



Ezekiel 7-8

Tape #7316
Ezekiel 7-8
By Chuck Smith

Ezekiel, chapter seven. The prophesies of Ezekiel chapter seven, took place in about 594 B.C.. Jerusalem was conquered in its final overthrow in about 588. So this is about six years before the final overthrow of Jerusalem, and its ceasing to exist as a city for a period of seventy years.

So the word of the Lord came unto me, saying (7:1),

Ezekiel the prophet, remember he is in Babylon. He is prophesying to the Jews that had already been taken captive. At this same time Jeremiah is prophesying to the Jews that are still in Jerusalem. Message is basically the same. The judgments of God are coming upon His people because they have forsaken God, and they have turned to other gods. That's the basic theme of the prophesies. It is the justifying of God in His judgment.

God is fair, even though the city is to be utterly destroyed, the people scattered, God is fair. Because there are reasons for this judgment. The reasons being they have turned their back on God. "So the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,"

Also, thou son of man, [Now he's been prophesying to the mountains, how they're going to be desolate, so] prophecy to the land, thus saith the Lord, to the land of Israel; And end, the end is come upon the four corners of the land (7:2).

There comes a time when things come to an end. While we are going through a particular epoch in history, it seems like things are just gonna go on like this forever. But there comes an end. There comes that time when God says, "That's it. It's all over." For a long period of time evil has been prevailing in the land. There have been spotty revivals, short periods where there was a surface movement of the people towards God. But basically at the core, and at the heart, there's been this downward trend. If you would graph it, you could see that there was this gradual decline. Evil is becoming more entrenched, and more powerful. Until you begin to think that there's no answer, there's no solution. Surely evil is going to ultimately triumph because things are just going down hill.

But there is coming an end to the evil reign. There is coming an end to the licentious practices that are going on. God is announcing here the end. "The end of the land from the four corners of the land." The end has come.

And now the end has come upon thee, and I will send mine anger upon thee, and will judge thee according to thy ways, and will recompense upon thee all thy abominations (7:3).

An end of the period of God's grace. An end of the period of God's tolerance, of God's patience, of God's longsuffering, of God's mercy. Now the time has come for God to react, and to respond against the evil that they have done. The abominations that they have committed.

My eye [The Lord said] will not spare thee, neither will I have pity: but I will recompense your ways upon you, and your abominations shall be in the midst of you: and you shall know that I am the Lord (7:4):

As this judgment comes, you will know that I am the righteous, holy God. Though patient, though merciful, and longsuffering, yet, a God of righteousness and judgment. Once a person has crossed that line, there is no pitying by God.

You remember at the time of Noah God said, "My spirit will not always strive with man." God had been striving with the people for years, and years! It took Noah a hundred years to build that ark. While he was building the ark, he was preaching to the people of righteousness. But they were mocking him, and laughing at him, and probably he was really the subject a lot, of a lot of jokes and all. Because here he is building that huge old boat out here in the desert. You know, and talks about a flood. I can just hear the Johnny Carson's of that day! They had a field day with him no doubt, and his project! But the whole while he was preaching righteousness. How that they ought to turn to God in righteousness.

God gave them ample opportunity to do so. But there came that day, there came that hour. When Noah gathered his family, and he went into that ark, and it said, "And God shut the door". He shut them in to a place of safety, but at the same time, He shut the outside world to the judgment that was coming. No longer was there a place of refuge for them. The end had come, and the rain began. God's Spirit wasn't striving anymore. No pity now, no mercy now. There was only that judgment of God that was coming.

In the book of Hebrews it speaks of how that, "Those that despise Moses' law, if you spoke against the law of Moses, you spoke disrespectfully or, or disparagingly against the law of Moses, if there were two, or three witnesses who would come and say, "I heard him cursing the law of Moses. I heard him saying things against the law of Moses." If you had two or three witnesses that would, would come and bear witness against you, they'd put you to death. They'd take you outside the camp, and they'd stone you. He that despised Moses' law was put to death by the mouth of two or three witnesses.

"Of how much worse a person do you suppose a person is counted worthy", if Moses, "despising Moses' laws would bring death, how much worse do you suppose on these men, for the person who treads under foot the blood of Jesus Christ, who counts the covenant an unholy thing, who has done despite to the spirit of Grace? For we know Him who has said, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Then the writer adds, "For it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Also in Hebrews it talks about, "How shall we escape if we neglect this great salvation that has been offered to us by God?" The answer is, there is no escape! But he said, "There is only that certain fearful looking forward to the fiery indignation of God's wrath, whereby He will devour His adversaries."

