

Series: A New Heart: The Book of Ezekiel
Message: Behind Closed Doors | Ezekiel 8-11
Preparation: Read Ezekiel 12-13



Sermon Big Idea	Helpful Resources
When we give our allegiance to the wrong things, we move away from God — but God's final move is always toward His people.	The Bible Project Guide: Ezekiel 

Head: Grasping the Text

Goal: To grasp the theological concepts and historical context of the text.

1. Read the verses: Ezekiel 8:1–18; 9:3–9; 10:18–19; 11:14–23. Ezekiel 8 shows four scenes, each deeper inside the temple: the idol at the gate, the secret room, the women weeping for Tammuz, and the men worshiping the sun. Why do you think God showed Ezekiel these one at a time, moving inward, instead of just telling him what was wrong?
2. In 8:12 and 9:9, the elders say, "The LORD does not see us; the LORD has abandoned the land." What evidence made them believe that? How did that wrong belief (doctrine) about God lead to their behavior (practice)?
3. In chapter 9, God marks those who "sigh and groan" over sin (9:4), and judgment "begins at My sanctuary" (9:6). What do these two details show about God's justice? How does this connect with 1 Peter 4:17: "For the time has come for judgment to begin with God's household." What does that mean for us as the church today?"
4. The glory leaves in three stages: from the Most Holy Place to the threshold (10:4), to the east gate (10:19), and to the Mount of Olives (11:23). What does this slow departure say about God's heart? Read Matthew 23:37–24:3 and Luke 19:41. How does Jesus repeat this same scene?

Heart: Internal Transformation

Goal: Examine how the text reshapes our identity, affections, and motivations to bring about honest self-examination.

5. Israel didn't replace God. They supplemented Him by keeping Him in their "spiritual portfolio" while hedging their bets. Where are you most tempted to keep a backup plan in case God doesn't come through? Think of money, grades, career, relationships, comfort or approval, etc.
6. In 9:8, Ezekiel falls on his face and cries out for mercy. When you hear about sin or judgment, in the world or in your own life, what's your usual reaction: indifference, judging others, analyzing it, or grief? What would it look like for your heart to feel what God feels? What prevents you from desiring more to have God's view toward these areas?
7. The people in Jerusalem thought they were "in" and the exiles were "out" (11:15), but God said, "I have been a sanctuary for them" (11:16). It's easy to treat our circumstances as a scorecard for whether God is with us. Have you ever felt that God had moved on without you, or quietly assumed that about someone else? How does Jesus, who took on the ultimate exile for us, change that story?

Hands: Living it Out

Goal: To move from hearing the Word to living it out as a disciple with specific, practical, and achievable steps for the coming week.

8. Ezekiel stood in the gap for his people. Pick one person, situation or part of our community (Poway, San Diego, your school or workplace) and commit to praying for it every day this week. Share it with the group so someone can follow up.
9. The church can slip into the same two-tier thinking as Jerusalem. Who in your life might feel "outside" of God's favor right now — such as going through a divorce, job loss, illness, quiet suffering, etc? What's one concrete way you can show them this week by encouraging them that God sees them and hasn't left?