

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Book of Ezekiel*

*Message 13*

*November 22, 2015*



The Awakening of Adonis with Tammuz and Ishtar and Venus by John William Waterhouse Cir 1900

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

# Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Ezekiel

Message Thirteen

The Wicked Jewish Religious Leaders

November 22, 2015

Daniel E. Woodhead

WICKED ABOMINATION IN THE TEMPLE

Ezekiel 8:1-15

<sup>1</sup>And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord Jehovah fell there upon me. <sup>2</sup>Then I beheld, and, lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire; from the appearance of his loins and downward, fire; and from his loins and upward, as the appearance of brightness, as it were glowing metal. <sup>3</sup>And he put forth the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head; and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the gate of the inner court that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy. <sup>4</sup>And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the appearance that I saw in the plain.

<sup>5</sup>Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold, northward of the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. <sup>6</sup>And he said unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel do commit here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? But thou shalt again see yet other great abominations.

<sup>7</sup>And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold, a hole in the wall. <sup>8</sup>Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold, a door. <sup>9</sup>And he said unto me, Go in, and see the wicked abominations that they do here. <sup>10</sup>So I went in and saw; and behold, every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about. <sup>11</sup>And there stood before them seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel; and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, every man with his censer in his hand; and the odor of the cloud of incense went up. <sup>12</sup>Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in his chambers of imagery? for they say, Jehovah seeth us not; Jehovah hath forsaken the land. <sup>13</sup>He said also unto me, Thou shalt again see yet other great abominations which they do.

<sup>14</sup>Then he brought me to the door of the gate of Jehovah's house which was toward the north; and behold, there sat the women weeping for Tammuz.

<sup>15</sup>*Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? thou shalt again see yet greater abominations than these (ASV, 1901).*

## THE LORD VISITS EZEKIEL

### Ezekiel 8:1-2

<sup>1</sup>*And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in my house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord Jehovah fell there upon me. <sup>2</sup>Then I beheld, and, lo, a likeness as the appearance of fire; from the appearance of his loins and downward, fire; and from his loins and upward, as the appearance of brightness, as it were glowing metal (ASV, 1901).*

As Ezekiel relates the events speaking in the first person he says that on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 592 B.C., which was more than a year after he had received his call into the prophetic ministry, God visited him again with a new series of visions. Ezekiel was at home in Tel-abib and elders of Judah, who were the leaders of the community in exile, were with him. They frequently met with Ezekiel regarding the affairs of the nation Israel and events transgressing back in Jerusalem. With this new set of visions we see a new section of the book. The visions in chapters three – seven spoke directly against Judah and Israel. In this section from chapter eight to eleven God directs His attention toward Jerusalem and the remnant under King Zedekiah. Those with Ezekiel might have been looking forward to an early release from captivity and a return to Jerusalem. Now they are told that the people in Jerusalem both king and Temple magistrates have grievously persisted in their sins. In fact the religious leaders were committing worse sins than Ezekiel had ever imagined before. God will supernaturally transport Ezekiel's spirit with Him to Jerusalem to witness the actual abominations being carried out by those responsible for connecting the people to their God. They had become wicked and were leading the people astray away from God. Israel's major spiritual decline began with the construction of temples to pagan gods on the sacred temple mount area during Solomon's reign. Solomon married many pagan wives and allowed each who wished to do so to build a temple and altar to her god (I Kings 11:1–8). This spiritual deterioration led to a resurrection of Baal worship (I Kings 16:31–34; 17:1–17) and resulted in the division of the nation into northern and southern kingdoms at the death of Solomon (1 Kings 11:41–12:33). When the leader of a country endorses paganism it flourishes.

Ezekiel is suddenly spiritized or led into a supernatural spiritual state by the Lord God of the universe. This is a reappearance of the same vision relative to the Shekinah Glory he saw in chapter one verses 26-28. Only he saw these vivid visions. The elders did not see them but Ezekiel would later relate the experience to them (11:24b).

