

Ezekiel 10:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

Analysis

The cherubim's position 'on the right side of the house' (the south side of the temple) indicates they have moved away from their position above the ark of the covenant. This represents the beginning of God's glory departing from the temple—a gradual, reluctant withdrawal rather than an immediate abandonment.

The cloud filling the inner court recalls the Shekinah glory that filled the tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-35) and Solomon's temple at its dedication (1 Kings 8:10-11). However, here the cloud's presence is transitional, marking the glory's departure rather than its abiding presence. The Hebrew *anan* (אָנָן, 'cloud') signifies both God's presence and His veiling of Himself from sinful humanity.

This demonstrates God's patience even in judgment. He does not abandon His temple precipitously but withdraws step by step, giving opportunity for repentance. The Reformed doctrine of common grace is evident—God delays final judgment, extending mercy even as He prepares to act.

Historical Context

The 'house' (bayit, בַּיּוֹת) refers to the main sanctuary building where the priests ministered daily. The temple complex had three main sections: the outer court, the Holy Place (for priests only), and the Most Holy Place (entered only by the high priest once yearly). The cherubim's movement from the Most Holy Place toward the outer areas signifies progressive abandonment.

For Ezekiel's audience—exiles who had already been deported in 597 BC—this vision explained why their exile was not a sign of Yahweh's weakness but of His righteous judgment. This challenged false prophets who promised immediate restoration.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 – God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Revelation 20:12 – Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What are the warning signs that God's presence is withdrawing from a church or believer's life?
2. How does God's patience in judgment demonstrate both His mercy and His holiness?
3. In what ways should this passage shape our understanding of corporate worship and God's presence?

Interlinear Text

בָּבָא וּלְבָבָה יְמִינֵּה עַמְּדָה יְמִינֵּה וְכֹרֶב יְמִינֵּה	Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house went in
H3742 H5975 H3225 H1004 H935	

בְּפִנְמִיתִן	הַמֵּצֵר	אַתָּה	מָלָא	וּבְעֵנֶן	בְּאֵישׁ
when the man	and the cloud	filled	H853	court	the inner
H376	H6051	H4390		H2691	H6442

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 9:3 (Parallel theme): And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side;

Ezekiel 43:4 (Parallel theme): And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate whose prospect is toward the east.

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