

Christian student ministry workers in Sweden developed a series of questions to ask when reading a Bible passage. Called the “Swedish Method” because of its origins, these questions can be used when reading the Bible by yourself or with others.

The daily readings in this family worship guide have a few questions. However, we encourage you, as appropriate for your family, to ask the following general questions of the text each day.



Is there something that ‘shines’ from the passage—whatever impacts most, or draws attention?



Is there something you don’t understand, or a question the passage raises in your mind?



Is there a personal application to your life?



Is there something you plan to share with someone else – and who will you share it with?



How do ideas in the passage interrelate? Or with other passages in this book – or in the whole Bible?

Worshipping Together is part of the vision and is a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Frankston, Victoria, Australia. frankstonrp.org.au bit.ly/WTrpcaf

The concept and layout draws heavily from *Let’s Worship God*, a ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Airdrie, Scotland. airdrierpcs.org

The readings are from Tim Chester’s 3-year weekly reading plan. bit.ly/WkBbl or bit.ly/3yrBbl

The quote on the cover is from the article *What Shampoo and Family Worship Have in Common*, Written by Randy Greenwald, (Quoted from *Tabletalk* magazine, Nov 1997.)

Notes this week are drawn in part from commentaries on Ezekiel by John Calvin, Peter Jeffrey, Derek Thomas, Iain Duguid, and James Smith, and notes from the HCSB Study Bible, and the Reformation Study Bible

Worshipping Together



We love God because He first loved us.

And we love to tell God that we love Him.

Joyful and faithful worship together twice each Lord’s Day is the highlight of our week. We are glad that they said, “Let us go to the House of the Lord.” Corporate worship prepares us for the week and prepares us for Heaven.

In addition, we regularly worship God as families and as individuals.

One father put it this way:

The back of my shampoo bottle says, “Lather, rinse, repeat.” Simple enough that even I can do it. Though family worship may be a bit more complicated than shampooing hair, it ought not to be rated with “home dentistry” in the scale of difficulty.



If you could buy family worship in the store, it would come in the form of a Bible, and the directions would simply say, “Read, pray, repeat.” Men should gather their families at least once daily. They should read a portion of the Scriptures to them. And they should pray with them. There need be no fireworks or pizzazz to keep the kids interested. There needs to be only a father* with a heart-love for God – who desires to see that love appropriated by his children.*

Read, pray, repeat.

* Fathers leading their family in worship is always the goal. When, in the Lord’s providence, the father is absent or uninterested, a godly mother will lead her children

Reading Ezekiel 10:1-2 The Lord spoke...

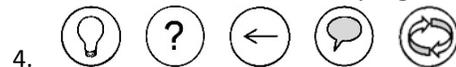
Notes (See back page for authors)
Due to a timing sequence for the compiler of this family worship guide, we looked at Ezekiel's call, then the good news of restoration (chapters 37 and 47). Now, we come back to the bad news.

God has pronounced judgment on Jerusalem due to their sin (9:9-10). Now, Ezekiel sees a vision like the one he saw in chapter 1 – multi-faced cherubim, wheels within wheels, and God's throne chariot. Calvin comments that *God wished to bear witness to the Jews that he had nothing further in common with them, because he intended to leave the temple, and then to consume the whole city with burning. But lest this threat should be unheeded by the Jews, God's majesty was placed before them so fearfully that it might strike even the obstinate with fear.*

The image of this judgment is now made clearer. As Thomas notes *among the wheels of the chariot that carried God's throne (10:2; cf. 1:15–21) was a raging fire. The linen-clad scribe is now asked to take some of these coals of fire and 'scatter them over the city' (10:2). Fire is often a symbol of God's holiness in Scripture and it would appear that by this action the scribe is being called upon to portray symbolically God's wrath upon the city.*

Our God is a consuming fire. (Heb 12:29)

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. Why is God judging Jerusalem?
 2. Do God's people need judgment today? Explain.
 3. How should Christians today regard God's judgment?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 125²
1. Pray for God to remember, in His wrath, His mercy
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

¹ You will notice we only have a printed guide for 6 days. We recommend each Lord's Day you review the previous week's readings and/or the previous or current week's sermons and pray together

² Psalm selections are taken from the *Book of Psalms for Worship*. We encourage our congregation to sing the same selection each day for a week to gain familiarity with the selection

Reading Ezekiel 10:15-22, 11:22-25 The Glory of the Lord departed...