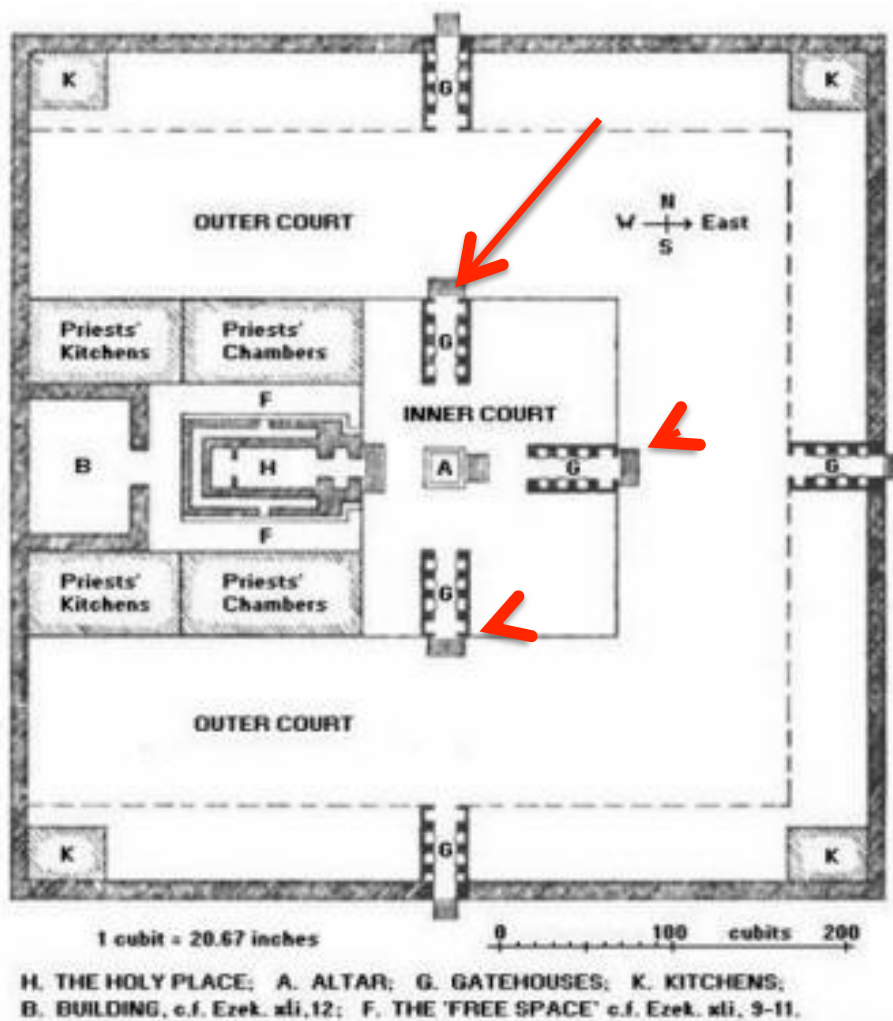
He had the appearance of a man. The Hebrew text designates the color of the fire and the metal like object as *chashmal* (great purity and clarity). The chashmal seems to be divided at the waist of God on His Throne. Fire seems to begin at the waist and extend upward and downward in both directions simultaneously. The brightness he saw extended all around Him. Daniel and John had a similar visions and experiences (Daniel 10:5-6; Revelation 1:13-15).

## EZEKIEL IS TAKEN

### Ezekiel 8:3-4

<sup>3</sup>And he put forth the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head; and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the gate of the inner court that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy. <sup>4</sup>And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the appearance that I saw in the plain (ASV, 1901).

Jehovah then took Ezekiel as it were by the hair indicating a strong urgent desire by God. He wanted to get Ezekiel's attention and to impart the seriousness of the events He wanted Ezekiel to witness. God spiritually lifted him to a sense of spiritualization (*between earth and heaven*) wherein he was fully conscious and aware but seeing Jerusalem. This same transportation will be recorded in the fortieth chapter when God carries him again to Jerusalem to see the details of the Messianic Temple. It will be a much more positive experience.



Ezekiel is taken to the door of the North Gate of the inner court where the leaders of Israel had set up an image, to provoke God to jealousy. The north gate was one of three gates that opened from the outer court to the inner court. The other two were located on the east and south sides. Since Ezekiel was at the “entrance” to the north gate, he was probably positioned in the outer court looking south toward the inner court. This is where he was in the presence of the Lord God of Israel who would give him a tour of the abominations of the Temple leaders of Israel. The leaders of Israel provoked God to jealousy intentionally, which caused pain to the Lord because they wanted to test Him. Knowing He is a jealous God from their scriptures they also knew the outcome of such provocations. They were led by the evil one Satan and could not fully comprehend the finality or certainty of the outcome of such abdominal behavior. Since there was temporal ecstasy associated with idol worship such as sexual experiences they were deceived into thinking that God would not see them. This is the level of deception that Satan is able to bring on one who is not steeped in continual connection with God. Satan creeps in and leads one away from the truth with doubt.

