

Ezekiel Ch 9 • “Sigh and Cry”

Background In Chapter 8, the Lord showed Ezekiel (in a vision) four examples of idolatry happening in and around the temple. At the end of the chapter, God declared judgment that would result. In Ch 9, we see a foreshadowing of that judgment.

Correction God did NOT dwell in the tabernacle / temple without interruption until the events of Ezekiel 8-12; see 1 Samuel 4 (“Ichabod!”).

v1-2 Still part of the vision God showing Ezekiel (cf 8:3). God calling those in authority over Jerusalem (angels not men) to execute judgment. Note that they approach from the north (cf Babylonian army). Also note presence of seventh man (7 = completion; judgment will be complete and comprehensive). Seventh man dressed in linen — garb of priests and sometimes angels. Possibly Gabriel (cf Dan 10, 12).

v3a Shekinah Glory no longer between the cherubim (cf Num 7:89).

v3b-4 Angel w/ pens given mission to mark the believing remnant. Even in judgment, God remembers mercy (Hab 3:2). The mark “taw” could be short for “tam” meaning blameless? “Taw” as written at that time also resembled an X (or cross). Also cf Rev 7:1-4; Gen 4:15 – other examples of God marking / mercy.

v5-7a First six angels on mission of judgment. Instructed to pile up bodies in the temple courtyard thereby defiling the temple.

v7b-8 God says “go” and Ezekiel is horrified at the implications. Seems like God is going to wipe out His people!

v9-11 God IS going to preserve a remnant (cf v11). But He also declares His judgment on those who aren’t repentant is necessary. When fear of the Lord is diminished, idolatry increases. Where idolatry increases, sin and bloodshed increase.

Application People misinterpreted the first two waves of captivity, concluding God was absent or indifferent. In reality, God hadn’t departed (yet) – THEY had. Same pattern would repeat in person of Jesus — the glory of God returned to the temple in person of Jesus (Col 2:9; John 14:9) but the leaders of His day preferred their idols to Him. So Jesus again declares “Ichabod” (Matt 23:37-38).

God won’t help us worship idols. When we find ourselves struggling as we worship idols, right response is not to ask “where did God go?” The right answer is to repent and return to Him!