Now God has been patient with the people! It's been years, and years, hundreds of years that God has put up with their evil. But they are on this downward slide and there comes the end of it. The end of the grace, the end of the mercy. Now God will judge without pity. His eye will not spare. As this judgment comes, they will know that Jehovah is God. "Thus saith Jehovah God, An evil, and only evil, has come." Martin Luther translated that, "Evil upon evil, behold, has come." In other words, the evil is just stacked upon evil. The people have gotten worse, and worse.

The Bible does prophesy concerning the last days that, "Evil men shall wax worse, and worse." The Bible said, "In the last days perilous times will come". It speaks of the conditions of these perilous times. One of the things is that wantonness. That is, that boasting in evil, and boasting of sin. It's not just sinning, but it is glorying, or exalting, boasting in the evil.

I thought it was interesting today, with so many things being canceled as the result of the early morning earthquakes, that there was a quick announcement that they would still go ahead with the gay pride parade in west Hollywood. That's what is known as "wantonness". The open flaunting of your sin. I heard on the news going home, I was trying to get an update on the earthquake, and they were broadcasting one of the gay pride parades, because they were all over the country, and these fellows were singing as they were going down the street, "When the saints go marching in". But then they sort of put an interesting little twist on the end, it's, "Oh Lord I want to be in the number when the queers go marching in". That's wantonness! That is flaunting your evil. The Lord says...

An end, and end has come (7:6):

They have stacked evil, upon evil." Though God is patient, and though God is merciful and longsuffering, there is a limit. The people had come to the limit. They had exhausted their opportunity of grace, and of mercy, and now the time of judgment has come. God said, "I'm not going to spare, and I'm not going to have pity. But I will give every man real justice, because they will get what they deserve. When this happens, you will know that I am the Lord. For they have stacked evil, upon evil."

The morning [The day of God's judgment has come] unto thee, O thou that dwellest in the land: the time is come, the day of trouble is near, and not the sounding again of the mountains (7:7).

That "sounding again of the mountains", is a reference to the sound of joy at the time of harvest. As they are bringing in the vintage, of the grapes and all for the harvest season, it was always a time of joy, and rejoicing, and partying. "But you're not going to experience that again."

Because I will shortly pour out my fury upon thee, and accomplish my anger upon thee: and I will judge you according to your ways (7:8),

Now we don't want that! We don't want God to judge us according to our ways! We want God to judge us according to His mercy. David said, "Have mercy upon me, O Lord, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions." Then he acknowledged his sin against the Lord. But he cried out for mercy. God is merciful to those who will repent and turn from their sin, and seek Him. God will be gracious and God will be merciful. But to persist in your evil practices, and in your evil way is only to court the judgment of God. Ultimately that day will come, when God will judge, and He will judge in absolute righteousness, which demands the punishment of your sin, which is death. So again, God declares...

My eye will not spare, neither will I have pity: I will recompense you according to your ways and your abominations that are in the midst of you; and ye shall know that I am the Lord that smiteth (7:9).

Now God is many things. The name "Jehovah" is used in compound forms to declare the various aspects of the character, and nature of God. He is said to be "Jehovah-Rapha", "The Lord thy God who heals thee". "Jehovah-Jireh", "The One who provides for you." "Jehovah-Shalom", "The Lord who is your peace". But now here He is, "The Lord that smiteth", when that day that judgment comes, those who have done despite to the Spirit of grace, He becomes, "Jehovah the smiter, the One who smites". Not sparing, not having pity, but dealing with them according to their abominations.

The "abomination" is always, in the scriptures, the setting up in your heart, and in your life of another god. God alone is worthy and deserving of our praise, and of our worship. To worship other than God is an abomination. So it is the establishing of another god in your heart, and in your life, and the worshiping of that other god, that constitutes an abomination. So He will judge them according to the abominations. We will talk about that a little bit in chapter eight.