Exodus 20:4-5

*<sup>4</sup>Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: <sup>5</sup>thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them; for I Jehovah thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation of them that hate me (ASV, 1901).*

This is an idol of Babylonian origin, which Isaiah describes as the “*Customs from the east*”

Isaiah 2:5-8

*<sup>5</sup>O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of Jehovah. <sup>6</sup>For thou hast forsaken thy people the house of Jacob, because they are filled with customs from the east, and are soothsayers like the Philistines, and they strike hands with the children of foreigners. <sup>7</sup>And their land is full of silver and gold, neither is there any end of their treasures; their land also is full of horses, neither is there any end of their chariots. <sup>8</sup>Their land also is full of idols; they worship the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made (ASV, 1901).*

EZEKIEL SEES THE IMAGE

Ezekiel 8:5-6

*<sup>5</sup>Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold, northward of the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. <sup>6</sup>And he said unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel do commit here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? But thou shalt again see yet other great abominations (ASV, 1901).*



God now directs Ezekiel’s attention to the gate, which opens to the north where he sees the *image of jealousy in the entry*. God tells Ezekiel to look at *what they do*, not just the image that they had set up. God sees everything but the elders did not think God in their satanic deception would see what they were doing (v. 12). While his body remained in Babylon Ezekiel’s very lucid spirit saw the first of four forms of apostate worship. This image of jealousy was not given a physical description but was positioned at the north gate to the inner court. Hezekiah’s evil son Manasseh set up an idol as described in II Kings 21:7 & II Chronicles 33:7, 15 (cir. 650 B.C.). Prior to him idol worship was carried out in secret as the Jews married into the Canaanite families. But with Manasseh it was carried out in the open flagrantly. Approximately twelve years later good king Josiah purged Judah and Jerusalem of these things upon notification of the righteous scribe Shaphan who read the Law of Moses to Josiah (II Chronicles 34). After Josiah died in battle the evil idolaters reversed his reforms (II Chronicles 36:5, 9; Jeremiah 3:10). This is probably the idol restored after Josiah’s death. There was a history of setting up unlawful images and altars in the temple precincts under various circumstances (II Kings. 16:10–16; 21:4–7, etc.). This was probably some type votive altar and image of Asherah, “the queen of heaven.” This was a cult, which was widespread in Jerusalem at that time and associated with Babylonian occultic worship (Jeremiah 7:17–18).

JUDAH	
Years (BC)	King
931 - 914	Rehoboam
914 - 911	Abijah
911 - 870	Asa
870 - 845	Jehoshaphat
853 - 842	Jehoram
842 - 841	Ahaziah
841 - 835	Athaliah
835 - 795	Joash
796 - 767	Amaziah
789 - 737	Azariah
737 - 721	Jotham
730 - 715	Ahaz
715 - 686	Hezekiah
697 - 642	Manasseh
642 - 640	Amon
640 - 609	Josiah
609 - 609	Jehoahaz
609 - 598	Jehoiakim
608 - 598	Jehoiachin
598 - 587	Zedekiah



They had turned so far away from God and were so flagrant with it that we can see that their hearts had gotten away from God because they erected the image of jealousy in open sight at the very gate through which men approached God. What caused God the most anger and pain was the beast worship they carried out as He said, “*seest thou what they do?*” There was certainly a sexually immoral component to this beast worship because they had to derive some ecstatic pleasure from this to continue doing it. It is sick and forbidden in the Bible (Leviticus 18:6-29). God is saying that what they do here is

designed to cause Him to *go far off from my sanctuary*. They wanted God and His moral order of the Universe to leave them alone so they could conduct their abdominal behavior without any reminder that what they were doing was wrong. God ends this section of scripture by saying to Ezekiel, “*But thou shalt again see yet other great abominations.*”

#### GOD TAKES EZEKIEL TO THE INNER COURT NORTH DOOR

Ezekiel 8:7-13

*<sup>7</sup>And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold, a hole in the wall. <sup>8</sup>Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold, a door. <sup>9</sup>And he said unto me, Go in, and see the wicked abominations that they do here. <sup>10</sup>So I went in and saw; and behold, every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about. <sup>11</sup>And there stood before them seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel; and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, every man with his censer in his hand; and the odor of the cloud of incense went up. <sup>12</sup>Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the elders of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in his chambers of imagery? for they say, Jehovah seeth us not; Jehovah hath forsaken the land. <sup>13</sup>He said also unto me, Thou shalt again see yet other great abominations, which they do (ASV, 1901).*

Now Ezekiel sees the door to the court and is told to dig in the wall to see a concealed door. He then is commanded to go in to the inner court where he sees the despicable practices that the Jewish religious leaders are performing even more so than outside the door. This was a pantheon of idolatry. He saw beasts being worshipped. There were pictures on the walls of all sorts of reptiles and other abdominal beasts as well as the idols of the people of Israel. He also saw the seventy elders worshipping these images with incense censers in their hands. This was probably the worshipping of the animal cults of Egypt (Romans 1:23). Jaazaniah, the son of Shaphan, is singled out for mention. Shaphan was the scribe, who received from the high priest, Hilkiah, the book of the law, and who read it before King Josiah (II Kings 22:8–11; Jeremiah 39:14). The son of this God-fearing man was the leader of the animal-worshippers. It was an evidence of the great apostasy, which had engulfed the nation. And these depraved men said: “*Jehovah seeth us not; Jehovah hath forsaken the land.*” They denied His omniscience and omnipresence. The apostasy in Christianity is going the same way. God again concluded this section of scripture saying, “*Thou shalt again see yet other great abominations which they do.*” There is much more to come.

