

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

GBC EQUIPPING HOUR | FEBRUARY 9, 2020



Class 7 – God’s Glory Departs (9:1-11:23)

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: Two Ways of Going about Bible Study

- Skip the hard parts (judgment) & dive into the easy (grace).
- Go through the hard parts to know the depth of God’s grace.

I. **Separating the Sheep from the Goats** (Ezekiel chapter 9)

Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

-Matthew 25:32

A. The Sheep

True sheep of God’s fold don’t carry on with the idolatry of the land. Instead they “sigh and groan over all the abominations that are committed..” (Ezekiel 9:4).

B. The Goats

Ezekiel’s cry for mercy over the slain, “Ah, Lord God! Will you destroy *all* the remnant of Israel..?” (italics added, Ezekiel 9:8) meant the overwhelming *majority* of Israel’s inhabitants were in fact apostate and corrupt.

C. Application for today:

II. **Ichabod!** (Ezekiel chapter 10)

A. Cha-vod = Hebrew for “Glory”, “Honor”, “Possessions”

There is an old saying, “familiarity breeds contempt.” It is the idea that, over time, people will take for granted the numerous blessings they possess. Before long they either criticize or ignore that once cherished thing or person. But then comes the day in which that blessing is suddenly gone...leaving a long shadow cast through the doorway.

Israel’s “glory” was ultimately in their having the very presence of Creator-God in their midst. This is something other nations did not get to enjoy. Over time, though, God’s honorable presence became ho-hum in the minds of the chosen people. A wave of idolatry swept over the land and much civil violence with it. God would not compete with this. God would judge first, by making his exit gloriously known.

B. A-yeh = Hebrew for “Where?” (Meaning ‘It’s Gone!’)

This, the vowel-starting, first-syllable of the word “Ichabod” found in 1 Samuel 4:21 means “where?” as in, “where is the Ark of the Covenant?” (i.e., when the Philistines captured it in the days of Samuel – when there was corruption among the priesthood). In the book of Ezekiel, it’s more than the Ark being gone, God’s protecting presence is gone. The New Testament echoes a similar warning for the church of Ephesus:

Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you **and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.**

-Revelation 2:5

C. Application for today:

III. **War and Peace** (Ezekiel Chapter 11)

A. War (Ezekiel 11:1-13)

For God to level the “sword” (11:8b -see also cf. 9:6 which involves a lengthy discussion) on his own people, comes on the heels of their warped promulgations. Judah’s leaders apparently had a way to control their people through fear of outside attacks (11:3 & 8a). Soon the fear of mere man took the place of the fear of God Almighty. Ironically some of the greatest horrors were realized within the “safe” walls of the city: Israelite savagely assaulting his fellow Israelite. The city truly had become a cauldron of meat filled with raw, animalistic tendencies.

B. Peace (Ezekiel 11:14-21)

Before Ezekiel tells of the final scene of YHWH’s official departure from the Temple, there is a brief glimpse of hope looking much further into the future.

Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.’¹⁸ And when they come there, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations.¹⁹ **And I will give them one heart, and a new spirit I will put within them. I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh,**²⁰ that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them. And they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

-Ezekiel 11:17-20

C. Application for today:

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)