

“GOD Has Left The Building!”

1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. Prayer for **Fire Victims**; those fighting the fires; **God’s help!**
- 1.2. **Share Kosovo Pic’s** -
- 1.3. **Sermon Intro: “Elvis has left the building!”** - It’s a phrase that was often used by announcers following Elvis Presley concerts to disperse audiences who lingered in hopes of an Elvis encore.
 - 1.3.1. It was **originally used** by promoter **Horace Lee Logan** on Dec.15 1956, to plead with concertgoers **not to leave a concert hall** to try to see Elvis as he left, and instead **remain to see the other acts on the bill**. The full quotation was "Please, young people... Elvis has left the building. He has gotten in his car and driven away.... Please take your seats."
 - 1.3.2. **Al Dvorin**, a concert announcer who traveled with Elvis throughout the performer's career, **made the phrase famous** when his voice was captured on many recordings of Elvis' performances.
- 1.4. We are amused at that phrase...**but** what happens when *God leaves the building... His building?* (read 8:6)
- 1.5. **Overview Chapters 8-11:**
 - 1.5.1. We’re in the middle of a **vision** God gave to Ezekiel of the defilement of the **Temple**(ch.8); **the destruction of the people**(ch.9); & the departure of **God’s Glory** from His house(ch.10,11).
- 1.6. **Ezekiel 9** describes the judgment from **God’s** vantage point.
 - 1.6.1. 2nd Kings 24,25 describe the judgment from the **human**, historical perspective, i.e. the Babylonian invasion...**but what was happening behind the scenes**.
- 1.7. Because of the **flagrant idolatry** in Jerusalem, God judged His City.

2. **GOD HAS LEFT THE BUILDING! (1-11)**

- 2.1. **MARKED BY GOD!** (1-4)
- 2.2. (1) **God Himself** summons the executioners to judge idolatrous Jerusalem.
 - 2.2.1. Some would feel more comfortable if He was “allowing” Satan to do this...but that’s not the case.
- 2.3. (2) **Angels** are frequently depicted as **men** in Scripture.
 - 2.3.1. **Angel** (Heb. *malak*) simply means messengers.
 - 2.3.2. God sends them on particular missions. **Sometimes to help & comfort**, other times to **judge**.

- 2.4. **This Angel** is understood to be *The Angel of the Lord*, the preincarnate Christ.
- 2.5. The **writer's inkhorn** (or writing kit/writing case) was literally, a case for the scribe
- 2.5.1. A Case for carrying **reed pens** with an inkhorn/inkwell attached.
- 2.5.2. It had a long narrow board w/grooves to hold the brush used for writing, & had hollowed-out areas to hold cakes of black and red ink.
- 2.6. **Who was spared?** Only those with a mark!
- 2.6.1. **Ask?** Where else in Scripture did God have believers **marked**?
- 2.6.1.1. Rev.7:1-3 (144,000 - **Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God**)
- 2.6.1.2. Ex.12:13 (Children of Israel in Egypt - **Blood on doorpost**)
- 2.6.1.3. Eph.4:30 **"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."**
- 2.7. **ALMOST ICHABOD** (3-7)
- 2.8. (4-7) **The one** was given orders to mark/seal/protect; **the other 6** were given orders to slaughter.
- 2.9. Since **true worship** had departed from the Temple, **the glory** of God was departing from the Temple.
- 2.10. So, the glory of God **moved** from the Holy of Holies, & began his departure stopping at the threshold. [Note movement: 10:18 to East Gate; 11:23 to mnt Olives]
- 2.11. **Without** the glory of God, the **Temple** was **just another building**.
Without the presence of God, **We** are **just like other people**.
- 2.11.1. What is it that **essentially** makes Christians **different** from other people? Isn't it the presence of God's glory?
- 2.11.2. **Read Ex.33:12-16.**
- 2.12. **Your choice: Ichabod or Ebenezer?** [Turn to - 1 Sam.4:21 & 7:12]
- 2.13. **Ichabod** (אִיכָבֹד) [no glory] – *"The glory of God has departed"*.
- 2.14. **Ebenezer** (אֶבְנֵי הַעֲזָרָה) [stone of help] – *"God is our helper"*.
- 2.14.1. It seems the extreme opposite of His glory **departing**(*Ichabod*) is when we recognize **His glory has been here**(*Ebenezer*)!
- 2.14.2. This memorial stone was set up by Samuel to commemorate the divine assistance to Israel in their great battle against the Philistines.
- 2.14.3. **God doesn't want to leave us; He wants to help us.**
- 2.14.3.1. If we turn to Him, He will help us.
- 2.14.3.2. **Leave** you, or **assist** you???
- 2.14.4. We should **retain memories** related to the Lord's **goodness** and **help** to our families. [set up family eben-ezers]

- 2.15. This rock became a “*war memorial*” - a reminder of Jehovah’s power in battle.
- 2.15.1. Your family needs **physical reminders** pointing to times when “the LORD hath helped you”? (maybe a least helping your kids to recognize...the help was from God)
- 2.15.1.1. So when fires consume your home & all your possessions, you still can look back & remember “**God is my helper!**”
- 2.15.2. Are you searching for ways to pass on to your children (or those in your sphere of influence) a **stability** which comes from **confidence** in God’s **providential care**?
- 2.15.3. Christian **Remember** God’s benefits (“forget not all His benefits” Ps.103:2); **Take** spiritual inventory (“the lord has done great things for us & we are glad” Ps.106:3); **Recognize** that God has always come to your rescue no matter how serious the crisis you’ve faced.
- 2.15.4. “Be sure if God sends you on **stony paths**, He will provide you with **strong shoes.**” (“or tough feet”, in the case of our Haitian caretaker Julio) [calluses]
- 2.16. **BEGIN AT MY SANCTUARY!** (6)
- 2.17. Judgment begins with his people.
- 2.17.1. 1 Pet.4:17 “For the time *has come* for judgment to **begin** at the **house of God**; and if *it begins with us first*, what will *be* the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?”
- 2.17.1.1. For greater **privileges** bring greater **responsibilities**.
- 2.17.1.2. Either **we** judge our sins, or **God** will judge them.
- 2.17.2. 1 Cor.11:31 “For if *we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.*”
- 2.17.2.1. Either **we** humble ourselves, or **God** will humble us.
- 2.18. (7) The bodies of the slain were strewn near the temple, causing further defilement.
- 2.19. **EZEKIEL’S PRAYER & RESPONSE!** (8-11)
- 2.20. (8) Ezekiel falls on his face & pleads with God.
- 2.21. (9) What was God’s answer to the prophet’s cry of distress? (9-11)
- 2.21.1. Very similar to response given to Jeremiah (15:1) “*Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me*(2 of Israel’s greatest intercessors), *My mind would not be favorable toward this people. Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth.*” ☹️
- 2.22. Because of the **flagrant idolatry** in Jerusalem, God had to judge His City.
- 2.23. **Story:** The soldier’s 1st **article of faith** is summed up nowhere more eloquently than in an 1865 letter from **William Sherman** to **U. S. Grant**: “I knew wherever I was that you **thought of me**, and if I got in a tight place **you would come**, if alive”
- 2.23.1. How much more can we trust our God!