

# Pentwater Bible Church

*Book of Ezekiel*

*Message 14*

*November 29, 2015*



Adoration of the golden calf by Andrea di Lione , Cir 1626-1629

Daniel E. Woodhead – Pastor Teacher

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The Book of Ezekiel

Message Fourteen

Wickedness and Anointing

November 29, 2015

Daniel E. Woodhead

Ezekiel 8:16-9:6

<sup>16</sup>And he brought me into the inner court of Jehovah's house; and behold, at the door of the temple of Jehovah, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of Jehovah, and their faces toward the east; and they were worshipping the sun toward the east. <sup>17</sup>Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have turned again to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. <sup>18</sup>Therefore will I also deal in wrath; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.

**9** Then he cried in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause ye them that have charge over the city to draw near, every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. <sup>2</sup>And behold, six men came from the way of the upper gate, which lieth toward the north, every man with his slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man in the midst of them clothed in linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side. And they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar.

<sup>3</sup>And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon it was, to the threshold of the house: and he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writer's inkhorn by his side. <sup>4</sup>And Jehovah said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry over all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof. <sup>5</sup>And to the others he said in my hearing, Go ye through the city after him, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity; <sup>6</sup>slay utterly the old man, the young man and the virgin, and little children and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark: and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the old men that were before the house (ASV, 1901).

WORSHIPPING THE SUN

Ezekiel 8:16

<sup>16</sup>And he brought me into the inner court of Jehovah's house; and behold, at the door of the temple of Jehovah, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of Jehovah, and

*their faces toward the east; and they were worshipping the sun toward the east (ASV, 1901).*

Jehovah God leads Ezekiel to the inner court of the Temple to witness more abominations of the Jewish Religious Leaders. These corruptions were the worst Ezekiel saw.

