

# 1 Samuel 7:7-17 - Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013

- While we did make it through to verse six last week, I want to pick it up beginning in verse four, so as to do a short study on the false gods.

(4) So the children of Israel put away the Baals and the Ashtoreths, and served the LORD only. (5) And Samuel said, "Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you." (6) So they gathered together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD. And they fasted that day, and said there, "We have sinned against the LORD." And Samuel judged the children of Israel at Mizpah.

- It's interesting to note we're told the names of these false gods were Baal, and Ashtoreth, both of which are gods still worshipped today.  
 - While the names have been changed to protect the guilty, the god of Baal is still worshipped modern day as the god of power and prestige.  
 - Ashtoreth was actually worshipped as the sex goddess, and as such is worshipped today as the goddess of sexual pleasure, and fertility.

- While we don't call them by their ancient names, there are four false gods that people still worship today by their new contemporary names.

Ancient Names of Some False Gods	Contemporary Names of the Same Gods
The god of Mammon.	The god of money and success.
The goddess Ashtoreth.	The goddess of sex and fertility.
The god of Baal.	The god of power and prestige.
The god of Moloch.	The god of convenience and prosperity.

- We talked briefly last week about the god of Moloch, so I'll just mention a couple of things, by way of this artist's rendition, of this false god.  
 - Some have suggested that the secretive Bohemian Grove is a modern day worship of Moloch by US President's and global illuminati elites.  
 - I share that to say this; our modern day worship of the ancient day god's can take on a variety of forms, often without us even realizing it.

- The way we can know if we're worshipping these gods is by how much of our energy and time we devote to them. Consider the following list...

Financial security	Pleasure
Materialism	Comfort
Knowledge	Convenience
Power and Control	Pain free, trouble free life
Sex	Accomplishment
Money and prosperity	Work, business or career
Self	Significance and success
Health	Physical appearance
Another person	Happiness

- The truth of the matter is, there's nothing new under the sun, in that, these god's all had their beginning, in the book of Genesis 10:6-10.  
 - Last week I mentioned a YouTube video by Armageddon News, titled, Babylon the Great & The Turkish Antichrist. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uY20IFaWIsQ>  
 - While I don't necessarily agree with their premise, nor have I had the time to vet their theory, I must say, they make a compelling argument.

- More specifically, they make the case that the ancient false gods of Baal and Ashtoreth are actually the modern day false religion of Islam.  
 - They get there by way of Islam's crescent moon and star that's pronounced on the Baal's and Ashtoreth's discovered in archeological digs.  
 - Be that as it may, what follows is a brief history of the origins of these false gods all of whom found their way into our modern day traditions.

After the Flood, Noah had grandson named Nimrod, who rebelled greatly against God. It's evident from history that this Nimrod was not only a political leader, but also the lead priest in a form of Pagan Satanic worship. As the legend goes, Nimrod dies, and his wife, whose name is Queen Semiramis, gives birth to an illegitimate son. She names him Tammuz, claiming him to be Nimrod reborn & immaculately conceived. Both child and mother were worshipped, as she became known as Semiramis the moon goddess of fertility and Queen of Heaven. Jeremiah 7:17-19 and Jeremiah 44:15-25 have references to the Israelites worshipping the Queen of Heaven.

This Mother and Son were worshipped for Tammuz's Immaculate Conception and resurrection. According to the legends, he was slain [killed by a wild boar], then went into the underworld. He rose again like spring vegetation from the ground, on the third day. A festival for the worship of Tammuz was then initiated to celebrate his miraculous conception and resurrection. Preceding this Tammuz festival, the pagans celebrated a fast of forty days. This was a time of lamenting and weeping. (*Lent was adopted by the church of the third and fourth centuries in hopes of converting the pagan unbeliever.*)

A worship of the Father Nimrod, Mother Semiramis, and Son Tammuz developed. It's believed that Nimrod's Tower of Babel, also known as a Ziggurat, was actually a pyramid. They continued to build them as structures of worship for the sun, moon, and stars (Astrology). Today, we can still find remnants of these pyramids throughout the world e.g., Iraq, South America, Central America, Egypt, Burma.

