

*Ezekiel also saw four wheels, within wheels, that accompanied the four creatures that traveled in God's presence.*

**The appearance of the wheels and their work was as the look of a chrysolite; and they four had one likeness; and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel. - Ezekiel 1:16**

This Lesson Outline was prepared by John M. Wharton

July 17, 2007

[HTTP://www.biblestudyadventures.com](http://www.biblestudyadventures.com)

**Sources -**

All bible text, unless otherwise indicated, is from the Public Domain Darby Translation from the e-Sword Bible program. ASV indicates the American Standard Version, with KJV indicating the King James Version. Quotations are often included from various classic Christian commentaries such as John Gill's Expositor, Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, Robertson's New Testament Word Pictures, and others. Greek and Hebrew word definitions are often included from the Strong's Concordance, and Brown-Driver-Briggs' unless otherwise indicated. All of these sources, both the Bible text's, commentaries, and Strong's definition's are all taken from the excellent free for download source, the e-Sword Bible program, or from the Pocket e-Sword version of the software, unless otherwise indicated.

**Introduction -**

**This is an enjoyable look at Ezekiel chapter 1. The prophet has seen four strange beings in the northern sky by the Chebar river in Babylon. Now he sees wheels by these beings that move in unison with them. Since the four beings were described as zipping rapidly around the sky, the wheels moving with them must have been quite a sight. And the presence of God, Himself, is seen by the prophet above the heads of the four beings. Let's enjoy this look at what Ezekiel saw some 2600 years ago.**

**Ezekiel Chapter 1:15-28 - Darby Translation**

**15 And I looked at the living creatures, and behold, one wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, toward their four faces.**

**Comments -**

**There is an immediate controversy about the wheel or wheels. The translations take the meanings of the Hebrew several different ways. Is there one wheel by each of the living beings which had four faces? Or does each wheel itself have four faces on it as the Douay-Rheims version seems to indicate?**

1:15 Now as I saw the living creatures, behold, **one wheel on the earth beside the living creatures, for each of the four faces of it.** - WEB (World English Bible) from <http://www.ebible.org/>

**Eze 1:15** Now as I beheld the living creatures, **behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces.** - KJV from the e-Sword program at <http://www.e-sword.net/>

**Eze 1:15** Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold, **one wheel upon the earth beside the living creatures, for each of the four faces thereof.** - ASV from the e-Sword program at <http://www.e-sword.net/>

**Eze 1:15** Now as I beheld the living creatures, **there appeared upon the earth by the living creatures one wheel with four faces.** - DRB from the e-Sword program at <http://www.e-sword.net/>

The KJV seems to take the same meaning as the Darby, ASV, and WEB bibles, which is that there were four living beings mentioned in verses 1-14 of Ezekiel 1:1-14, and each had four faces. By each one of those living beings was one of these wheels that Ezekiel now mentions. That question is important because it affects how many creatures there might have been, as well as how many wheels there were, and their very appearance. But the classic Bible commentators Jamieson, Fausset and Brown, as well as Keil and Delitzsch all seem to understand that there was one of these wheels on the side of each face of a living being. That is, there was a wheel on the south facing side of the being, there was one on the east facing side, and likewise a wheel on the west side and one on the north side. Thus you would have four wheels there in proximity (i.e. close too) each living being.

16 The appearance of the wheels and their work was as the look of a chrysolite; and they four had one likeness; and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.

**Geneva Bible Translation Notes from the e-Sword Bible program at <http://www.e-sword.net/>**

**Eze 1:16** - The appearance of the wheels and their work [was] like the colour of a (k) 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.

(k) **The Hebrew word is tarshish meaning that the colour was like the Cilician Sea, or a precious stone so called.** - *Emphasis mine.*

#### **Comments -**

Gill agrees that the color of the wheels is a "sea green". Jamieson, Fausset and Brown mention that this "Tarshish or Tartessus" stone was brought from Spain. The wheels then had a shiny green appearance to them.

17 When they went, they went upon their four sides; they turned not when they went.

18 As for their rims, they were high and dreadful; and they four had their rims full of eyes round about.

**Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary from the e-Sword Bible program at <http://www.e-sword.net/>**

**Eze 1:17 -**

**went upon their four sides** — Those faces or sides of the four wheels moved which answered to the direction in which the cherubim desired to move; while the transverse circles in each of the four composite wheels remained suspended from the ground, so as not to impede the movements of the others.

