

EZEKIEL 1:1-12:28 | THE DESOLATION

EZEKIEL 8:1-11:24 | SECOND VISION

- The first vision (Ezek. 1:1-3:27) took place at Chebar. This vision takes place at Jerusalem.
- See outline for structure of this section.

EZEKIEL 8:1-4 | THE BEGINNING OF THE VISION

See session 5

EZEKIEL 8:5-9:11 | SINS AND PUNISHMENTS

EZEKIEL 8:5-17 | THE SINS OF THE PEOPLE

A	U 8:1-4. The beginning of the Vision.
V	W 8:5-9:11. Sins and Punishments.
	X 10:1-22. Cherubim.
V	W 11:1-21. Sins and Punishments.
	X 11:22-23. Cherubim.
U	11:24, 25. The end of the Vision.

- Verses 5-6 –
 - Ezekiel appears to be inside the temple complex, looking out the northern gate.
 - When he looks to that gate, he sees **this image of jealousy** which he had seen in verse 3. He also hears, for the first time, the voice of the **likeness as the appearance of fire** from verse 2.
 - The voice expresses displeasure at **what they do** (v. 6), referring to **the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here**. These abominations were designed to **go far off from my sanctuary**.
- Verses 7-13 –
 - Ezekiel finds a hidden door, behind which he was told he would find **wicked abominations** (v. 9).
 - The **creeping things, and abominable beasts...portrayed upon the wall** represented the pagan **idols of the house of Israel**.
 - These are likely images of Egyptian pagan gods.
 - In addition to the artistic rendering of these beasts he saw **seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel**.
 - This represented the spiritual leadership of the nation (see Num. 11:16).
 - **Jaazaniah the son of Shephan** was one of the elders of Israel (his father, **Shephan** was a scribe who helped in Josiah's reforms (2 Kings 22:8).
 - The voice let Ezekiel know that now **hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark**. These leaders *thought* the Lord was not watching.
- Verses 14-15 –
 - The third "sin of the people" was also seen at the north gate, where **there sat women weeping for Tammuz**. The voice sounds with amazement, **Hast thou seen this, O son of man?**
 - The word **Tammuz** is directly from the Hebrew, and is commonly believed to be the predecessor for the Greek god Adonis.
 - If this is the correct interpretation (as it seems to be), then we have another example of the idolatry of the nation.
 - Adonis was said by the Greeks to be a handsome young man who was gored to death by a boar. Greek women mourned his death in an annual festival.
- Verses 16-17 –
 - The fourth (and final) sin of the people. This image takes place in **the inner court of the Lord's house** rather than at the north gate. In this court were about 25 men (undoubtedly Jewish priests) who had **their backs toward the temple...and their faces toward the east**, worshipping the sun. Once again, the voice asks, **has thou seen this, O son of man?**

- On this vision, God shifts to the **house of Judah**. The entire nation is guilty, regardless of the tribes, but the house of Israel receives the greater condemnation.
- Bullinger interprets **the branch** as a symbol of the Asherah, but gives no Biblical evidence to support his case. Whatever is meant, the statement is certainly condemnatory.

EZEKIEL 8:18-9:11 | THE PUNISHMENTS

- Verse 8:18 –
 - In verse 18, the focus changes from the sins of the people to the punishment from God.
 - The pronoun of verse 18 proves that the **likeness as the appearance of fire** in verse 2 is indeed a theophany, for **vengeance is mine** (Rom. 12:19, see also Dt. 32:35). The elect nation of God has passed the point of no return, they will be punished.
- Verses 9:1-7 –
 - The command was given of the Lord to gather **them that have charge over the city** and that they were to each bring **his destroying weapon**. There were **six men who came from the way of the higher gate**. These six appear to be angels. The **higher gate** is likely not a reference to some heavenly portal, but rather the name of one of the gates to the temple (compare Jer. 20:2). Of these six, one was **clothed with linen** and held a **writer's inkhorn**. This one was instructed to **set a mark upon the foreheads** of those who had a thirst for righteousness. The remaining five were to **slay utterly** everyone who did not have the mark. They were to take the slain bodies and **fill the courts** of the temple, thus defiling it.
 - There is so much similarity here to the sealing of the 144,000 and other aspects of the book of Revelation. However, this prophecy is primarily about the destruction of Jerusalem under the Babylonians.
 - Perhaps there is a note of foreshadow in the mark in addition to the future mark of the 144,000. The Hebrew literally says, “place a *taw* on the foreheads.” The *taw* later produced the Greek letter *tau* and the English letter “T” and is, of course, the “mark of the cross.” While we do not want to *spiritualize* letters, F.W. Grant says, “As far back as the days of Tertullian it has been interpreted in this way, and all the circumstances here confirm the interpretation. Here, then, is the sinner’s shield at all times, the only hope of escape where all are sinners.”¹
- Verse 9:8 –
 - Recall that this is a vision (in which Ezekiel is physically moved to Jerusalem). The **six men** did not do the slaying, that would be done by the Babylonians not long from seeing the vision. The vision gave Ezekiel the understanding of what was taking place behind the scenes. The six men did the behind the scenes slaying that ultimately led to the actual slaying.
 - Ezekiel wonders, **wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel?** That is, *will there be a remnant left?*
- Verses 9:9-10 –
 - This is the first time that the **house of Israel and Judah** is mentioned together in the book of Ezekiel. Their sin has been **exceeding great**, and the chief sin is that of disbelief, saying that **the Lord hath forsaken the earth, the Lord seeth not**.
 - The Lord lets Ezekiel know that *He has seen it all*, and **mine eye shall not spare**.
- Verse 9:11 - The punishment ends in a note of hope as the “marking” angel says, **I have done as thou hast commanded me**. A remnant has been saved.

¹ F. W. Grant, *The Numerical Bible: Being a Revised Translation of the Holy Scriptures with Expository Notes: Arranged, Divided, and Briefly Characterized According to the Principles of Their Numerical Structure: Ezekiel (Study Text)* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1931), 55.