

The LORD Is There

Session 9. The Delight of Your Eyes

The city fell exactly as the word said, the prophet's silent grief carried God's own, and the mouth that could only warn was opened for hope.

What We Found

We reached the hinge of the whole book. In chapter 24, God had Ezekiel write down the exact date the siege of Jerusalem began, seven hundred miles away, so that when the news finally arrived, everyone could check that God had spoken before the event. That same week Ezekiel lost his wife, the delight of his eyes, and his silent, restrained grief became a sign of a loss too great for mourning: the people were about to lose the delight of their eyes, the sanctuary itself. We did not pretend this chapter is easy. We found that Ezekiel's grief is Scripture's window onto God's own grief over his house, and that the answer finally big enough for it is the God who, in Christ, entered human suffering and death himself.

In chapter 33 the watchman charge from session 3 was renewed, and God swore by his own life that he takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, pleading turn back, turn back. Then, in 33:22, God opened Ezekiel's mouth the evening before the fugitive reached him with the news that the city had fallen; the long muteness ended: the opened mouth we have been tracking since session 3 was finally opened, because the message is about to change. And the chapter ended with a warning aimed straight at people like us: crowds who loved hearing the prophet like a beautiful song, were genuinely moved, and did nothing. Being stirred is not the same as being changed.

Voices of the Church

St. Gregory the Great, d. 604

Preaching on this very watchman charge, St. Gregory teaches in substance that the watchman is stationed on a height so that he can see trouble coming from far off, and that anyone who accepts the office of speaking for God must therefore live on the heights, above the life he is calling others to leave. And then, remarkably, the pope confesses his own poverty: he fears that his tongue announces what his life does not match, and he asks his hearers to pray for him.

Homilies on Ezekiel, Book 1, Homily 11. Summary of his teaching, not a direct quotation.

For the group. The most credible watchman is the one honest enough to admit the gap between what they say and how they live, and to keep speaking anyway while asking for prayers.

St. Ambrose, d. 397

When his beloved brother Satyrus died, St. Ambrose grieved openly and wrote about it. He teaches in substance that tears are not a failure of faith and that a Christian is not forbidden to weep for the dead; what transforms Christian grief is not the suppression of sorrow but the hope of resurrection, which lets love and loss and confidence in God live in the same heart at the same time.

On the Death of His Brother Satyrus. Summary of his teaching, not a direct quotation.

For the group. Ezekiel's commanded silence was a unique prophetic sign, not a rule for us. The Church's true norm for grief is Ambrose's: weep, and hope, together.

St. John Chrysostom, d. 407

St. John Chrysostom rebuked congregations that treated preaching as a performance to be applauded, telling them that what he wanted was not their noise but their changed lives. The rebuke is a recurring theme of his preaching; no single homily is claimed here.

Homilies on the Acts of the Apostles, locus not pinned. Summary of his teaching, not a direct quotation.

For the group. The question is never whether the session was moving; it is whether Tuesday looked different because of it.

Live It This Week

Practices

1. Turn one hearing into one doing within 48 hours: pick a single concrete thing tonight's session pointed at, a conversation you have been avoiding, an apology, an act of generosity, and do it before the week is half over.
2. Pray for someone who has lost the delight of their eyes. Name one person you know who is grieving, and this week send them a message, visit them, or have a Mass offered for their intention.
3. Each morning this week, pray the sense of Ezekiel 33:11 back to God in your own words: you take no pleasure in my death; today I turn back to you.
4. Memorize the verse below and let its double plea, turn back, turn back, be the words you reach for when you fail this week.

Scripture Memory

Ezekiel 33:11 (excerpt)

"... As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?"

Ezekiel 33:11 (excerpt)

Go Further in the Catechism

- **CCC 1037.** God predestines no one to hell; he desires that all turn and live
- **CCC 1428.** conversion is an uninterrupted task for the whole Church
- **CCC 1431.** interior repentance is a radical turning of the whole heart back to God
- **CCC 2611.** the prayer of faith means disposing the heart to do the Father's will, not only saying Lord, Lord

Before next session. Read Ezekiel 28:1-19 before we meet again, and skim chapters 25 to 27 if you can.