

## A Proclamation Against the King of Tyre and against Sidon

### Ezekiel 28

Ezekiel 28:1-10 - *The word of the Lord came to me again, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Because your heart is lifted up, and you say, ‘I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the midst of the seas, ‘yet you are a man, and not a god, though you set your heart as the heart of a god. <sup>3</sup> (Behold, you are wiser than Daniel! There is no secret that can be hidden from you! <sup>4</sup> With your wisdom and your understanding you have gained riches for yourself, and gathered gold and silver into your treasuries. <sup>5</sup> By your great wisdom in trade you have increased your riches, and your heart is lifted up because of your riches),”*

*<sup>6</sup> ‘Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Because you have set your heart as the heart of a god, <sup>7</sup> Behold, therefore, I will bring strangers against you, the most terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and defile your splendor. <sup>8</sup> They shall throw you down into the Pit, and you shall die the death of the slain in the midst of the seas.*

*<sup>9</sup> “Will you still say before him who slays you, ‘I am a god’? But you shall be a man, and not a god in the hand of him who slays you. <sup>10</sup> You shall die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of aliens; For I have spoken,” says the Lord God.”*

### Background Notes

Chapters 26, 27, and 28 contain God’s pronouncement and prophecy of judgment against the ancient city of Tyre. Chapter 26 was a detailed description of the various stages of Tyre’s predicted fall, including the time when Alexander the Great’s army scraped the ruins of mainland Tyre into the sea to build a causeway across the Mediterranean Sea, so Alexander could conquer the defiant island city of Tyre. The evidence of this causeway and the fulfillment of this detailed prophecy still exists today for skeptics of the Bible to consider.

The prophecy against the fall of Tyre continued in chapter 27. Tyre, the proud maritime power of the ancient world, was pictured as a beautiful ship that was caught in a devastating storm. She broke up and sank, and there was no one to rescue her.

In chapter 28 God’s pronouncement of judgment on the great Phoenician city-state of Tyre continued, as the Lord revealed the evil pride of the king of Tyre - and the evil power source behind the king of Tyre.

## Doctrinal Points

### 1. The Lord revealed the evil pride of the king of Tyre.

The human king of Tyre who was denounced in Ezekiel 28 was King Ethbaal. He was the proud ruler of Tyre at the time of Ezekiel's prophecy. This arrogant king deified himself and had to be reminded that he was only a man (v2). Ezekiel's point was not that the king of Tyre didn't have wisdom and ability – he *did*. He had greatly increased the trade and wealth of Tyre, and it had become a great commercial power in the ancient world (v5). But as a result, the king and his whole kingdom were lifted up with pride and placed themselves above God (v6).

Therefore God, who hates man's pride, had to cut Tyre down to size, and He would do it at the hands of strangers from foreign nations. Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was the first enemy stranger to conquer Tyre. The great city would die a shameful death like those who die at sea with no burial, and like an uncircumcised barbarian (v7-10). The once proud king and kingdom of Tyre would no longer say, "I am a god."

Notice that Daniel, who was a captive in Babylon at this time, was already known for his wisdom (v3). Daniel, however, was not lifted up with pride. He gave all the glory to God for his wisdom, and was honored as a result. The Lord revealed and judged the evil pride of the king of Tyre.

### 2. The Lord revealed the evil power of the king of Tyre.

Ezekiel 28:11-19 - *"Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, <sup>12</sup> "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord God: "You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. <sup>13</sup> You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created.*

*<sup>14</sup> "You were the anointed cherub who covers. I established you. You were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.*

*<sup>15</sup> You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, until iniquity was found in you.*

*<sup>16</sup> "By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned.*

*Therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones.*

*<sup>17</sup> "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground. I laid you before kings that they might gaze at you. <sup>18</sup> "You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your trading; therefore I brought fire from your midst. It devoured you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you.*

*<sup>19</sup> All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; you have become a horror, and shall be no more forever.'"*

Conservative evangelical Christians with a high view of Scripture are divided in their interpretation of this passage of Scripture. Some see it just as a continuing denunciation of the human king of Tyre, using highly figurative language for this ruler who regarded himself as a god. Others (myself included) interpret this passage as going beyond the human king of Tyre, and believe it describes the evil power source behind this pagan king: Satan himself.

