

Ezekiel 9 – The Desolation Begins

By Holly Effiom

VV1-2

Is God calling out an order to Ezekiel?

Who appeared at God's command? Where did they come from?

Where is the "higher gate"?

What was each of the men holding in their hands? What was the one wearing linen holding?

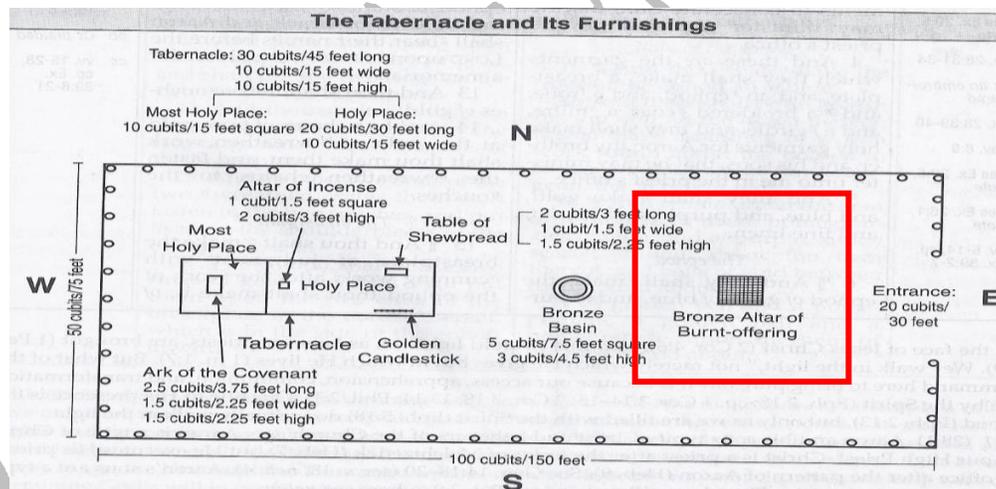
Where did this group stand? Is this significant?

Where was the brazen altar located in the temple? Ex 27.

Based upon our understanding of Rev 11:1-2, what might this section of scripture tell us about to whom Ezekiel's message is directed?

LESSON: It's only a few words but a lot of information is being conveyed in these first 2 verses: God is yelling orders to the hearing of Ezekiel but it wasn't directed toward Ezekiel. He was speaking to some men coming by way of the "higher gate" of whom we were not previously aware. One of the "men" we know was an angel or one of the pure because it's noted that he's wearing linen; furthermore, this one is not carrying a slaughter weapon, but rather had an inkhorn for writing by his side.

The mention of these standing beside the brazen altar lets us know that what's about to occur will *also* take place in the "outer court". The diagram below shows where the bronze altar was located in the Tabernacle.



VV3-4

From what did the glory of the God of Israel move away?

What/Who is a cherub? Where did we read about the cherubim before? Ex 25

What is the man with the inkhorn supposed to do?

Throughout what city will the man with the inkhorn travel?

Who's supposed to receive a mark? Does this sound familiar? Rev 7:2-8

Is this instruction comforting?

LESSON: It is comforting to know that God knows those who see and lament over the abominations being committed, refusing to take part in them. Not everyone has the wherewithal to stop or change people's behavior; but Ezekiel 3 makes it clear that it is incumbent upon all of us to do what? Give warning. Another point to remember, while this is the instruction to the man wearing linen, with the inkhorn, at the destruction of the temple, this same instruction will be given at the end as shown in Rev 7:2-8.

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I find it so interesting that the mercy seat is flanked on either side by cherubim (Ex 25:10-22), and that it is there that God said that He would meet with Moses and Aaron, seated above the ark that contained the Law/testimony/covenant. That mercy seat and ark of the covenant is the image of God's throne, and to think that He wanted His throne to reside here in the earth! Even more amazing is that in that action – His seat being based upon the Law – God submitted Himself to His own Law in His dealings with mankind!

So, the image of the mercy seat is being invoked in this first mention of the "cherub" in this chapter of Ezekiel. Why? Consider where the scene is taking place – the temple in Jerusalem prior to the final fall of Jerusalem. The ark of the covenant with the mercy seat is leaving the temple in Jerusalem, I-chabod! Remember, the ark of the testimony is not seen again until John sees it in Rev 11:19.

There's so much information conveyed in this section of Ezekiel. Most importantly, God is responding to the elders' dangerous message in Eze 8:12 – "The Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth" – in showing the ark of the covenant as a representation of a *living* and *moving* throne of God.

VV5-7

What was the instruction to the men with slaughter weapons? Ex 32:7-29

Where were the men directed to start their slaughter?

Who were the first to be killed?

LESSON: It always strikes me so powerfully that God instructed the destroyers to start at *His own sanctuary*. Ezekiel 8 shows clearly that there were people inside the temple committing abominations, thinking that God didn't see them. We all have to be very careful and vigilant over our souls. No one who commits abominations before God will escape unscathed in the end, old or young, and *starting* with those in position of leadership.

As God gave His instructions to the men with slaughter weapons, I was reminded of Moses' response upon returning to camp, from receiving the law, written by the "...finger of God", to discover the children of Israel naked, dancing around, and worshiping, a cow! They had only left Egypt a few weeks before, and they had already descended into idolatry. God even remarked on the quick regression in Ex 32:8.

VV8-11

What did Ezekiel ask God?

What was God's answer?

What did the man with the inkhorn report?

What do we learn from this section of scripture?

What do we learn about God's wrath?

What do we learn about to whom this message is directed?

What do we learn about the ark of the covenant and mercy seat, and the throne of God from this section of Ezekiel?

LESSON: In reading God's response to Ezekiel, we see the fact that Jerusalem had had its day (Eze 7:10-11) – iniquity (pride) had grown exceedingly into violence, which had grown into perverseness – espousing and teaching that there is no God – (*idolatry*). When you see these 3 things, be it Jerusalem's or that end-time Gentile nation, judgment is inevitable – God's day.