

Ezekiel 8:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy.

Analysis

The Spirit transports Ezekiel in vision to Jerusalem's temple, where he sees 'the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy' (semel haqinah hamaqneh, לְמֹשֶׁבֶת קִנָּה הַמָּקְנֵה). This idol, likely representing Asherah (the Canaanite fertility goddess), was placed at the northern entrance to the inner court—directly facing the temple's holy place. The term 'jealousy' (qinah, קִנָּה) reflects God's covenant exclusivity (Exodus 20:5, 34:14, Deuteronomy 4:24). Just as marital unfaithfulness provokes jealousy in a faithful spouse, idolatry provokes God's righteous jealousy. The idol's location—in the temple itself—makes the offense particularly egregious. This wasn't private household idolatry but public, official desecration of God's dwelling place. The vision reveals why God's glory must depart and judgment must come—His holy presence cannot coexist with idolatrous abomination.

Historical Context

King Manasseh had earlier placed an Asherah idol in the temple (2 Kings 21:7), which Josiah removed during his reforms (2 Kings 23:6). However, after Josiah's death, idolatry resurged under Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. Archaeological evidence confirms widespread Asherah worship in Israel and Judah, with inscriptions

mentioning 'Yahweh and his Asherah.' This syncretism attempted to merge Canaanite fertility religion with Yahwism—a grotesque corruption of monotheistic covenant faith. For exiles in Babylon (where Ezekiel received this vision in 592 BC), this revelation explained Jerusalem's impending destruction. The temple's sanctity had been violated beyond remedy, necessitating divine judgment.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What 'idols of jealousy' compete for God's exclusive place in your heart and worship?
2. How does understanding God's covenant jealousy deepen your appreciation for His passionate love?

Interlinear Text

רָאשׁ	בָּצִיכְתָּה	וַיְשַׁלַּח
And he put forth	the form	of an hand
H7971	H8403	H3027
וַיִּתְבֹּנֶת יְתִי	וְיִקְחֶנֶּנִי	וְיִצְחַצְכֶּנִי
lifted me up	and the spirit	between the earth
H5375	H853	H7307
וְיִתְפַּתְּאֵת יְתִי	בֵּין רַקֵּן וּבֵין	וְיִתְפַּתְּאֵת
and brought	to Jerusalem	me in the visions
H935	H853	H3389
וְיִרְשַׁלְּמֶה מָה	וְיִרְשַׁלְּמֶה אֹתָתִי	וְיִתְפַּתְּאֵת בְּמִראֹת
gate	of the inner	that looketh
H8179	H6442	H6437
וְיִתְפַּנְּמִית שְׁעָר	הַפּוֹנֶן הַפְּנִימִית שְׁעָר	וְיִתְפַּנְּמִית שְׁעָר
where was the seat	of the image	toward the north
H4186	H5566	H6828
מָוֵשׁ בְּ	סְמִלָּה	צָפֵן וּנְהָה
בְּקַנְאָה הַמְּקַנְנָה:	בְּקַנְאָה	צָפֵן וּנְהָה
which provoketh to jealousy		
H7069		

Additional Cross-References

Deuteronomy 32:16 (References God): They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

Ezekiel 11:1 (Spirit): Moreover the spirit lifted me up, and brought me unto the east gate of the LORD'S house, which looketh eastward: and behold at the door of the gate five and twenty men; among whom I saw Jaazaniah the son of Azur, and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah, princes of the people.

Ezekiel 5:11 (References God): Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord GOD; Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity.

Exodus 20:5 (References God): Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

Deuteronomy 32:21 (References God): They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

Deuteronomy 6:15 (References God): (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

Deuteronomy 5:9 (References God): Thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me,

Deuteronomy 4:24 (References God): For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

Ezekiel 2:9 (Parallel theme): And when I looked, behold, an hand was sent unto me; and, lo, a roll of a book was therein;

Ezekiel 11:24 (Spirit): Afterwards the spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me.