

The Book of EZEKIEL

Chapters 7 – 9

Chapter 7 - “They Shall Know That I Am the LORD”

(v1-9) Abominations, Abominations, Abominations!

(v10-19) Behold, the day!

(v20-27) Defilement, Destruction, Disaster, Desolation!

Chapter 8 - “Ezekiel’s Four Visions”

(v1-4) Vision of God’s glory

(v5-12) Vision of idolatrous practices in the temple

(v13-14) Vision of women weeping for Tammuz

(International Standard Bible Encyclopedia – TAMMUZ - (1) The name of a Phoenician deity, the Adonis of the Greeks. He was originally a Sumerian or Babylonian sun-god, called Dumuzu, the husband of Ishtar, who corresponds to Aphrodite of the Greeks. The worship of these deities was introduced into Syria in very early times under the designation of Tammuz and Astarte, and appears among the Greeks in the myth of Adonis and Aphrodite, who are identified with Osiris and Isis of the Egyptian pantheon, showing how widespread the cult became. The Babylonian myth represents Dumuzu, or Tammuz, as a beautiful shepherd slain by a wild boar, the symbol of winter. Ishtar long mourned for him and descended into the underworld to deliver him from the embrace of death (Frazer, Adonis, Attis and Osiris). This mourning for Tammuz was celebrated in Babylonia by women on the 2nd day of the 4th month, which thus acquired the name of Tammuz (see CALENDAR). This custom of weeping for Tammuz is referred to in the Bible in the only passage where the name occurs ([Ezekiel 8:14](#)). The chief seat of the cult in Syria was Gebal (modern Gebail, Greek Bublos) in Phoenicia, to the South of which the river Adonis (Nahr Ibrahim) has its mouth, and its source is the magnificent fountain of Apeca (modern `Afqa), where was the celebrated temple of Venus or Aphrodite, the ruins of which still exist. The women of Gebal used to repair to this temple in midsummer to celebrate the death of Adonis or Tammuz, and there arose in connection with this celebration those licentious rites which rendered the cult so infamous that it was suppressed by Constantine the Great. The name Adonis, by which this deity was known to the Greeks, is none other than the Phoenician 'Adhon, which is the same in Hebrew. His death is supposed to typify the long, dry summer of Syria and Palestine, when vegetation perishes, and his return to life the rainy season when the parched earth is revived and is covered with luxuriant vegetation, or his death symbolizes the cold, rough winter, the boar of the myth, and his return the verdant

spring. Considering the disgraceful and licentious rites with which the cult was celebrated, it is no wonder that Ezekiel should have taken the vision of the women weeping for Tammuz in the temple as one of the greatest abominations that could defile the Holy House.)

(v15-18) Vision of sun worshipers

(The prominent gods in Mesopotamia were those over heaven, air, and earth, personified by Anu, Enlil, and Enki (Ea). Another group was made up of those that controlled the heavenly bodies: **the sun**, the moon, and the planet Venus (the "morning star"). In fact, Ur, the city from which Abraham came, was the center for worship of the moon god Sin. As Mesopotamian religion developed, each god had his own star, and the worship of the stars became popular with the development of ASTROLOGY. Many of the astrological texts and charts of the ancient Babylonians read like modern horoscopes.

The worship of the sun, moon, and stars eventually spread across the entire ancient world. The Egyptians, Canaanites, and Phoenicians all incorporated features of this form of worship. Place names in pre-Israelite Canaan reflect the practice. Beth Shemesh (Josh 15:10) means house of the sun [god]. Jericho (Num 22:1) probably means moon city. Joshua's miracle of the sun and the moon standing still takes on greater significance in light of this fact. It was a demonstration of the sovereign power of the Lord God of Israel over the pagan gods identified as the sun and the moon, worshiped in pagan cities (Josh 10:12-13.) (From Nelson's Bible Dictionary)
(New Testament correlation: Romans 1:16-32)

Chapter 9 - "Vision of Judgment in Jerusalem"

(v1-2) Vision of six slaying men are Angels.

(v3-4) The mark of protection (Rev. 7; 9:4)

Ezekiel 9:4- *And the LORD 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 for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof.*

([A mark] literally, "Tau," the name of the last letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The old form of the letter was that of a cross. The Jews have interpreted this sign variously, some considering that "Tau," being the last of the Hebrew letters, and so closing the alphabet, denoted completeness, and thus the mark indicated the completeness of the sorrow for sin in those upon whom it was placed. Others again observed that "Tau" was the first letter of Torah ("the Law") and that the foreheads were marked as of men obedient to the Law. Christians, noting the resemblance of this letter in its most ancient form to a cross, have seen herein a reference to the cross with which Christians were signed. The custom for pagan gods and their votaries to bear certain marks furnishes instances, in which God was pleased to employ symbolism, generally in use, to express higher and more divine truth. The sign of the cross in baptism is an outward sign of the designation of God's elect, who at the last day shall be exempted from the destruction of the ungodly.) (from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblesoft)

(v5-11) Reasons for God's judgment is: idolatry, bloodshed, and perversity.

(Ref. – Christ return with angels for judgment: Matthew 13:36-43; 16:24-27; 24:22,31)