#### WORSHIPPING TAMMUZ

Ezekiel 8:14-15

*<sup>14</sup>Then he brought me to the door of the gate of Jehovah’s house, which was toward the north; and behold, there sat the women weeping for Tammuz. <sup>15</sup>Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? thou shalt again see yet greater abominations than these (ASV, 1901).*

Ezekiel saw women weeping for Tammuz originally a Babylonian cultic figure.

In Genesis chapter ten is an introduction to a man named Nimrod. He was the sixth son born of Cush. His name in Hebrew means to rebel. He was the founder of Babylon and Assyria. He is mentioned in I Chronicles 1: 10, Micah 5: 6 and in Genesis 10: 8b-9. The Hebrew text states that he was a mighty hunter before (Hebrew against) the Lord. This is indicative of his antagonism and opposition to God. He was wicked and made the whole world rebel through the building of the Tower of Babel. He was the first to establish kingdoms. This happened in two stages. The *first* is in Shinar, which included Babel, Erech, Accad and Calneh. The second kingdom is Assyria called the land of Nimrod in Micah 5: 6. After the language was separated in confused by God it drove him to Assyria from Babylon. The two have been intertwined since then.

#### THE CULTIC BACKGROUND

Tradition suggests that Nimrod died a violent death. One tradition says that a wild animal killed him. Another says that Shem killed him because he had led the people into the worship of Baal.

According to ancient Egyptian and Babylonian traditions, his mother was Semiramis; sometimes Semiramis is referred to as the mother of Nimrod, and sometimes as his wife, leading to the belief that Nimrod married his mother. Also according to these traditions, Semiramis, who rose to greatness as the "Queen of Heaven" because of her son, was presented with a difficulty when her son died, so instead she pronounced him to be a god, so that she herself would become a goddess.

Even though Semiramis claimed to be a virgin she had another son, named Tammuz, whom she said was the reincarnation of Nimrod. She became known as the "Virgin Mother", "Holy Mother" and the "Queen of Heaven" and was symbolized by the Moon (Symbol of Islam). So began the worship of Semiramis and the child-god, and the whole paraphernalia of the Babylonian religious system.

From various ancient sources, it seems that Nimrod's wife/mother; Semiramis was high priestess of the Babel religion and the founder of all mystery religions as well as goddess. After the tower was destroyed, the languages confused and the people scattered she was worshiped as a goddess under many different names. She became Ishtar of Syria, Astarte of Phoenicia, Isis of Egypt, Aphrodite of Greece, and Venus of Rome—in each case the deity of sexual love and fertility. Her son Tammuz also came to be deified under various names and was the consort of Ishtar and god of the underworld.

According to the cult of Ishtar, Tammuz was conceived by a sunbeam, a counterfeit version of Jesus' virgin birth. Tammuz corresponded to Baal in Phoenicia, Osiris in Egypt, Eros in Greece, and Cupid in Rome. In every case, the worship of those gods and goddesses was associated with sexual immorality. The celebration of Lent, which has no basis in Scripture, but rather developed from the pagan celebration of Semiramis' mourning for forty days over the death of Tammuz (Ezekiel 8:14) before his alleged resurrection. This is another of Satan's mythical counterfeits.

After the decline of Babylon, their priests fled to Egypt and transported their religion with them. There the people worshipped Isis and her son Osiris (otherwise known as Horus).



The same mother and child deities appeared in Greece as Ceres, the Great Mother, with the babe at her breast, or as Irene, the goddess of Peace, with the boy Plutus in her arms and in Pagan Rome as Fortuna and Jupiter. Other cultures embraced this concept such as Cyprian and Indian. This is the classic mother child worship we see in the contemporary Roman church too. God again ends this section of scripture by saying to Ezekiel, *“But thou shalt again see yet other great abominations.”* He is saying to Ezekiel, “there is more evil to come.” In all of these mother child cults the child never grows to adulthood. This is true of the Madonna and Child, which became Mariolatry in the Middle Ages.



Indian  
Devaki



Babylonian



Indian  
Crishna



Hindu



Indian



Cyprus



Egyptian

NEXT MESSAGE: WICKED ABOMINATIONS CONTINUE IN THE TEMPLE  
**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**  
 E-mail [info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com](mailto:info@pentwaterbiblechurch.com) Toll Free 877-706-2479