Behold the day, the morning has arrived, the day has come, behold, it is come: the morning is gone forth; the rod has blossomed, and pride has budded. ["You've come to the full fruit of the judgment now."] Violence is risen up into a rod of wickedness: and none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs: ["You're gonna, the people are gonna be destroyed, as well as your possessions are gonna be stripped."] neither shall there be any waiting for them. [No one to pity, no one to mourn, because they're gonna be slain.] The time is come, the day draws near (7:10-12):

I think that God is, is, is saying much the same today. "The time is come." We have compounded evil upon evil, and, and the morning is breaking of this day of God's judgment and wrath! It is coming upon the earth. Even the earthquake could be a precursor of what is yet to come. Because I am convinced that God is going to begin to judge the earth, the inhabitants of this earth for their abominations, for the evil and the compounding of evil. So, "the time is come, the day is drawing near"...

let not the buyer rejoice, nor the seller mourn: for wrath is upon all the multitude thereof (7:10-12).

Now in those days, the preservation of the family property was one of the main concerns of a person. When they came into the land, each family was given a portion of the land. That was more or less a sacred trust. "This belongs to our family. The cultivation of it, the development of it, it's ours." Through the years that maintaining of this family property was of vital importance.

Now there were times when because of financial stress or pressure, a person was forced to sell the family possession, the property. When you were pressed or strapped financially, and had to sell your property, that was always a time of, of sorrow, of mourning. Whenever you had the opportunity to buy property, that was a time of rejoicing. "Ah I get a chance to you know, expand our property, and our holdings!" So selling was never a rejoicing, it wasn't, it's not like today, when you put your house, "Alright we sold it!", you know, "Hooray!" It wasn't that way in those days, it was, it was the loss of, of something that was entrusted to you as a sacred trust, to maintain the family's possessions.

Even today, if you will go into the shops in the old city of Jerusalem, and if you start bargaining with these fellows too hard, you start pressing a, a, for your price which is too low, they will throw up their hands in despair, and they say, "My grandfather owned this shop! My father owned this shop! And now, I would sell to you for that price? I would lose the family's inheritance!" You know. They get very dramatic over this you know, "I've been entrusted with it. This shop that has been in the family for centuries! You're trying to cause me to lose it by, you know, by your driving for too low a price!" Thus this keeping of the family's possessions was so important. Selling it was always a, a time of sorrow. Buying was always a time of

rejoicing.

Now because of that, the importance of keeping it in the family, they had that reversionary clause that we've talked about. In the contract, when you sold, you always had the opportunity to buy it back. Should your fortunes change, and in a specified period of time, should you be able then to purchase back the property, could you fulfill the requirements within the deed of trust, then you could always buy the property back, and it was maintained in the family. Even a, a second little reversionary clause, if you personally couldn't buy it back, then your brother could, or your cousin could. The whole idea was keeping it in the family. Not losing it for the family. But if you could not buy it back, if you could not fulfill the clause of the buy back, then it remained in the new ownership.

Now those who were selling their property, and forced to sell their property in Jerusalem, knew that it, as they went into captivity, they would not have the opportunity to buy it back. Thus there was real seller's kind of remorse. Real sorrow over selling, because they wouldn't be able, and they knew they wouldn't be able to redeem the property when the time of redemption had come. Thus, as they were being taken captive, many of them were selling their property so that they'd have something. The buyer's were going around, they had a field day because of all of the forced sales. But He said that, "The day is drawing near that the buyer will not rejoice, nor the seller mourn, for wrath is upon all of the multitude." Every one's gonna lose it.

For the seller shall not return to that which is sold, [He's not gonna be able to buy it back.] although they were yet alive: [That is, though they were still living, when the time came for repurchase, they wouldn't be able to do it.] for the vision is touching the whole multitude, which shall not return; ["You're going into captivity, and you're gonna die in captivity, you're not gonna live long enough to return to the land."] neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life. For they have blown the trumpet, [To call the troops to battle, to call the men to their positions, to defend the city of Jerusalem.] that they might all make ready; but none goes to the battle: for my wrath is on the multitude thereof. The sword is without the city, and the pestilence and the famine are within the city: he that is in the field shall die by the sword; and he that is in the city will be devoured by the famine and the pestilence (7:13-15).

There'll be no place to hide, no safety. Those that are out in the field will be killed by the sword. Those that seek refuge within the city will die even a worse death by famine, and by the plague.

Those that do escape shall escape, and shall be like doves, mourning as a dove, [That, that sad, sort of mournful cry of the dove.] upon the mountains, and upon the valleys, all of them mourning every one for his iniquity (7:16).