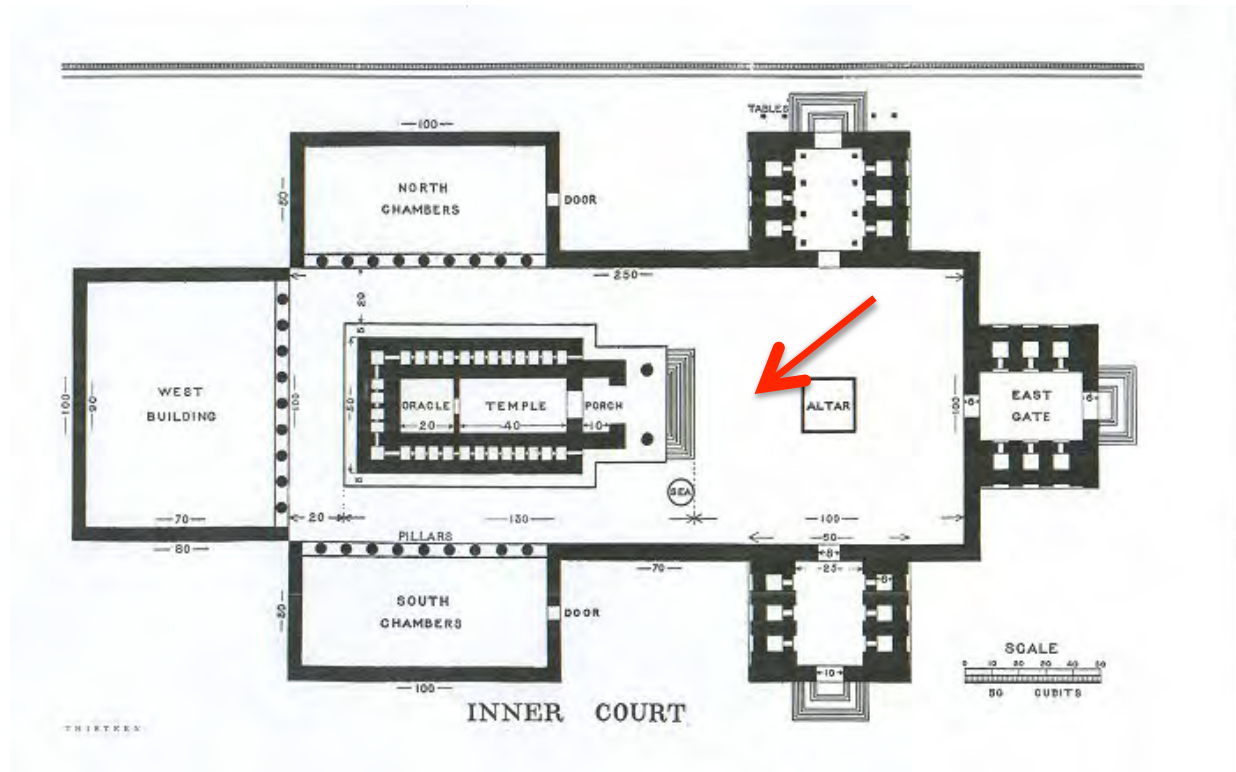


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These men were probably twenty-four priests located between the covered entrance and the altar with their backs to the Temple and their faces toward the sun. They were worshipping the sun. From their days in Egypt sun worship was occurring in Israel. Moses warned of this (Deuteronomy 4:19). In attempting to avoid this, the Lord established the position of the sanctuary in such way so the entrance was facing west. In this configuration those entering the Sanctuary would be facing the Holy of Holies with their back to the sun in the east. These twenty-five men had defied the Lord, faced the east, and bowed down to it in obeisance. In this way they were showing their contempt for the Temple of the God and Him as well. Some Jewish interpreters see this act of defiance toward God carried out by the twenty-five defecating toward the Temple in obscene insolence as they bent over. They had uncovered themselves and evacuated downwards toward the Temple.<sup>1</sup> The Jewish interpreters translate the Hebrew word *meeshtachvtem* as bowing down *destructively* not worshipping. The sense of defiance toward God is apparent which is why this particular abomination is the worst one of the four in chapter eight. The downward slide is clear for Israel. They had descended into idol worship with its attendant sexual immorality and defiance to God. The New Testament letter of I John writes to the Church *My little children, guard yourselves from idols* (I John 5:21). This

<sup>1</sup> Eisemann Rabbi Moshe, Sherman Rabbi Nosson, *Yechezkel Translation and Commentary*, Published by Mesorah Publications Ltd. Brooklyn, NY 1977 pg.167

makes it apparent that it can happen to us if we do not heed the Word of God and be ensnared by the things of this world. Many churches have fallen victim to this as they move away from the Word of God and promote worldly practices. Consider the quote from Kent Dobson, pastor of Mars Hill Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan upon resigning.

"I have always been and I'm still drawn to the very edges of religion and faith and God," Dobson said. "I've said a few times that I don't even know if we know what we mean by God anymore. That's the edges of faith. That's the thing that pulls me. I'm not really drawn to the center. I'm not drawn to the orthodox or the mainstream or the status quo."<sup>2</sup>

## THE BRANCH TO THE NOSE

### Ezekiel 8:17-18

*<sup>17</sup>Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations, which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have turned again to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. <sup>18</sup>Therefore will I also deal in wrath; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them (ASV, 1901).*

God is now telling Ezekiel that the people (house of) of Judah consider their abominations to be very trivial as it there is no moral order to the Universe or responsibility to God. This of course is very foul to the Lord. He has expressed His indignation elsewhere in the Bible.

### Deuteronomy 4:19

*<sup>19</sup>and lest thou lift up thine eyes unto heaven, and when thou seest the sun and the moon and the stars, even all the host of heaven, thou be drawn away and worship them, and serve them, which Jehovah thy God hath allotted unto all the peoples under the whole heaven (ASV, 1901).*

The end result of paganism or allegiance to Satan is the institution of violence toward one another. When God is defied and abused and even denied there is no reason to maintain the moral order He created. This vacuum of leaving God is always filled with violence. Before the Flood God said that the world had turned away from Him and He only found eight people out of several billion who would follow Him. The result of this apostasy was the promulgation of violence.

### Genesis 6:11-12

*<sup>11</sup>And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. <sup>12</sup>And God saw the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth (ASV, 1901).*

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2015/11/rob\\_bells\\_successor\\_at\\_mars\\_hi.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2015/11/rob_bells_successor_at_mars_hi.html)

It is clear that today there is a major movement away from trusting the Word of God as authoritative in people's lives. It began in earnest with the Documentary Hypothesis of Julius Wellhausen the German theologian (cir. 1870). This theory denied the Mosaic authorship of the first five books of the Bible. It spread to America and polluted the eastern seminaries and therefore the mainline Christian denominations.

Wellhausen insisted that human reason only, not the Bible, could be trusted. He presented the idea that the Bible, far from being God's Word was just a collection of human documents. Dr. David Breese in his book, "The Seven Men Who Rule the World from the Grave" states that:

"From these destructive heresies the church leaders quoted everything but the Bible and preached everything but the gospel, and reality was gone. Religious liberalism was born." Breese continues:

"The calamities that came upon Europe such as Communism, Nazism, fascism, the world of the occult and other *diseased ideas* have been promulgated by the absence of a spiritual core made of divine life and spiritual blessing. Wellhausen and his liberalism destroyed the spiritual life in Europe and nearly succeeded in the spiritual destruction of the United States." Today less than 1% of the population of Europe is made up of Evangelical Christians."<sup>3</sup>

Lest you think that men are not able to negatively influence others to keep them out of The Kingdom listen to what the Lord Jesus had to say to the Pharisees:

*Matthew 23:13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in [yourselves], neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in (KJV).*

Liberalism is like a plague within the church. It exists within us and seeks to be like us but it denies the fundamentals of the faith. Liberals still want real Christians to think of them as "one of us." They espouse a set of diseased ideas.

