Message #12

Ezekiel 9:1-11

Ezekiel had been given a tour of what religious leaders were doing in the Temple. They were involved in evil and idolatrous behavior. These were the religious leaders of Israel who behind the scenes were living lives that were totally and completely involved in evil.

They thought they were getting away with their “secret sin” so God says in this chapter, I will not put up with that. In fact, I will put a stop to it and the way I will do that is through some ferocious judgment.

Now in this day and age, we actually are the temple of God (I Cor. 6:18). We who know the Lord are the sacred property of God. If we involve or indulge ourselves in that which is evil, God will not tolerate that in our lives forever.

If we continue to participate in that which is evil and idolatrous, God will put a stop to it and to us. He does not simply sit idly by forever and let His sacred property plunge themselves in that which is abominable. It does not matter what the race or gender. Those who indulge themselves in evil pursuits will ultimately incur the judgment of God.

What we see here is this:

**BECAUSE GOD’S OWN PEOPLE REFUSED TO TURN FROM THEIR EVIL SIN, GOD PERSONALLY COMMANDS A DESTRUCTIVE JUDGMENT TO COME AGAINST THEM.**

This is one very serious chapter that has both immediate and future application for Israel and frankly for us as well. God is a patient and gracious God, but He will not tolerate forever His sacred property that persists in being unfaithful to Him. This chapter makes that point very clear.

This chapter may be broken down into four main parts:

**PART #1 – God commands that judgment come against His own people. 9:1-7a**

In the aftermath of the horrible evil things happening in the Temple by the religious leaders, God said I have had enough.

In verse 1, Ezekiel actually heard God call for His “executioners” to draw near with their destroying weapons in their hands. These executioners are authorized by God to pour out Divine wrath on His own people. These were religious people not right with Him.

If a religious person does not trust in Jesus Christ as Savior, then that person is committing idolatry and trusting in something other than God. No matter how religious or pious the person pretends to be or believes he is, he will face the wrath of God.
According to verse 2, there were six angelic beings in human form, which came with their slaughter weapons in their hands. Among the six was a certain key priestly leader who was clothed in linen with a “writing case” at his loins.

This writing case is a Divine written authorized legal document that is closely connected to matters of judgment. These are Divine documents of war. These beings went to a very sacred place, the bronze altar and they stood there.

They came from a direction of the “upper gate” and they stood at the bronze altar. That altar should have been the place where people went to deal with their sin. That altar was the place where those animals were sacrificed as a means of atonement for sin. It is clear that these people were not dealing with their sin. So that same altar that offered grace would now become the very sport that would authorize judgment.

Do we not see truth here about the cross of Jesus Christ? That cross of Jesus Christ offers eternal grace and salvation to those who believe. But to those who don’t believe, that same cross offers eternal judgment and wrath. The cross can be a place of salvation or a place of condemnation, just like this altar.

According to verse 3, God’s glory departed from the cherub and went to the top of the Temple. The glory of the Lord was departing from the holy of holies and moving to a spot that would oversee the massive destructive judgment.

Years ago a Jewish Rabbi wrestled with the idea of why do bad things happen to people. Why do bad things happen to Israel? One answer is given right here because God authorizes it as a judgment. Does that mean that every time something bad happens to people it is a judgment of God? No. There is the case of Job, who had horrible things happen to him as an attack of Satan. When Jesus was here there was a tower collapse that killed many people that had nothing to do with the sin of people. But the truth is there are times when bad things do happen as a judgment of God and this is one of those times.

In verse 3, God called for a man clothed in linen to come to Him. Now this man was closely connected to what is written. So the Word of God is closely connected to this man. This is significant for this judgment is clearly consistent with the written Word of God.

Now we know that no one can approach the glory of God except God. There is this great scene in Revelation 5 in which no one is worthy to approach God and take that seven sealed scroll judgment book except one and that one is Jesus Christ. So we conclude that this man clothed in linen is none other than Jesus Christ in a pre-incarnate appearance. Jesus Christ is the One to whom all Scripture points.
God told this man exactly what He wanted both he and His team to do to His own people. There were two specific actions he was to take:

**Action #1** - God tells him to go through the city and put a saving mark on all of His people who are sad and groaning over the horrible sin being committed by the people. 9:4

Now in Hebrew the word “mark” is the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet which is “Tau,” which is literally spelled “Tau” (תוע) in this text. To us in English it is the letter “T.”

Now we do not believe this is any coincidence because that letter forms a cross. **So any person who has the tau mark or the cross on them escapes judgment.** However, if they do not have that mark they will be destroyed. That is the simple truth of this text.

God knows people individually even when He is pouring out national and international judgments. He knows who hates sin and He knows who loves sin. He knows who hates the evil happening in His place of worship and He knows those who love it.