In his book, *The Gospel in the Stars, The Real Meaning of the Zodiac*, D. James Kennedy, whose now with the Lord, of this wrote, "I know it will surprise you, but the sphinx actually unlocks the mystery of the zodiac. It is fascinating to note that in the Temple of Esneh in Egypt, there is a great sky painting in the portico on the ceiling, which shows the whole picture of the zodiac with all of its constellations. Between the figures of *Virgo, The Virgin*, and *Leo, The Lion*, there is carved the figure of the sphinx with the head of a woman and the body of a lion. The woman's face is looking at *The Virgin* and the lion's tail is pointing to *Leo*, telling us that we begin with *The Virgin* and end with *Leo*."

This worship of Ashtoreth was known by other names: Mother Nature, Mother Earth, Mother Goddess, Mother Semiramis, Queen of Heaven, Ishtar (Easter), Goddess of Fertility, Goddess of Spring, Goddess of Love Around the world, the names were different but the worship was the same. Interestingly, she was also known as the wife of Baal. Also, around the world, the names were different, but the worship was the same in that the worship was sexual in nature and would involve temple prostitutes. For the Phoenician's it was Tammuz & Ashtoreth, in Greek Mythology it is Eros & Aphrodites, in Egyptology, it's Horus & Isis, and for the Roman's it's the gods of Cupid and Venus.

It's for this reason that the Easter Bunny came about, as the Rabbit was a symbol of fertility and sexuality. They have represented fertility in many cultures because they breed quickly. In traditional Christian art the hare represents lust. It's thought that the Playboy Bunny is symbolic of this pagan sexual goddess.

This brings us to the Easter egg. The egg was a sacred symbol among the Babylonians! They believed an old fable about an egg of wondrous size, which was supposed to have fallen from heaven into the Euphrates River. From this egg the Goddess Astarte (Easter Semiramis), was hatched. And so the egg came to symbolize the Goddess Easter." The idea of a mystic egg spread from Babylon to many parts of the world. In Northern Europe, China and Japan the eggs were colored for their sacred festivals. The egg was also a symbol of fertility and Semiramis was the goddess of Fertility. It's for this reason that this pagan worship became the Christian's Easter. In 313 AD, a politically correct Constantine united the pagan counterfeit religion with the Christian worship. So, The December 25th pagan worship of Saturnalia, became the modern day celebration of Christmas. On December 25th Christians celebrate Christmas - Christ's birth, as the Pagans would celebrate Tammuz's resurrection. On Ishtar/Easter Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, as the Pagan's celebrate the birth ("immaculate conception") of Tammuz. The Pagans worshipped Tammuz and celebrated on December 25th placing a Yule log (Chaldean for boy child) on the fire. A tree (replaced the Yule log) decked with silver and gold so as to celebrate the resurrection of Tammuz.

**Jeremiah 10:3-4 NKJV** For the customs of the peoples *are* futile; For *one* cuts a tree from the forest, The work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. (4) They decorate it with silver and gold; They fasten it with nails and hammers So that it will not topple.

By the way, this is also where we got our Easter Sunrise Services. The sunrise was sun worshipping...looking "toward the east." However, it is an abomination in the Bible.

**Ezekiel 8:13-16 NKJV** And He said to me, "Turn again, *and* you will see greater abominations that they are doing." (14) So He brought me to the door of the north gate of the LORD's house; and to my dismay, women were sitting there weeping for Tammuz. (15) Then He said to me, "Have you seen *this*, O son of man? Turn again, you will see greater abominations than these." (16) So He brought me into the inner court of the LORD's house; and there, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, *were* about twenty-five men with their backs toward the temple of the LORD and their faces toward the east, and they were worshiping the sun toward the east.

(7) Now when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel had gathered together at Mizpah, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard *of it*, they were afraid of the Philistines.  
- Well, here we go again, the Philistines are getting ready to attack the Israelites, and once again, the children of Israel hear it and are afraid.  
- However, this time it's different because the Israelites won't turn to the ark of God for deliverance, they'll turn to the God of the ark instead.  
- This is yet another reason we can know the Israelites had finally learned their lesson and that their repentance was sincere and genuine.

