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** (יִכָּבֹד) [no glory] – “The glory of God has **departed**”.

2.14. **Ebenezer** (אֶבֶן לֵאָזֶר) [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!