The twenty-five men defying God in the Temple are now seen as raising *the branch to their nose*. There are many interpretations of this obscure passage. The Jewish commentators found it to be a wicked and revolting rite accompanying the turning toward the sun and bending over to defecate toward God's Temple. This act was seen by them as a way to keep the odor of their stool from entering their noses. Others think that they are simply referencing God's reaction to their gross idolatry by "putting the stench to My nose," that is, idolatry is a putrid, offensive smell to God. Since there are many views on this passage it is difficult to be dogmatic about it. What is clear is that it was an act of defiance to God and His rule and authority over the lives of the Jewish Temple officials and He was completely offended by it. God now tells Ezekiel that He will no longer put up with the Jews since they have rebelled to the point of no return. Only physical persecution on a grand scale would bring them back to Him. Any last minute effort if it

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<sup>3</sup> Breese, Dr. David, *Seven Men Who Rule The World From The Grave*, Moody Press, Chicago, IL 1990. Pg. 102.

were genuine would not stop the destruction of Jerusalem. He also told this to Isaiah one hundred fifty years earlier.

Isaiah 1:15

*<sup>15</sup>And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood (ASV, 1901).*

THE DESTROYERS

Ezekiel 9:1-2

*<sup>1</sup> Then he cried in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause ye them that have charge over the city to draw near, every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. <sup>2</sup>And behold, six men came from the way of the upper gate, which lieth toward the north, every man with his slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man in the midst of them clothed in linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side. And they went in, and stood beside the brazen altar (ASV, 1901).*

God then audibly in a loud voice said directly in his ears, “Cause ye them that have charge over the city to draw near, every man with his destroying weapon in his hand.” These are like the seven celestial beings that stand before God (Revelation 8:2) to do His destructive will. During the Tribulation they will sound the Trumpets opening the second set of judgments on the world to rid it of sin and sinful practices. These angels are prepared to execute judgment upon Jerusalem in that each is fitted with a *destroying weapon in his hand*. Since seven is the number signifying completeness in the Bible their actions would result in complete destruction. They entered the Temple compound by way of the upper gate which was built by Jotham (II Kings 15:35). It was also called the upper Benjamin gate (Jeremiah 20:2) or the new gate (Jeremiah 26:10; 36:10). This gate was toward the north, which is the direction the Babylonian invaders will come. The six had some sort of slaughter weapon like a battle-axe (Jeremiah 51:20) or mace with them. The sixth one was entirely different from the first group. He was dressed in a linen gown and he had a *writer's inkhorn by his side*. The inkhorn was a writer's kit usually was made from an animal horn. It had a palette with a slot for pens and a hollow place for two kinds of ink, usually black and red. Professional scribes usually carried this kind of equipment. All seven of them went to their position next to the brazen altar. They were prepared to execute judgment at God's command.

THE COMMAND TO ANOINT AND DESTROY

Ezekiel 9:3-6

*<sup>3</sup>And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon it was, to the threshold of the house: and he called to the man clothed in linen, who had the writer's inkhorn by his side. <sup>4</sup>And Jehovah said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry over all the abominations that are done in the midst thereof. <sup>5</sup>And to the others he said in my hearing, Go ye through the city after him, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither*

*have ye pity; <sup>6</sup>slay utterly the old man, the young man and the virgin, and little children and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark: and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the old men that were before the house (ASV, 1901).*

This is the first description of the God of Israel leaving the Temple. The cherubim lift Him up to the threshold of the Temple. This vision will be more completely defined in chapter ten. God was guiding Ezekiel in the vision in the inner courtyard now He is seated on the cherubim in the Holy of Holies on His fiery chariot throne.

Just before the executions were carried out, the messenger in white linen was instructed to go through the city and *set a mark* on the forehead of those who “*sigh and that cry*” over the detestable things done in front of them by the religious authorities and those of the population that follow them. The “*mark*” of God distinguished the righteous from the guilty. There was special significance to the “*mark*” used for this purpose. The word “*mark*” is the Hebrew word *tav*, which is the name of the last letter in the Hebrew alphabet. It may have been understood as an abbreviation for *tām*, “blameless.” At the time this was written the *tav* of Hebrew script was written like an X or sloped cross. Its use here was to identify the righteous and exempt them from judgment. The “*man*” in white linen was to place the *tav* on the forehead of every righteous person. The significance of this must not be missed. God has His people that love Him and he will protect them from His Judgments. In this instance He will ensure that those who are grieved over the abominations will be delivered. This is a characteristic of our Lord. Consider Enoch who was taken by God before the Flood (Genesis 5:24). The Church will be removed at the Rapture before the Final Condemnation known as the Tribulation (1 Thessalonians 4:14-17). Romans 8:1 says *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit*. In other words because we are “*saved*” we desire to follow the lead of God’s Spirit who lives in us. We have been sealed with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13; II Corinthians 1:22). We will not experience the program of judgment coming on all the earth as Jesus told His apostles.

Luke 21:34-36

*34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. 35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man (KJV).*

The 144,000 Jewish evangelists will be sealed during the Tribulation to protect them so they can carry out their work for God (Revelation 7:1-8).

The righteous were anointed and God said to the destroying angels “*begin at my sanctuary.*” *Then they began at the old men that were before the house.* So the idolatrous Jewish Temple leaders were first to be destroyed.

NEXT MESSAGE: THE DESTRUCTION COMMENCES

**Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments**

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