**Now this one man is able to mark those who will escape judgment and wrath.** The one in the linen is the one who could determine whether or not they would experience God’s judgment. That was His job.

God is in the business of putting saving marks on people so that they escape His judgment. Although the mark may not be visible to the world, it is visible to Him. For example, when one believes on Jesus Christ, he is sealed with the saving mark of the Holy Spirit. In Exodus, God had Israel put a saving mark on the door posts (Exodus 12). In Revelation, 144,000 will be marked by God and will be saved (Revelation 7).

Whenever God authorizes His wrath, those with the saving mark have nothing to fear.

**Action #2** - God tells the others to go through the city and kill everyone. 9:5-7a

Now God is the One doing this. He is the One pouring out vengeance. He is pouring out His wrath on His own people. There were to be no distinctions made either by gender or age. In other words, when God sends His judgment, all those who are not right with Him receive it. God gives them directions for this assignment:

**(Direction #1)** - After marking those right with God, you strike those who aren’t. 9:5a

**(Direction #2)** - You are not to let your eye pity the people. 9:5b

The tendency for anyone connected to God is to demonstrate grace and mercy. No grace and no mercy. People do not want to think about God in these terms. They want a God who is always gracious and compassionate. But there is another side to God and when sin and evil reach a certain level, people will experience that other side of God.
(Direction #3) - You are not to spare the people. 9:5c

(Direction #4) - You are to utterly slay old men. 9:6a

(Direction #5) - You are to utterly slay young men. 9:6b

(Direction #6) - You are to utterly slay maidens. 9:6c

(Direction #7) - You are to utterly slay little children. 9:6d

(Direction #8) - You are to utterly slay women. 9:6e

(Direction #9) - You are not to touch any man upon whom is the mark. 9:6f

(Direction #10) - You are to start this judgment at My sanctuary. 9:6g

PART #2 – God’s agents carry out judgment against His own people. 9:6h-7

As soon as they were given these orders they started executing the elders who were at the temple. Actually we know from the previous chapter, Ezek. 8:12, that these elders were involved in evil things right at the Temple. They started killing them right in the Temple.

Verse 7 says God told them to fill the courts with their dead bodies so they did and they went and they struck down the people in the city.

When we turn to II Chronicles 36:17-19, we learn that God did do this literally. He authorized this judgment to take place as these heavenly forces used the Babylonians. God’s warnings of judgments and His promises of rewards are fulfilled literally every single time.

We know that during the Tribulation, there will be a ferocious judgment sanctioned by God at the ultimate level. During the time of Jacob’s trouble, thousands upon thousands of Jews will be killed right in Jerusalem. This is why Jesus said when you see the Abomination of Desolation flee that city as fast as you can.

Now those who know dispensational doctrine know that we are in the Church Age and we are in the Age of Grace. Because of that, most churches and people who go to church don’t view this as any real threat to them. However, when we turn to Revelation and to the church of Thyatira we discover that the exact same threat is given to the church (Rev. 2:21-24).

God gave Israel plenty of time to repent, just as He gives us. But sooner or later if His people don’t repent, His judgment will come.
PART #3 – God explains to Ezekiel why He is judging His own people. 9:8-10

When Ezekiel saw this judgment taking place he was left alone and he fell down on his face and cried out on behalf of God’s people. Ezekiel said, God you are destroying your own people and you are pouring out your wrath on your own people in your own city Jerusalem. Ezekiel cried out are you going to destroy all of Israel?

So God takes the time to show Ezekiel why He is doing that:

Reason #1 - Because the iniquity of Israel and Judah has reached a very great level. 9:9a

Sin was so rampant that God had to destroy His own people.

Reason #2 - Because the land is filled with blood. 9:9b

What this means is that the city that was supposed to be a sacred city for the worship of God had become a totally lawless city known for lawless activity. There was no sense of justice anymore.

Reason #3 - Because the city is full of perversion. 9:9c

There are perverted things that people do that will cause God to send His wrath judgment.

Reason #4 - Because of their heretical theological belief. 9:9d

God’s own people say the LORD has forsaken the land and they also say God is not sovereign and He does not see what they are doing.

This is an extremely important point to see. When people invent their own theological viewpoints, it affects their morality. People who invent their own ideas about God, rather than rely upon the Word of God, end up doing things that will lead them to judgment.

It is so ironic because the people were saying, “God does not see” and the reason for the very judgment they are about to experience is because He does see.

God says to Ezekiel, I cannot and will not answer your request to stop this judgment. I will not show any pity, nor will I spare anyone. “I will bring their conduct upon their heads” (verse 10).

God was completely just in pouring out this judgment.

PART #4 – God’s special man clothed in linen reports to God that he did what He commanded. 9:11

The special righteous man reported back and said it was done just as you commanded. He had marked those who would receive God’s protection so that they would be spared. But those without the mark would be judged.