

Ezekiel – Study 11

Would Ezekiel have stood a better chance of success in our churches today?

Ezekiel Chapter 28

In the last study I made an inadequate attempt to explain the tremendous power and might the king of Tyre had built up for himself over many years. We looked at the geographical position of the city of Tyre, the old city on the traffic route right along the coast South West to Egypt where much of Tyre's riches came from, and the extending of the main land by way of a causeway to a rock island where palaces, fine houses and security garrisons were built.

We looked at God's bitter disappointment at the king's massive pride problem as well as His condemnation at the king's treatment of Israel. We also saw the downfall and ruin of this great city at the hand of God, prophesied by Ezekiel which left this great and powerful place devoid of all splendour and left it the flat empty rock that it was before it all began.

This study takes on a different meaning of the name Tyre and one we all must recognise, let's start and ask the Lord to help us.

Chapter 28 verse 1 and 2

The word of the Lord came again to me saying. Son of man say unto the prince of Tyre thus says the Lord God; Because your heart is lifted up and you have said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet you are a man and not God though you set your heart as the heart of God.

God knows our hearts and what it says, even that which we think in our hearts is known to God. He knew the thoughts of "The prince of Tyre" and that he had set himself up as a god. He said "I am a god and I sit in the seat of God in the midst of the seas" He was thinking thoughts like "as God sits enthroned in His glory so I sit secure, safe and impregnable in my stronghold and I am able to control my subjects at will". The word 'seas' in the Bible often refers to people, vast numbers of people and Ithobal the king of Tyre felt he had control of vast numbers of people because they all came to or past by Tyre every day to trade, worship and work and bring their gifts or levy to the king. Also ships from far and wide came to Tyre's vast harbour where thousands of men loaded and unloaded these vessels bringing vast wealth to Tyre.

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Chapter 27 verses 12 onwards shows the amount of men, kings, merchants and peoples who traded with Tyre making the king very wealthy indeed and the city of Tyre the trading capital of the world.

v 12 **Tarshish**; - multitude of all kinds of riches with silver, iron, tin and lead,

v 13 **Javan, Tubal, and Mesheck**- traded in persons (slaves) and vessels of brass,

v14 **Togarmah**- traded in horses and horsemen and mules,

v15 **Dedan**- ivory and ebony,

v16 **Syria**- emeralds, purple, brodered work, fine linen and coral.

v17 **Judah**- wheat, pannag, honey, oil and balm.

v18 **Damascus**- wine and white wool.

v19 **Dan**- bright iron, cassia, and calamus.

v20 **Dedan**- precious clothes for chariots.

v21 **Arabia**- lambs, rams and goats.

v22 **Sheba and Raamah**- all spices, precious stones and gold.

V23 **Haran, Canneh, Eden, Sheba, Asshur and Chilmad**, were also some of the towns and cities that came to trade at Tyre. Haran for instance was about 300 miles from Tyre, **Tarshish** was in Spain which shows us how important Tyre was and how these other places were dependent upon Tyre for their livelihood. They all were a part of the “sea” the king of Tyre said he was in the centre of sitting on his throne!

God turns His attention to Tyre’s ruler Ithobal or Ithobaal who is symbolic of Satan, who had become rich and powerful with all these towns and cities coming to trade at his markets and as his name suggests had close connections with Baal a Phoenician god.

Verse 2

Because your heart is lifted up and you have said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet you are a man and not a God though you set your heart as the heart of God.

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Here God was putting Ithobaal in his place reminding him through Ezekiel that he was only a man albeit with big ideas of himself and full of pride. It is interesting to note that Paul's description of the man of sin gives the same picture using almost the same words.

2 Thessalonians 2 verse 3 & 4.

....and that man of sin be revealed, the son of partition who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped so that he as God sits in the Temple of God showing himself that he is God.

Thank God that verse also tells us that when every born again Bible believing Christian is taken out of the way (to be with Christ) then the Antichrist will then be revealed.

Ezekiel 28. 3,4,5.

Behold, you are wiser than Daniel there is no secret that they can hide from you.

Here king Ithobaal of Tyre thinks he is wiser than Daniel whose fame had reached Tyre, and that his subjects could have no secrets from him and they could not hide any dark deed from him either. But all this was in his mind, he was not greater than Daniel and he was neither a mind reader nor a god.

With your wisdom and with your understanding you have gotten yourself riches and have gotten gold and silver into your treasures. By your great wisdom and by your traffic have you increased your riches and your heart is lifted up because of your riches.

As we have studied earlier God can read our minds, He did with the Children of Israel when they thought "God cannot see our deeds in the dark" God also acknowledges our success, He is pleased when we are successful in business or in music or painting or singing, politics, sport or anything else His children may pursue. What God will not tolerate is any of those pursuits coming before Him and allowing them to lead us into pride. Neither must we take these verses to promote poverty nor lack in the church. God wants us all to prosper *as our souls prosper*.

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Then God says to the king through Ezekiel: v.6

*Therefore says the Lord God because you have set your heart as the heart of God;
Behold therefore I will bring strangers upon you the terrible of the nations and they
draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom and they shall defile your
brightness. They shall bring you down to the pit and you shall die the deaths of them
who are slain in the midst of the sea.*

The love of riches is the great sin of mankind fuelled by pride and encouraged by Satan. Satan, also full of pride has wanted to be God even before the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. All who follow Satan has that same spirit.

God said He will bring strangers upon the king of Tyre and as we have seen those “strangers” amongst others, were the Crusaders, Byzantines, Arab and Greco-Roman empires who in turn did their bit to pull down this proud and head strong king’s empire.

