and grace?
3. In what ways does God's sovereignty mean His presence cannot be manipulated or controlled by human actions?

Interlinear Text

מִאֵלֶּם: בָּאָפָּנִים יְלָכֵת וְכָל קְתַת

H1980

And when the cherubims

H3742

בְּכָרוּבִים

ימָם

ילְכֵת

בָּאָפָּנִים

מִאֵלֶּם:

the same wheels

H212

by them

H681

מֵעַל לְרוּם פָּנְפִילָה מְאַת וּבְשָׂא תָּ

lifted up

And when the cherubims

H3742

בְּכָרוּבִים

ימָם

אַת

פָּנְפִילָה

מְאַת

לְרוּם

H5921

their wings

to mount up

H7311

H5375

מִאֵלֶּם:

מִאֵלֶּם: הַ מְגַמֵּן בָּאָפָּנִים יְלָכֵת לֹא

from the earth

H3808

turned

the same wheels

H1571

also

by them

H776

H5437

H212

H1992

H681

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