Notes (See back page for authors)
We return to Ezekiel – but the story is the same as 1 Samuel 4. The glory has departed – Ichabod. As Israel was falsely confident in Samuel's day in the Ark of the Covenant, little more than a magic box to them, so Israel was falsely confident in Ezekiel's day in the Temple, little more than a magic building to them.

As Duguid notes, *Ezekiel sees a cloud filling the inner court and the glory of God on the move once more, just as it had been in the days of the desert wanderings (cf. Ex. 40:34–37). This glory cloud is not leading Israel, however, but leaving them.*

Duguid continues, *first it passes from the earthly cherubim in the Most Holy Place to the threshold of the temple (Ezek. 10:4), then from the threshold of the temple to the divine chariot over the (real) cherubim (10:18). From there the glory moves to the east gate of the temple courtyard (10:19), where there is a pause during which the prophet receives a further oracle and vision. Finally the glory moves on to the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, outside the city limits. The city itself is now effectively doomed, cut off from divine aid from its true protector, waiting for the ax to fall. The Lord has abandoned the city to the empty hope offered by the idols for which the people abandoned him.*

Now, in Jesus, God's glory resides in, and only in, each true church of Jesus Christ in the world. Be in His true church!

- Questions** (see back page for explanation of symbols)
1. What was Israel's confidence in the Temple?
 2. Why did God's glory depart from the temple and Jerusalem?
 3. Where is God's glory today?



- Praise Pray** Psalm 125
1. Pray that you and your family will be always in God's true church and know His glory in Jesus
 2. Pray for your family
 3. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member
 4. Pray for the reading and preaching of God's word tomorrow

Reading 1 Samuel 4 Ichabod

Notes

(Today we take a brief detour to 1 Samuel and notes from a commentary by John Woodhouse)

“Ichabod”—“Where is the glory?” The glory was exiled from Israel. There is a dreadful play on words in this story. The description of old Eli in verse 18 tells us that he “was ... heavy.” The Hebrew word is kabed, the verb form of kabod, “glory.” Eli had been the glory, the kabod, of Israel—her priest, teacher, mediator, representative. But the glory of Eli had become no more than his old bulk—and it had killed him. Where is the glory? Dead by the road out of Shiloh.

The ark, kept in the tabernacle, had long been associated with the glory of God. In the days of Moses, “the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud settled on it, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle” (Exodus 40:34, 35). Where is the glory? Captured and taken by the Philistines!

The story in 1 Samuel 4 is actually a miniature of the history of Israel as it unfolds through the whole Old Testament. Eventually this nation was driven from the land by the Assyrians and then the Babylonians, and everything that represented their special relationship with God was destroyed. It was the very lowest point in Israel’s long history. The experience at Aphek was a foretaste of it. In the land of Babylon Ezekiel became a prophet to the survivors. He saw a vision of the glory of the Lord departing from the temple in Jerusalem and going to Babylon (Ezekiel 10). The glory was exiled!

[But] those who will be with Jesus, where he is, will see his glory (John 17:24).

Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What does Ichabod mean?
2. Why had God’s glory departed from Israel?
3. Might God’s glory depart from the church today? Explain.



Praise Pray

- Psalm 125
1. Pray, with your family, that you will know God’s glory in Jesus
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Ezekiel 10:3-5 The Glory of the Lord begins to move

Notes

(See back page for authors)

Initially, it might seem, this vision is good news. God’s glory is filling the temple – as it did the tabernacle and the temple when they were built. Note however that this visible showing of God’s glory is not descending on and filling the temple, but is moving up (and soon away) from the temple.