It's a terrible thing to ultimately face the penalty for your sin, and at that point, come to a place of recognition, "I am in this because I sinned. I am going through this pain, and this suffering because I didn't listen to God." It's always a tragic thing.

It's an interesting thing how that just a split second kind of decision, wrong decision that's made in a split second of time, can cost you a lifetime of suffering, and misery.

I have a friend that I went to high school with. He was a next door neighbor, and he was driving his car along a two way, two lane highway. There was a car in front of him that was going slowly. He was quickly overtaking the car, and they were on a curve. He had to determine whether or not to try and pass the car, take his chances, or to brake and to pull up behind the car, and wait until they got to a place where you had sufficient vision. As you are approaching, you're making all of the computations at the closing speed that you're coming on, "when is that crisis moment when I'm gonna have to either brake and pull behind him, or go for it?" You know, and as you're making, you're coming, you're contemplating, you're wanting to know, "Brake or accelerate", you know. You're going, going and it finally came to that point, "I'll go for it!" Pulled out, in a head on collision. His spinal cord was severed and he was paralyzed from the neck down. It was a tragic thing. As I would visit him and he would be in that wheelchair, head back, and could just talk. Had his full mental faculty, but had no physical faculties, to realize that, that split second wrong decision is gonna cost him a lifetime of invalidism.

Now just that quick! The wrong decision costs! I can imagine that as the years went by and he was in this paralyzed condition, that he went over, and over, and over in his mind that whole decision process. I

would imagine that he could see himself approaching that car, and, and determining, “What shall I do? Shall I brake, shall I pass?” You know, and I’m sure that decision haunted him, haunted him. You know, you, you can’t change the past. You can’t go back and relive it. You can’t redo it.

My dad and brother made a wrong decision to fly up from San Diego in my brother’s plane in this horrible storm. They crashed, and were killed at Pendelton. You think, I was tormented over that! Why didn’t I say, “Get a motel, stay in San Diego. Fly up tomorrow.” Why, why, why did I say that? If I’d only..., you know, and you’re tormented by that. Because the wrong decision can’t be reversed. You can’t go back and change it.

I think of a person who is consigned to hell, into that place of punishment, how it must haunt them over and over and over. The folly of deciding not to receive Jesus Christ. They probably in their mind, go through every service where they sat there and said, “No”. Every invitation that they heard, that they sort of gripped the pew, and said, “No I won’t this time”. It’s there to torment, and to haunt. The tragedy of making a wrong decision!

Here, the people had made the wrong decision. Now they are going to go into captivity. “You’re not going to return. You’re going to remain a captive. You’re not gonna come back to the land. For you will not return to that which is sold. Though you’re still alive. For the vision is touching the whole multitude which shall not return, and neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life.” At that time, your iniquity will not be a joy to you. Those pleasures will be long forgotten, and only the misery of your folly remains. “They have blown the trumpet to make ready; but none goes to battle: for my wrath”, the Lord said, “is on the multitude. The sword is without, pestilence within, and they that escape will be mourning”, and that horrible, tragic mourning over the folly!

All of their hands will be feeble, all of their knees will be weak as water (7:17).

They, they will be so devastated by the famine, that when the Babylonians finally make the breach in the wall and pour into the city, they will be too weak to even stand up and defend themselves. They’ve been emaciated by that horrible famine that they have experienced.

They shall also gird themselves with sackcloth (7:18),

Sackcloth was always used for mourning, it was a sign for mourning. In fact they had several signs for mourning. One was sackcloth, the other was ashes on their head, and the other was shaving their hair at death. Even to the present day they still will not let a razor come to their head. Many of the Orthodox will shave their heads when a family member dies. It’s a sign of mourning. So these signs of mourning, girding themselves, or clothing themselves with sackcloth.

and horror shall cover them; shame shall be upon all of their faces, [The ashes that they wipe upon their faces, and then,] the baldness upon their heads. [As they have shaved their heads in mourning for the dead.] They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed: their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord: they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels: because it is the stumblingblock of their iniquity (7:18-19).

So their gold, their silver will be worthless. They won’t be able to purchase anything for them. Much less their salvation! It’s been a stumblingblock to them.

