

Executive Summary

Ezekiel 9 serves as a pivotal record of divine judgment against the tribe of Judah and the city of Jerusalem. The narrative establishes a clear distinction between two groups: those who "sigh and groan" over the abominations of the city—who are subsequently marked for protection—and those who participate in idolatry, who are marked for "utter" destruction.

- **The Mobility of God’s Glory:** The physical presence of God moves from the cherub in the inner court to the threshold of the Temple, signaling a shift toward judgment.
- **Selective Preservation:** A specific "mark" (*tāv*) is placed on the foreheads of the faithful to ensure they are spared from the coming slaughter.
- **Extensive Destruction:** Divine "visitors" are commanded to slay all individuals without the mark, regardless of age or gender, beginning at the sanctuary.
- **Justification of Wrath:** The severity of the punishment is justified by the "very, very great" iniquity of Israel and Judah, characterized by perversion and the arrogant belief that God has forsaken the land.

I. The Transition of the Divine Presence

The Word of the LORD presents Ezekiel with specific details concerning the "greater abominations" occurring within the sacred precincts of the Temple in Jerusalem. These acts are categorized by their location, the participants, and the nature of the false deities involved.

II. The Marking of the Remnant

Before the execution of judgment, a process of "delineation" occurs. God commands the man clothed in linen, who carries a writing case at his loins, to pass through Jerusalem and mark a specific subset of the population.

Identification of the Faithful

The individuals to be spared are identified by their emotional and spiritual state regarding the city's corruption.

Term	Hebrew Word	Occurrence in Ezekiel	Definition/Significance
Mark	<i>tāv</i> (טָו)	2 times	To mark, set, or delineate.
Sigh	<i>’ānaḥ</i> (אָנָח)	4 times	Written in the Niphal stem (passive); denotes a state of "moaning."
Groan	<i>’ānaq</i> (אָנָק)	3 times	Written in the Niphal stem (passive); denotes "to cry" or "lament."

Grammatical Note: In the Hebrew text, these terms operate as "articular participles," which function to define the identity or status of the person. This group is identified as "the sighing ones and the groaning ones"—those who are in a state of grief over the abominations committed in Jerusalem.

III. The Execution of Universal Judgment

Following the marking process, God commands the "visitors"—six men equipped with "striking instruments"—to proceed with the destruction of those without the mark.

Parameters of Destruction

The command for slaughter is absolute and lacks compassion. The visitors are instructed to "utterly slay" the population, starting from the sanctuary itself. This instruction resulted in the defilement of the Temple, as the courts were filled with the slain.

- **Utterly (*mašhīt*):** While technically a noun meaning "ruin" or "destruction," it is used here as an adverb to underscore the intensity and extensiveness of the activity.
- **Demographics Targeted:** The command explicitly includes old men, young men, maidens (virgins or young women not yet betrothed), little children, and women.
- **Linguistic Insight on Children:** The word for little children (*ṭāṭ*) is derived from a root meaning "short steps," describing the unnatural walking of toddlers just beginning to walk.

The Book of Ezekiel

Lesson 16-Chapter Nine (Ezekiel 9:1-11)

IV. Ezekiel's Intercession and Divine Justification

As the slaughter began, Ezekiel found himself alone and "fell on his face," crying out in grief. He questioned if God intended to destroy the entire "remnant" ('š'ērîṭ)—those left behind—by pouring out His wrath on Jerusalem.

The Magnitude of Iniquity

The Word of the LORD justifies the carnage by citing the extreme depravity of the house of Israel and Judah.

1. **Iniquity:** Described as "very, very great" (*mehode, mehode*).
2. **Environmental Corruption:** The land is described as "filled with blood" and the city as "full of perversion."

The Arrogance of the People

A primary factor in the judgment was the stated belief of the people: "*The LORD has forsaken the land, and the LORD does not see.*" God identifies this as a statement of arrogance rather than an appeal for help.

God's response clarifies two points of reality:

1. He has **not** left; He observes all their activity.
2. He will bring their conduct "upon their heads," enacting a judgment that mirrors their own violence toward one another.

Conclusion: Movement of the Divine Glory

The vision concludes with the return of the man clothed in linen. Having completed his task of marking the faithful, he reports back to God: "*I have done just as You have commanded me.*" This confirms that while the destruction was extensive and horrific, it was also precise, sparing those whom God had identified as faithful. The judgment serves as a definitive act to show the people "that I am the LORD."