Verse 8

*They shall bring you down to the pit and you shall die the deaths of them who are slain
in the midst of the sea.*

They shall bring you down to the pit refers to Hell, there is no half way with God’s message, the Bible tells us pride comes before a fall and in Ithobaal’s case his pride led him straight into hell. We are not told however how this king died but the inference is that he died at sea and was certainly not given a Royal funeral.

Verse 11 begins the 46th Prophecy from the Lord to Ezekiel’s.

All that is written from verse 11 to 19 has a double reference to the earthly king a man, and to the supernatural king Satan or Lucifer who ruled Tyre through an earthly monarch. There are statements in these verses that could not possibly refer to a human being and therefore must relate to Satan the sponsor of a king who has opened himself up to his leading.

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Verse 12.

Thus says the Lord God; you seal up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You have been in Eden the garden of God every precious stone was your covering the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle and gold. The workmanship of your tabrets and of your pipes was prepared in you in the day that you were created.

The phrase “seal up the sum” refers to Satan being the one who was sealed to the sum of perfection. This phrase implies ‘the full measure of perfection’. A thing is sealed when it is completed. Lucifer is a created being and God created him an angel so one can imagine the completeness, the beauty and perfection of God’s creation. He was covered from head to toe in precious stones mentioned above, they were his covering and we just cannot imagine what he looked like he was beauty beyond our thinking or understanding.

Verse 14. 15

You are the anointed Cherub that covereth and I have set you so; you were upon the perfect in your ways from the days that you were created, until iniquity was found in you.

He was the anointed cherub and was set, by God on God’s Holy Mountain and he walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. The Bible says he was in Eden the garden of God so it is quite likely he was there from the very beginning. This was not the Eden of Adam and Eve although Satan was in that Eden too this was a pre-Adam earth as shown in

2 Peter 3 5-7. (and other places)

*For this they are willingly ignorant of that which by the Word of God the Heavens were of old and the earth standing out of the water and in the water. 6 **Whereby the world that then was being overflowed with water perished,** 7. But the heavens and the earth which are now by the same Word are kept in store reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment and Perdition of the ungodly men.*

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Neither was any earthly king in the Eden of Adam and Eve, this was God's original Creation of loveliness and perfection called Lucifer walking up and down the stones of fire on pavements of sapphire and gold in perfection and sinlessness: this was certainly before Adams time, Satan as we have known him has always been the man of sin and the deceiver since he was introduced to us as the serpent tempting Eve.

Verse 13

The workmanship of your tabrets and your pipes was prepared in you in the day that you were created.

His musical instruments were already made especially for him and in him, his whole being was a beautiful, wonderful sound that produced praise and worship to the God who made him. He was set on the Mountain of God by God Himself and no doubt was the worship master and leader of that time to all the hosts of created beings God filled heaven with. There is no reference to Angels in the Mountain of God at the time of the king of Tyre's rule so the reference is to the Cherub himself when he had an exalted place in the Mountain of God when here on earth before his fall.

I am fully aware that some do not agree that there was a pre-Adam age and that our world is only 6-10 thousand years old I respect their view if they respect mine. I have only brought this subject up because Satan is found in our present study of Tyre Chapter 28.

Isaiah 14 v 12. 13. 14

How are you fallen from Heaven O Lucifer, son of the morning? How are you cut down to the ground which did weaken the nations?

For you have said in your heart, I will ascend into Heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north.

I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the Most High.

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Satan served the Lord in righteousness for a period of time but his heart was lifted up to vanity and in his heart he made plans to exalt himself above God. Colossians 1 verse 15 to 18 tells us God created thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers in heaven and earth and Lucifer was given dominion of the earth because he said he would ascend into heaven to get the host of heaven to follow him in his war against God. Satan said in his heart I will exalt my throne above the stars of God so if he had a throne he also had a kingdom over which he was trusted by God to rule. A lot more could be said of Satan and his downfall and it is well worth a study because it is a good thing to know your enemy as any army commander will tell us.

Verse 16 tells us that God, who is all powerful and almighty said He would cast out Satan as profane from the mountain of God and would destroy him, He said He would cast him to the ground and lay him before kings that they may behold him.

Ultimately Satan will be cast into the lake of fire where he will meet all the kings of the world and all those that have followed him and have been duped by him throughout the ages who are also in Hell because of him, they will hate him with an indescribable passion... and they will have all eternity to do it in.

As we have said from verse 11 to 19 there is a double reference between the king of Tyre and Satan which has references and verses that could not refer to an earthly man. We have reminded ourselves of the origin of Lucifer in the Heavens on the mountain of God and of his being cast out of Heaven by God Himself to the earth below. We know the coming end of Satan as he knows himself; we know he is at war with the Saints of God and as the return of Christ draws near his attack is increasing. So many of my Christian friends feel with me they are in the war zone too. Sickness, marriage breakdowns, murders, abandonment and ill treatment of children is rampant, stealing, fraud and deceit, sinfulness and heartaches are all around us and we can lay all this at the door of Satan and his final quest to defeat God and His Saints.

Take heart my friends the one thing we can be sure of is that he will NOT win, his time is short and his destiny is Hell.

Revelation 3 verse 12 says:

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To him who overcomes will I grant to sit with Me in My throne

Only a small verse but it has such a tremendous hope for the Christian whose name is written in the Lambs book of life, no matter what difficulties you are fighting, remember it's too late to give up now He's on His way! Keep looking up, soon He will break the clouds with His brightness the trumpet will sound and the overcomers will be away to Heaven, and Satan...well he hasn't got much to look forward to has he?

Blessings to you all.