As for the beauty of his ornament, he is set in majesty: but they made the images of their abominations and their detestable things therein: therefore have I set it far from them. [These idols, these images that they were worshiping.] I will give it into the hands of the strangers (7:20-21),

All of their gold, their silver, the little silver idols, and gold idols. Of course they made solid gold, and solid silver idols, images of their abominations. Strangers will take them.

the wicked of the earth will receive it as a spoil; and they will pollute it. My face will I turn also from them, and they shall pollute my secret place (7:21-22):

That is the holy of holies, the enemy will come into this place that only the high priest could enter, and that, once a year, one day in the year, and it will be polluted by their enemies. Actually, later on, Antiochus Epiphanes, slaughtered a pig in the Holy of Holies to desecrate, and to pollute that holy place. “My face will I turn from them, and they shall pollute my secret place”...

for the robber shall enter into it, and they shall defile it. Make a chain: [So the Lord told Ezekiel, “Make

a chain, and bind yourself up with this chain!”] *for the land is full of bloody crimes, the city is full of violence.* [The end of, of the nation came as violence, riots, crime, horrible bloody crimes, and violence in the streets.] *Wherefore* [The Lord said] *I will bring the worst of the heathen, and they shall possess their houses: I will also make the pomp of the strong to cease; and the holy places to be defiled. Destruction comes; and they shall seek peace, and there shall be none. Mischief shall come upon mischief, and rumour shall be upon rumour; then shall they seek a vision of the prophet; but the law shall perish from the priest, and the counsel from the ancients* (7:22-26).

They will finally begin to seek after the prophet, the priest, and all but it will be too late. The die will have been cast, and it's too late now.

And the king will mourn, and the prince will be clothed with desolation, the hands of the people of the land will be troubled: I will do unto them after their way, and according to what they deserve will I judge them; and they shall know that I am the Lord (7:27).

Chapter 8

And it came to pass in [chapter eight] *in the sixth year, the sixth month* (8:1),

Now the prophesies of Ezekiel began in the fifth year of the captivity of king Jehoiachin, and he speaks of it in verse two. It was in the fifth day of the fifth year, of king Jehoiachin's captivity. So this is a year later that he is prophesying now in the sixth month, the fifth day of the month.

as he sat in his house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, and the hand of Jehovah God fell upon me there (8:1).

So he's sitting in his house with several of the elders from Judah, all of them captives. Suddenly the hand of the Lord came upon the prophet Ezekiel. He had this vision. He saw what was like the, appeared to be fire, it was like, the likeness of fire. Just this flame of fire.

and from the loins downward, and upward it was the appearance of brightness, and it was the colour of amber. [So suddenly there was this vision, looked like fire.] *Then there was* [sort of] *the hand that came out of the fire, and took him by the lock of his head;* [By his ponytail] *and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and he brought me by vision of God back to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looks towards the north;* [This would be the inner gate of the temple looking towards the north.] *where was the throne of the image of jealousy* (8:2-3),

There in the temple they had set up idols of the pagan gods, and goddesses. Right there in the door of the temple was this image, this idol, the likeness of Ashtoreth there in the temple of God. So he was brought by the Spirit in a vision, where he saw the temple, and he saw this abominable abomination. This, this idol that they had erected there in the temple. It was the throne of the image of jealousy. God said, "I am a jealous God. You are to have no other gods before me. You're not to make any graven images to bow down to them, and to worship them. For the Lord thy God is a jealous God." Here is the image that was provoking the jealousy of God. As they were bowing down and worshiping this image of this pagan goddess there in the temple.

And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the plains. [That is, by the river Chebar, that glory of the Lord that he describes in chapter one of Ezekiel.] *Then the Lord said to me, Son of man lift up your eyes now on the way toward the north.* ["Look towards the north", so he said,] *I lifted up my eyes toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar there was this image of jealousy in the entry.* [Right there in the entry of the gate to the altar of God, was this idol, this image, the image of jealousy.] *He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, do you see what they're doing? even the great abominations that the house of Israel is committing here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary* (8:4-6)?

"Do you see what's happening, do you see what the people are doing? Right here in my house, the things that are going on? Should I not leave the sanctuary?"

but turn yet again, and I will show you even greater abominations. ["This isn't the worst of it!"] *And so he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, there was a hole there in the wall. And he said to me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold I saw a door. And he said*

unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. And so I went in and I saw; and behold ever form of creeping things, and abominable beasts (8:6-10),

“Abominable beasts”. In the carvings in, and around the world of these beast like creatures that you see carved in the temples in India. You see carved on the buildings of ancient Rome. The gargoyles, and these various ugly faced creatures, usually with the tongue hanging out. Actually that tongue hanging out was a sign of demon possession. These same kind of images that look like animals. These creeping things, and these horrible grotesque looking forms of, of animals. They were there on the walls.

along with the idols of the house of Israel, and they were portrayed on all these walls (8:10).