(8) So the children of Israel said to Samuel, "Do not cease to cry out to the LORD our God for us, that He may save us from the hand of the Philistines." (9) And Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered *it as* a whole burnt offering to the LORD. Then Samuel cried out to the LORD for Israel, and the LORD answered him. (10) Now as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel. But the LORD thundered with a loud thunder upon the Philistines that day, and so confused them that they were overcome before Israel. (11) And the men of Israel went out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, and drove them back as far as below Beth Car.  
- I find it interesting not only that God drove the Philistines back but; how God drove the Philistines back, in that He thundered upon them.  
- Here's why, it's believed that Baal, as the son of Dagon, was the god of thunder. No wonder they were all so confused by the thunder.  
- The lesson to be learned here is that humbling ourselves in repentance before God, and trusting in God, will bring about victory from God.

(12) Then Samuel took a stone and set *it* up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the LORD has helped us."  
- Here, Samuel places a stone between Mizpah and Shen and names the stone, "Ebenezer," which means "stone of help," as a memorial.  
- The purpose in doing this was so the Israelites would remember how the Lord had helped them in giving them the victory over their enemy.  
- This is a beautiful picture of God's grace. It was twenty years prior at this very place that they were defeated, and the ark was captured.

- This speaks to the loving kindness of God in replacing those memories of our defeat, with new memories of when He brought our victory.  
- These are what are now called, an Ebenezer stone, which has the meaning of remembering when God helped you through difficult trials.  
- The idea behind it is that those Ebenezer stones of when God helped you in the past, serves as a reminder of how God will help you now.

One commentator said it best this way, "His past help is a reminder and a pledge of future help."

There's an interesting story behind a famous hymn written in 1757, referencing this Ebenezer stone titled, "Come Thou Fount," by Robert Robinson. As the story goes, when Robert was involved with a questionable group of friends, and started sensing a needed change in his life. So he convinced a group of friends to go see the famous Methodist preacher, George Whitefield, so that he and his friends could heckle the minister while he was giving his message. Unbeknownst to his friends Roberts had ulterior motives for the visit, and so did God. That day Whitefield preached on Matthew 3:7, which says, "*But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, 'O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? After hearing that message Roberts left feeling a deep sense of conviction and dread. That message remained with Roberts until the age of 20, when he publicly declared that he would enter the ministry and live a life dedicated to the message of the cross. Two years later, at the young age of 22, Roberts penned the hymn, Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing. Here are three verses of this famous hymn: Come thou fount of every blessing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace. Streams of mercy never ceasing, Call for songs of loudest praise. Teach me some melodious sonnet, Sung by flaming tongues above. I'll praise the mount I'm fixed upon it, Mount of Thy redeeming love. Here I raise my Ebenezer, Hither by Thy help I come. And I hope by Thy good pleasure, Safely to arrive at home. Jesus sought me when a stranger, Wondering from the fold of God. He, to rescue me from danger, Interposed His precious blood. O to grace how great a debtor, Daily I'm constrained to be! Let thy goodness like a fetter, Bind my wandering heart to Thee. Prone to wander Lord I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love. Here's my heart Lord, take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts above. This last verse may have been foreshadowing a season in Robert's life. Although unverifiable—the story goes that one day, many years after writing the hymn, Roberts boarded a stagecoach in which a young lady happen to be humming Come Thou Fount. When the lady asked him what he thought of the hymn she was humming—he responded, "Madam, I am the poor unhappy man who wrote that hymn many years ago, and I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I had then."*

(13) So the Philistines were subdued, and they did not come anymore into the territory of Israel. And the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. (14) Then the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron to Gath; and Israel recovered its territory from the hands of the Philistines. Also there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. (15) And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. (16) He went from year to year on a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and judged Israel in all those places. (17) But he always returned to Ramah, for his home *was* there. There he judged Israel, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

- I love ending a chapter like this. What a glorious passage describing the blessing and success that God had given to Samuel all his days.
- Samuel didn't just start off well, he finished well, and in so doing we have a most magnificent character study of Samuel and his example.
- These characteristics will shine throughout our study of Samuel, and it's evidenced by what we see here with the characteristic of humility.

One commentator drew an insightful comparison between Samuel and Samson when he wrote, "Compare Samuel - a humble, spiritually minded judge - to Samson, who was a compromising, carnal judge. Samuel seemed so much weaker, and Samson seemed so much stronger, but who was more effective in leading Israel into victory over their enemies?"