

# Ezekiel 8:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.

## Analysis

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Ezekiel witnesses Israel's elders secretly worshiping idols in darkened temple chambers, each person serving 'his idols' (gillulim, גִּלּוּלִים—a contemptuous term meaning 'dung pellets' or 'filthy things'). Their rationalization reveals shocking theological apostasy: 'The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the land.' This represents practical atheism—they claim Yahweh is either unable (doesn't see) or unwilling (has forsaken) to engage with His people, therefore other deities must be consulted. This lie directly contradicts God's omniscience (Psalm 139:1-12) and covenant faithfulness (Deuteronomy 31:6). Their darkness symbolizes both literal secrecy and spiritual blindness. They worship in 'chambers of imagery' (cheder maskito, חֶדֶר מַשְׁכִּיתוֹ)—rooms decorated with pagan murals and symbols. What they practice secretly, God sees fully. Their assumption that God has abandoned them becomes self-fulfilling—through their idolatry, they drive away His presence.

## Historical Context

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The seventy elders represented Israel's leadership—men responsible for spiritual guidance were leading in apostasy. These weren't ignorant common people but educated leaders who knew God's law yet chose syncretism. The phrase 'every man in the chambers of his imagery' suggests individualized idolatry—each elder

had customized his own secret shrine. This proliferation of private idolatry reveals how deeply corruption had penetrated Judean society. Historical records and archaeology confirm that Mesopotamian influence increased during this period, with many adopting Babylonian religious practices even before the exile. The leaders' cynicism ('God has forsaken the land') justified their pragmatic turn to other deities.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. What secret sins do you justify by assuming God doesn't see or doesn't care?
2. How does leadership's hidden compromise corrupt those under their influence?

## Interlinear Text

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אָמַר יִם	אֵלַי	רָאָה	בֶּן	אָדָם	אִשׁ רַ
Then said	H413	hast thou seen	he unto me Son	of man	H834
H559		H7200	H1121	H120	
זִקְנֵי י	בֵּית	יִשְׂרָאֵל	עָשׂוּ יִם	בַּחֹשֶׁךְ	אִישׁ
what the ancients	of the house	of Israel	do	in the dark	every man
H2205	H1004	H3478	H6213	H2822	H376
בְּחֻדְרֵי י	מִשְׁכָּנֵי ו	כִּי	אָמַר יִם	אֵין	יְהוָה
in the chambers	of his imagery	H3588	Then said	H369	The LORD
H2315	H4906		H559		H3068
רָאָה	עַל ב	יְהוָה	אֶת	הָאָרֶץ:	
H853	hath forsaken	The LORD	H853	the earth	
	H5800	H3068		H776	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 29:15** (Darkness): Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the LORD, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us?

**Ezekiel 9:9** (References Lord): Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not.

**Psalms 10:11** (Parallel theme): He hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten: he hideth his face; he will never see it.

**Ephesians 5:12** (Parallel theme): For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

**Ezekiel 8:15** (Parallel theme): Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these.