There were all of these drawings there on the walls. The idols were, of Ashtoreth, were pornographic, they had exaggerated female forms. They were designed for the same purpose that pornography is designed today, to arouse a person sexually. Here they were portrayed on the walls of this room that he came into when he had dug through the hole in the wall.

And there stood before them the seventy men who were the ancients of the house of Israel (8:11),

That is, the older men, those who were leaders, the elders of the house of Israel. You remember that at the time of Moses when the job of trying to give judgment to all the people was too great, there was a line of people from morning till evening, to talk to Moses that he might give judgment. His father in law said, “Moses man! This is gonna kill you! You know, all day long, all you do everyday, all day long is just sit there while this whole line of people are waiting to talk to you and all. You’ve got to, you’ve got to delegate some responsibility. You need to, to get hold of some men.”

So the Lord commanded Moses to choose seventy men, the elders of Israel, bring them into the tabernacle, God would put His Spirit upon them, and they would judge then over the people. If the case came to them that they couldn’t handle, then they would come to Moses, more or less as the supreme court. Moses would go to God, get the judgment, and pass it on to the seventy elders. So they were the judges, they were the elders, or the judges of the land of Israel. “Now here were these seventy of the ancients”...

and there stood with them Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, and every man had a censor in his hand; [The censor was the little incense censor that the priests offered unto the Lord, the incense unto the Lord.] and so a thick cloud of incense went up (8:11).

But this was not incense unto the Lord. In the pagan festivals there was also that burning of incense. You remember in the hippie era, as the hippies were involved in just about every thing that they could get involved in, including a lot of the Hindu-type religions, where there’s a lot of burning of incense to cover the horrible smells that you get in India. So the hippies got into the incense trip, along with many of the other trips that they were in. So these men are holding these censors of incense, and the place is filled with this thick cloud of incense.

You remember those hippie stores and all, you go in there, they had that smell of incense? Laguna Beach, you know, walk by and you’d smell the incense floating around, so that smell of the marijuana, and the rest of the stuff that was coming out of the places.

Then he said unto me, Son of man, have you seen what these elders [The judges, the rulers] do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? [In other words, “This is what’s going on in the minds Ezekiel. I brought you into the mind. What you see, is what they are thinking. The imagery of their mind.” (8:12).

It’s an awesome thing to realize that God knows your thoughts. He knows everything that you think. The Bible says, “There is nothing hidden from Him, but everything is naked and open unto Him with whom we have to do.” A lot of times people have their own little secret chamber that they think no one knows, no one sees, no one knows what’s going on in my thoughts, you know. But God does. You see what every man is doing in the chambers of his imagery...

for they say, The Lord doesn’t see us; and the Lord has forsaken the earth (8:12).

So with that idea that God doesn’t see, God doesn’t know, they were giving themselves over to the evil. They were not checking evil. They were not restraining the evil. But in their minds they were going over, and their minds were polluted with this evil, because they thought, “Well God doesn’t see, and God has forsaken the earth”.

But he said unto me, Turn yet again, and you will see even greater abominations that they do. So he brought me to the [gate, or to the] door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz (8:13-14).

Tammuz was a god of the Babylonians, the ancient Babylonians. The worship of Tammuz went back almost, well, it went back to the time of shortly after the flood. When Shem, the son of Noah, settled on the Babylonian plain. You remember the next incident that is recorded in the Bible is there in Babylon, the building of the towers in Babylon unto heaven, that they might communicate with the spirit beings. And God bringing the confusion of tongues there at Babel.

This ancient Babylonian religion was Satan's counterfeit to God's redemptive program through Jesus Christ. There was a woman who was named Simmaramus, and she bore a son who she named Tammuz. Supposedly Simmaramus was a virgin, and thus it was purported that Tammuz was born of a virgin Simmaramus. So the mother and child were worshiped. Simmaramus was called "The queen of heaven". She was always portrayed in the art with a halo about her head. According to the legend, she had another child whose name was Ashtart, and Tammuz fell in love, or was seduced by Ashtart, who was his sister, but she became his wife. But she betrayed him.

