

# THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

GBC EQUIPPING HOUR | FEBRUARY 2, 2020

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## **Class 6 – Idolatry in the House (8:1-18)**

**PURPOSE:** To relate to the early Jews in Exile -leaving their glory days, entering into hostile territory, always looking ahead to the Kingdom of Redemption.

### **Introduction: The Jealousy of God**

- Not To Be Confused with Coveting

Lusting after a woman's body on the monitor screen is a sin because she is not your wife. The Bible calls this coveting (Exodus 20:17). But if a man's wife is jealous for her husband's *intimate* attention, she is not in sin because her husband belongs *to her* and not another outside woman. Here in both these cases there are individuals with heart-longings. But one is carnal and the other is virtuous. God is 'justified' in being jealous for Israel's attention and devotion because Israel was married to him (Jeremiah 31:32; also see Hosea).

- Taking It One Step Further: Seeing God as the Ultimate Source of All Pleasure

Even if Israel were not bound to a covenant with YHWH she still would be expected to reason out, just by looking at the wonders of his creation, that he is the most attractive and marvelous of all beings (Romans 1:18-23).

I. **Pausing...To See It God's Way** (Ezekiel 8:1-4)

A. Going from "God Seeing It My Way"...

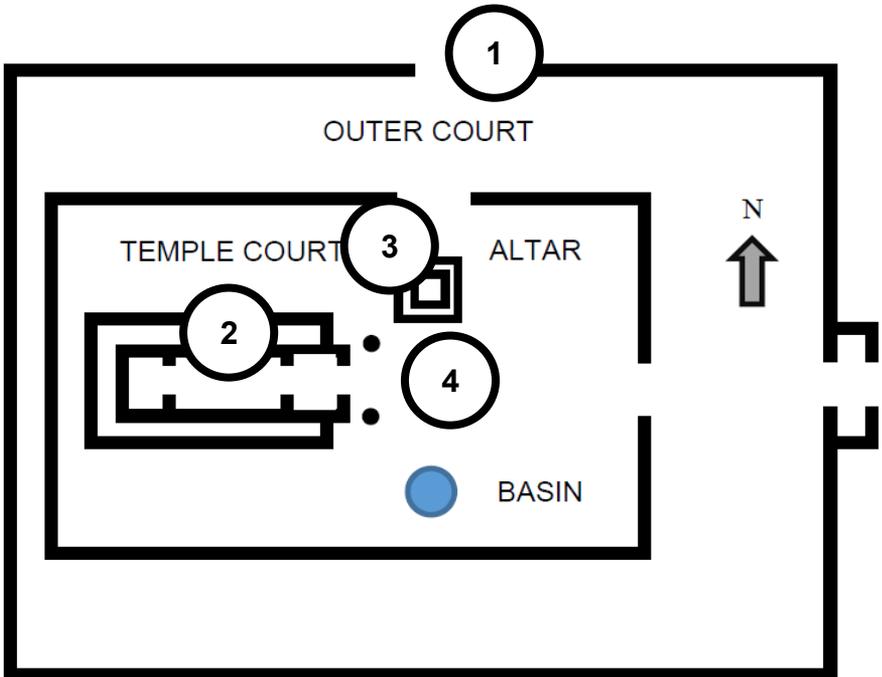
In fact God did take the time to see it "our way." Christ lived among us, experienced the sweat, blood and tears that we do today (Hebrews 4:15).

B. ...To Me Seeing It God's Way

Are there in fact somethings that would "drive [God] far from his sanctuary?" (cf. verse 6). Yes. Like when worshipers replace Glory with an imposter.

II. **Tour of Tears** (Ezekiel 4:5-18)

Scale of Solomon's Temple + Court layout below: size of football field.



A. Stopping Point #1: At the North Gate Entrance (v. 5-6)

When everyone is greeted by the sight of an idol at the entry gate it surely sets the atmosphere for worship beyond, inside the perimeter wall. This is the direct opposite of the Christian church practice of “checking your heart at the door” before entering into Sunday worship.

B. Stopping Point #2: Inside the Temple Interior (v. 7-13)

What makes the scene of scheming Elders, bent on bringing idolatry into the Holy Place, *worse* (v. 6) than the previous scene of the idol sitting at the North Gate? It is that they will accelerate Israel’s apostasy in their celebrating that which is cursed by the Law of God. Where the shepherd’s lead, the people follow (see Jeremiah 23:13).

C. Stopping Point #3: Just Outside the Temple (v. 14-15)

What makes the scene of women weeping over a dead god (Tammuz) just outside the Holy Place *worse* (v. 13) than the idolatrous spiritual leaders? Women, in Scripture, often personify the affections and devotions of the close-knit family (Proverbs 31). If Mom is evil it’s a sure bet that the whole family is now going downhill. That which was once forbidden...now the accepted cultural norm.

D. Stopping Point #4: Between Porch & Altar (v. 16-18)

What makes the scene of the 25 men bowing east to the rising sun *worse* (v. 15) than the weeping women falling before Tammuz? It may be that the men, gathered in such visible defiance, will on the last straw plunge the nation into “violence.” See verse 17 with Ezekiel 9:9 referencing their resulting corruption to “blood[shed]” and “injustice.” But the “violence” of this nation screaming for Marshal Law would give way to God’s judgment starting at the sanctuary (9:6) where it all began.

## **The Book of Ezekiel Course Outline:**

- Introduction to Ezekiel
- Ezekiel's Close Encounter (1:1-28)
- Ezekiel's Strange Commissioning (2:1-3:27)
- Four Signs of Coming Judgment (4:1-5:17)
- Two Messages of Coming Judgment (6:1-7:27)
- Idolatry in the House (8:1-18)
- God's Glory Departs (9:1-11:23)
- Straight Talk to the Covenant People (12:1-19:14)
- Defective Leadership (20:1-23:49)
- The Purge (24:1-27)
- Foreign Raiders Not Exempt (25:1-33:20)
- Reentering the Land on God's Terms (33:21-39:29)
- Restoration of Temple Worship (40:1-46:24)
- Restoration of the Land (47:1-48:35)