

## Ezekiel Ch 8 • “Great Abominations”

- Background* Chapters 8–11 deal with Judah’s idolatry and the resultant departure of God’s glory from the temple in Jerusalem. These chapters are a subsection of the second major division of the book (Ch 3:22–Ch 24:27) dealing with prophecies of God’s judgment against Judah.
- v1a Similar to opening verse of Ch 1, but different date. Sixth year following deportation of Jehoiachin (597<sup>BC</sup>) = 592<sup>BC</sup>. Sixth month and fifth day = September 17, 592<sup>BC</sup> (14 months after first vision).
- v1b-4 Hand of the Lord comes upon Ezekiel forcefully (grabs by hair!)  
“Image of jealousy” – statue of an idol (Asherah?)  
Manasseh put idols in temple (2 Chronicles 33:7)  
Josiah removed but returned after death (Jer 3:10)  
One of first and greatest commandments (Ex 20:4)  
Position of statue is between altar & gate where animals brought in — challenge to worship of the One True God.
- v5-6a God foreshadows the departure of His Glory (first time since Ex 40)
- v6b-12 More idol worship – etchings or engravings of animals IN the temple. Possibly Egyptian deities (if Babylonian wouldn’t need to be secret)  
Praying to Egyptian gods to deliver them since God had abandoned (!)  
Note: Jaazaniah – son of Shaphan (Josiah’s scribe cf Jer 29, 36, 39).
- v13-14 Location shifts to inner court by north door. More idolatry going on. Weeping for Tammuz – originally Ishtar’s husband. Later morphed into god of crops and fertility. Thought to die every summer and resurrect every spring. In between, weeping. Not mentioned but likely the weeping Ezekiel sees was accompanied by various sex acts
- v15-16 Temple oriented so moving toward Holy of Holies = moving west. Different than many (most) pagan temples where worship faces sun. Ezekiel sees priests (?) worshipping the sun (forbidden @ Deut 4:19). Could be worse – “back toward temple” could refer to defecation.
- v17-18 “Branch to nose” is a mystery but clearly some kind of insult. We don’t need to know details to know people have gone too far. Only option they’ve left themselves is God’s judgment.
- APP What idols are we worshipping? Placing something between us & Jesus?  
Denying God is present & loving? Trusting in works? Tolerating sexual sin?  
Boxing God out of areas of our life? Praise God we are spared v18!  
But we still need to repent and return to fully enjoy God’s presence & power!