According to the legend, or the stories, this Babylonian religion, incidentally Tammuz was born at the winter solstice, December twenty fifth. Thus his birthday was celebrated by the ancient Babylonians who had pigs with fires, and so forth, the Yule log. It all goes back to the Babylonian customs. It was well, to go on with the story, Tammuz was out in the woods, he was hunting, and he was killed by a wild boar. His spirit descended into Hades, the netherworld, and Ashtart was so grieved over his death and being in the netherworld, that she went down into the netherworld to join him, and to mourn and to weep for him.

Through her weeping and intercession, he was released from this underworld, and was resurrected. They celebrated his resurrection by calling it, because Ashtart had interceded and had brought the resurrection, they celebrated at the spring solstice, what they called "Ashtart", which was in honor of Ashtart who went into the underworld. By her weeping and all, and grief, he was given a reprieve, and allowed to come back to the earth.

Thus, the earth began to spring forth with flowers and all. They worshiped at the spring solstice what they called "Ashtart", or what we call, "Easter". Easter comes from the word Ashtart. Celebrating the resurrection of Tammuz. Seems counterfeit! This was a part of the Babylonian religion. It became a part of the religion in Judah. It was the abomination that God detested. The women weeping for Tammuz, here it is. Right in the, the temple, here are these women.

That was the custom every year during the winter time, when, and according to the stories, Tammuz had to spend six months in hell, and six months on the earth. While he was in hell, the earth was dark you know, I mean it was, the plants all died, and the, the sun was waning, the days were getting shorter and the wintertime was setting in. But then Ashtart was celebrated in the spring, when everything began to bud again, and the earth began to come to life. Thus Tammuz then was here during this time of budding and all.

The summer, the summer solstice was actually the worship of Tammuz during the summer solstice, and even in the Jewish calendar their month of July is named Tammuz, which means summer, and is a carryover from that ancient Babylonian cult.

When Constantine, the Emperor of Rome made Christianity a state religion, in order to get the support of all of the people, he incorporated into the church many of the pagan practices that the Romans had borrowed from the Babylonians, and that the Greeks had borrowed. You have your Adonis, and all, the same, the same stories, they, they are translated into different cultures, the same idea of six months in the netherworld, and six months on the earth, just given different names. So he incorporated into the church these pagan Babylonian festivals.

So rather than celebrating on December 25th the birth of Tammuz, we say we celebrate the birth of Jesus. That's why we celebrate it December 25th. We celebrate, and we call it Easter which is directly from Ashtart the spring solstice, the resurrection to life. These things became incorporated into the church!

I am not yet convinced or do I have an opinion of what God thinks of the celebration of these days. It's so deeply ingrained now in us by tradition, that I sometimes wonder what does God think of us, as a church,

celebrating these particular days. I'm not certain. I, I do confess that I have certain problems with it.

Now on the other hand, I know that in Christ, all things are lawful for me. That, at Christmas, I'm not thinking of Tammuz. But I'm thinking of Jesus Christ, and I'm honoring Him. But you know, as I look at the way the world is worshiping Christmas, it's becoming more pagan all the time. It started out as a pagan holiday, and it is ending as a pagan holiday. There's very little thought of Jesus at Christmas time. The major emphasis is on commercialism, on the gift buying. The attention has been diverted from Jesus to Santa Claus and he becomes the central character at Christmas, the one that the children are most interested in. Rather than God's gift of eternal life through His Son Jesus Christ, it's you know, the latest GI Joe that has the attention of your children.

It has become rather pagan and I think that as Christians, we need to evaluate our celebration of the day. The same is true for Easter. But I'll leave that with you to ponder. I've been pondering it for a long time.

So he said to me, Have you seen this (8:15),

"It's almost like incredible! Do you, can you believe this? You know, can you believe that this is actually happening here in the temple, these women weeping for Tammuz?"

turn again, I'll show you even worse, greater abominations than these. So he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, [Now this is the place where the priest would go.] and, behold, [the door] at the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, he saw about twenty five men, [Which represent the priesthood, the twenty four courses, plus the high priests.] and they had their backs toward the temple of the Lord, [Here they are in this inner court, the place of the priest, but their backs are against the Holy of Holies.] and their faces are toward the east; and they worshiped the sun toward the east. [So here were the priests involved in sun worship right in the temple of God!] Then he said unto me, Have you seen this, [Or, "Can you believe this?"] O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they are committing here? ["Can I just ignore this, is it a light thing?"] for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose (8:15-17).