**Comments -**

The insights of Jamieson, Fausett and Brown are interesting. They see a wheel on each of the four sides of a living being. Whichever direction a being moved the wheel on that side move in unison with it. But verse 18 sounds more like four wheels, and strangely each wheel's rim was full of eyes. These were strange beings that confronted Ezekiel that day.

19 And when the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.

20 **Whithersoever the Spirit was to go, they went, thither would [their] spirit go;** and the wheels were lifted up along with them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

21 When those went, they went; and when those stood, they stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up along with them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

**the Spirit** - H7307 רוּחַ rûach roo'-akh From H7306; **wind**; by resemblance *breath*, that is, a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; figuratively *life, anger, unsubstantiality*; by extension a *region* of the sky; by resemblance *spirit*, but only of a rational being (including its expression and functions): - air, anger, blast, breath, X cool, courage, mind, X quarter, X side, spirit ([ual]), tempest, X vain, ([whirl-]) wind (-y).

**Comments -**

The sense of the spirit is clearly enough of the spirit of life and being, or the spirit of God, that was in them. Where it lead, the beings went. It was the same spirit within the being itself, and within the wheel associated with that being.

22 **And there was the likeness of an expanse over the heads of the living creature, as the look of the terrible crystal,** stretched forth over their heads above.

**of the terrible** – H3372 יָרֵא' yârê' yaw-ray' A primitive root; **to fear; morally to revere; causatively to frighten**: - affright, be (make) afraid, dread (-ful), (put in) fear (-ful, -fully, -ing). (be had in) reverence (-end), X see, terrible (act, -ness, thing).

**crystal** – H7140 קֶרַח קֶרַח qerach qôrach keh'-rakh, ko'-rakh From H7139; **ice (as if bald, that is, smooth); hence, hail**; by resemblance, rock *crystal*: - crystal, frost, ice.

**Comments -**

This expanse or space, was crystal looking. That doesn't mean that it was crystal. But in what sense was it fearful? Was it dreadful to look at? A crystal or ice wouldn't necessarily look fearful. Was it morally fearful, or awe inspiring because of what it was or represented? Maybe it had that aspect because of the association of these powerful beings with Jehovah God.

23 And under the expanse were their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two which covered on this side, and every one had two which covered on that side their bodies.

24 And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, a tumultuous noise, as the noise of a host: when they stood, they let down their wings;

**Comments -**

**These four wings were very loud, and powerful as the beings were in motion. But when they stood on the ground they let their wings down.**

25 and there was a voice from above the expanse that was over their heads. When they stood, they let down their wings.

26 And above the expanse 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 a likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

27 And I saw as the look of glowing brass, as the appearance of fire, within it round about; from the appearance of his loins and upward, and from the appearance of his loins and downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.

28 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 Jehovah. And when I saw, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of one that spoke.

**Comments -**

**This puts us in mind of the the presence of Jehovah God that manifested above the arc of the covenant between the two cherubim. Are these the real cherubim? The presence of God is clearly here above the presence of these four beings. But if God made His presence above them, did the four beings go in different directions, as we may have thought to this point, or in unison in a single direction, all four keeping formation with the presence of God directly above them? God has not made a random creation, and then stepped back to watch it take shape, or not, however the randomness forms it. He has created with purpose and intent, and He joins in with His creation, exhibited His presence among them. What we have lost in the garden is beyond the imagination, and measure, or mankind. Not a theoretical holiness, composed of rules and regulations, but a glad presence of the God among we the beings that He has gladly made. We had the garden, and failed the test, and now live a life, of separation, imperfection, sickness, and physical death. Only the true God can heal such a breach. And that He has, through the sacrifice, of His son, upon the tree.**

## **Conclusion -**

This has been a thoroughly enjoyable look at what Ezekiel saw in this chapter 1. First he had seen four strange beings in the northern sky by the Chebar river in Babylon. Then he saw four wheels, one by each of these beings, and the wheels moved in unison with them. Since the four beings were described as zipping rapidly around the sky, the wheels moving with them must have been quite a sight. And the presence of God, Himself, was seen by the prophet above the heads of the four beings. What an incredible manifestation of the mystery and power of God was seen by Ezekiel that day 2600 years ago.