Certain verses here could never be said of a human king. The human king of Tyre certainly was not in the Garden of Eden, the human king of Tyre was never a cherub, and the human king of Tyre was not created perfect, without a sinful nature (v13-15).

What do we learn about Satan in this passage? He was a very beautiful and majestic, a high-ranking angel who was created without sin. He was closely associated with the throne of God. He was perfect himself - until he became proud. Because of the sin of pride, God removed him from his high position, and ultimately he will be consigned to hell forever.

The human king of Tyre followed the same sinful path. Because of the commercial wealth and power of his great city, he became filled with sinful arrogance. God had to cut him down, and all who witnessed the downfall of the king of Tyre were amazed and appalled.

The Bible nowhere specifically tells us when the creation and fall of Satan took place. I believe Scripture implies that Satan was created during the Genesis 1 "Creation Week," and that he fell shortly after Creation Week - probably not too long after. I take this position for the following reasons:

**a.** Angels are created beings and therefore they function in the "space - matter - time function" universe that God created during the Creation Week of Genesis 1. Only God functions outside His created universe.

**b.** At the end of Creation Week God saw everything that He had made and indeed it was very good (Genesis 1:31). It sounds like everything was in perfect harmony, with no jarring notes, such as a fallen Satan. And Genesis 2:1 says, "*Thus the heavens and the earth and all their hosts were finished.*" "All their hosts" may be a reference to the created angelic host.

**c.** We see here in Ezekiel 28 that Satan was in the Garden of Eden initially in his unfallen state. It's possible that the high place God gave to mankind in His created world, and the close communion of God with Adam and Eve, may have been the trigger that caused pride and jealousy in Satan.

**d.** Job 38:7 says that at the time of creation, all the "sons of God" shouted for joy. The inference is that all the angels rejoiced because they were still all holy angels.

And there's certainly "more we could say"! The Lord revealed the evil power of the king of Tyre.

## Practical Application

### Remember what Jesus said about Tyre and Sidon!

Ezekiel 28:20-26 - *"Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, <sup>21</sup> "Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, and prophesy against her, <sup>22</sup> and say, 'Thus says the Lord God:*

*"Behold, I am against you, O Sidon; I will be glorified in your midst; and they shall know that I am the Lord when I execute judgments in her and am hallowed in her.*

*<sup>23</sup> For I will send pestilence upon her, and blood in her streets. The wounded shall be judged in her midst by the sword against her on every side.*

*Then they shall know that I am the Lord.*

*<sup>24</sup> "And there shall no longer be a pricking brier or a painful thorn for the house of Israel from among all who are around them, who despise them. Then they shall know that I am the Lord God."*

*<sup>25</sup> Thus says the Lord God: "When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob. <sup>26</sup> And they will dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I am the Lord their God.'"*

This chapter closes with good news for Israel: in the future God would restore Israel as a nation, and they would build and dwell in safety. This prophecy has not been fulfilled yet - but we're seeing the beginning! When the Lord returns, this prophecy will be completely fulfilled. It is not being fulfilled in the Church, as some teach. It will be fulfilled in the restored and revived Jewish state of Israel!

Sidon, Tyre's sister city (about twenty-five miles north on the Mediterranean coast) was also denounced and placed under God's judgment (v20-23). All of this came true with Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of this area, but the prophecy about Sidon never said that it would be completely destroyed - and be no more. And ancient Sidon still exists today – but it has never known peace for any length of time. It seems that verse 23 continues to be fulfilled, even to this present day. Go online and read a history of Sidon - and keep your eye on the news!

In addition, remember what Jesus said about Tyre and Sidon. When Jesus denounced the cities of Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida for not believing on Him, He said, *"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you"* (Matthew 11:21-22).

God judged Tyre and Sidon because of their great sins. Rejecting Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord is an even greater sin. So if you have never trusted in Christ for salvation - remember what Jesus said about Tyre and Sidon!