Now the idea there is, they stick their nose up at God. The idea is that of snubbing God. Have you ever heard of a person who is stuck up, it talks about, their nose is stuck up in the air. They are snubbing. They walk past you, and they put their nose up in the air like they don't see you. God is saying, "They are trying to snub me. They are worshiping the sun, they are worshiping Tammuz, they are worshiping Ashtoreth, and they're snubbing me."

Therefore I will also deal in my fury: my eye will not spare, [Again repeating] I'm not gonna have pity: and though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them (8:18).

They've gone over the brink. They have gone beyond the limits. "I'm not going to spare, I'm not going to pity, even though they cry loudly in my ear, I won't hear it. They've gone too far." Where is that point, where a person goes over the line? Where you go too far. Where God says, "That's it." How close are you to that line? God has been patient, God has been merciful, but they ignored the mercies of God, they ignored the warnings of God.

"There is a time, we know not when, a line, we know not where, that marks the destiny of men to its sorrow, and despair. There is a line, though unseen by man, once that it is crossed; even God Himself, in all of His love, has sworn that all is lost." They had gone over that line. They went too far. God said, "Is it a light thing that they keep snubbing me? That they won't listen to me? I will judge them. My fury will come upon them. I will not pity, I will not spare, and though they cry unto me with a loud voice, I won't hear. They've gone too far."

As a servant of Jesus Christ, as a minister of God, I must warn you that you can go too far. You can cross the line to its sorrow and despair, or hope and despair. You can go too far, and God will shut the door, and say, "Okay, that's it. You've snubbed me for the last time. I've given you the last call, I've given you the last invitation, and you've marked your destiny and, it's established." I pray that, that is not the case of any of you tonight, the unpardonable sin, that place where you've gone over too far, and God says, "Okay, that's it." You enter into the hopeless despair. Even though you would cry, God wouldn't hear. You snubbed Him once too often.

Don't let that be the case! If God is speaking to your heart tonight, if the Spirit of God is moving upon your heart this evening, if there is still that conviction of sin, that awareness that, "I haven't been living for God as I should. I know I am doing things that are not pleasing to God.", and the Spirit of God is still dealing with you, rejoice that God is still striving with your heart! Surely take advantage of it, and seek the Lord while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near, lest the wicked days come, and there will be no more opportunity.

I would encourage you, go back to the prayer room, some of the elders of the church will be back there. They'll be happy to pray with you tonight. This could be God's final call to you, you don't know. It may be that you snubbed Him so many times, that God says, "Okay, once more, I'll give you the opportunity." "An end, an end", God said, "It's over. They've gone too far. If you continue, that day will come when God will say to you, "An end, that's it."

To Jeremiah He said, "Don't pray anymore for their good. If you do, I won't hear you. Let them alone. They're given over to their idols." It's serious business. Because it's the difference between the love of God, and the fury of God that you will experience for eternity. Something to seriously contemplate! Shall we pray?

Father, we thank You for your patience, we thank You for Your love. We thank You Lord that You've been merciful to us, and that You've forgiven us, and cleansed us from our sin, and from our idolatry. Thank you Lord for washing us, and making us pure. Thank You Lord for Your patience with which you dealt with us. Thank You Lord for everything that You've put up with, as You were dealing with us. Thank You Lord for Your stubborn love that did not let us go. Lord we rejoice in that hope of the forgiveness of sins, and eternal life, through Jesus our Lord. But in the same token Lord, we realize that there are those here tonight that are still caught up in abominable idolatry. Their lives are still ruled by other gods, or goddesses. They are still bowing their knees to the pleasures, and to the things of this world. They've snubbed you over and over. O Lord, as you deal with them tonight, may they respond. May this be the night that they come from darkness, into light. From the power of Satan, into the kingdom of God. In Jesus' name we ask it Father, Amen.

Shall we stand? If you don't feel anything tonight, then I would be very worried. You think, "Well so what." It means, it could possibly mean that you've already gone over the line, which would be a tragic thing indeed. May the Lord be with you, may the Lord guide and keep you in His love, may the Lord bless, and give you a wonderful week. May His hand be upon you to guard, to guide, to preserve. In Jesus' name.