Calvin comments that *in this place and elsewhere, as in Ps. 18, and in other places, a cloud seems to signify the averted face of God, as if the temple was full of darkness...the temple was filled with blackness, because God had transferred his glory away.*

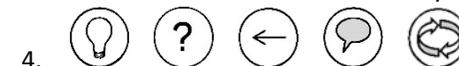
The brightness of God’s glory, which had been said to dwell between the cherubim in the most holy place (1 Sam 4:4 and others) is now moving out to the threshold of the temple. Duguid notes that *it departs slowly, haltingly, as if reluctant to leave.*

Accompanying the movement of God’s glory is a thunderous sound – as of God’s voice (cf Ps 29:3-9). Calvin comments *that it is just as if God thundered from heaven and made the whole world, tremble; for no concussion can be more severe than that sound of the cherubims’ wings. From this a certain wonderful change must be perceptible, since God so filled his Prophet with terror, that he should be a messenger and witness of it to all others.*

Questions

(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. Why did God’s “glory cloud” settle on the temple when built?
2. How is this “glory cloud” different?
3. How do we hear God’s voice today?



Praise Pray

- Psalm 125
1. Pray that the glory of God will fill rather than depart from His particular churches
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Ezekiel 10:6-8 The cherub took some fire...

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Cherubim are pictured often as cute, chubby, baby angels. No such images here. Rather these cherubim are keepers and dispensers of God's flaming fire. As Calvin notes, *the Jews thought that they should always be safe and secure under God's presence; they thought that the sacred fire on the altar availed for the expiation of all wickedness. But God showed that he so resided in the temple that he clothed himself with wrath against them, and that the cherubim were keepers of his arms by which they were at length to be destroyed... Hence the angel is ordered to take fire and to sprinkle it about the city, that it may be destroyed by the burning.*

Then he says that fire was given, but whence was it taken? it was, says he, in the midst of the cherubim. When David prays to God, he makes mention of the cherubim, (Ps. 80:1,) by which a more familiar access is laid open, and deservedly so; because God, when inviting the faithful to himself, as if he stretched forth his hands to them, had angels at hand who brought him in contact with men. Now the Prophet teaches, that God's presence was of no use to the Jews, because he was in arms for their destruction; and the cherubim, who were formerly ministers of his grace, were now at hand to execute his vengeance, since they extend fire from hand to hand for the conflagration of the whole city.

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. How are cherubim often pictured?
2. How are they pictured here?
3. Why is the fire of God's temple given to the man in linen (see v2 if needed)?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 125
1. In prayer seek God's gracious invitation to you and others into His presence
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member

Reading Ezekiel 10:9-14 a wheel within a wheel

Notes
(See back page for authors)

Ezekiel again describes in detail, as in chapter 1, God's throne chariot. Duguid notes that *it is supported by living creatures, which are instantly recognizable as cherubim from their role as throne-bearers (cf. Ps. 18:10) and indeed are explicitly identified as such in v1. These extraordinary winged creatures ... have four faces each—that of a man, a lion (the highest wild animal), an ox (the highest domestic animal), and an eagle (the highest bird)—symbolizing the fact that they embody within themselves all of the highest attributes of living creation...As well as being God's throne-bearers, the cherubim are the guardians of God's holiness.*

Duguid further comments that *it is easy to get drowned in the details. It is possible to get caught up in the complexities of creatures with legs and faces and wings, of coals and torches and lightning, of wheels within wheels.*

The movement of these wheels within wheels, these cherubim "full of eyes" note God's movement and control. Calvin comments that *the wheels are images of all the changes which are discerned in the world. No more suitable figure can be chosen; for nothing is stationary in the world, but revolutions, as we commonly call them, are continually happening...But [Ezekiel] saw that the wheels did not revolve by their own force, but are annexed to the angels, since all events depend on a first cause, namely, on that secret ordinance and inspiration of God.*

Questions
(see back page for explanation of symbols)

1. What do the wheels in this image depict?
2. What do the eyes show?
3. What do the cherubim do (see also v.1)?

4.     

Praise Pray

- Psalm 125
1. Rejoice with your family in prayer that God is in control
 2. Pray for a member of your church
 3. Pray for your family
 4. Pray for a non-Christian friend/family member