

Review

God has pronounced judgement upon those in the northeast, east, southeast, and west. Now, He turns to the north and directs his words towards Tyre, a seaport city of Phoenicia.

26:1-3 Tyre's Destruction Like Waves

Tyre was a city north of Israel located on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. They were just across the border from the Israeli territory of the tribe of Asher, and were actually allies with Israel during the days of King David and King Solomon (2Sam 5; 1Kin 5; 1Chron 14; 2Chron 2). Unfortunately, they turned against Israel in later years - even selling Jews as slaves (Joel 3:4-6; Amos 1:9).

God announced the judgment of Tyre as being because they said of Jerusalem, "The gateway of the peoples is broken - it has opened to me, and I will be filled." The story behind this statement is that before the Jews were carried away into the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, all of the trade caravans going between Egypt and Tyre had to go through Israel and were taxed. Now the merchants of Tyre were rejoicing over the fact that the Jews have been judged by God and removed from the land. As we were reminded in chapter 25, God is against any nation who is against the Jews.

God says that Tyre is hoping to be filled with traders, but instead He will fill her with a flood of attackers.

26:4-21 Tyre's Destruction

"Many nations" will be brought up against Tyre (v.3) in judgment. This judgment is described in an odd, inconceivable way. But God's word is always sure, and it proved to be quite literal.

After Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed Jerusalem, he put the city of Tyre to siege. In 573BC, it fell to the Babylonians after being besieged for 13 years. But in the meantime, the residents of Tyre had fled to an island which was about a half mile offshore. With a channel of water 20 feet deep separating them from the mainland, and the island's 150-foot high walls, they believed that they were now invincible.

The entire population of Tyre had been relocated, and they were safe for about 250 years. But then came the reign of Alexander the Great. As Alexander and his troops were marching toward Egypt, he sent messengers to Tyre offering them a treaty of peace. However, the Tyrians believed they were invincible in their unconquerable fortress, and killed his messengers.

As a result, Alexander came to attack Tyre. But how? There was no way to attack the city from the sea, and the land was too far away. Then Alexander had an idea. Why not bring the land closer to the island?

His army began to disassemble the old city of Tyre and cast it into the sea. All of the stones and timber were turned into a land bridge: twenty feet high and two hundred feet wide, slowly advancing towards the island. After seven months of construction (Jan-July 332BC), Alexander's archers and catapults destroyed the city's defenses. Over 7,000 died defending the island, 2,000 were crucified on the beach, and the remaining 30,000 Tyrians were sold into slavery.

God's Word through Ezekiel had been fulfilled exactly.

27:1-36 A Lamentation Over Tyre

The Phoenicians were quite proud of their city of Tyre. After all, it was world-renowned as a sea-faring center of trade. Tyre was called "the Queen of the Sea" in the ancient world. It is believed by many historians that sea navigation originated in Tyre. Isaiah mentions that Tyre's merchants were princes, and their traders were "the honored of the earth" (Isa. 23:8).

They had lots of allies, lots of customers, and lots of pride. But soon, they would become the "talk of the town" for another reason: their total destruction.

28:1-10 The Prince Of Tyre

God was also personally disgusted with the prince of Tyre. This ruler had become so prideful of his position, he actually began to think of himself as a god. God communicated through Ezekiel's prophecy, "To men, you are wise and intelligent. You are rich. You have power and in-

fluence. But you are not a god, and I will demonstrate this to everyone by your death."

28:11-19 The King Of Tyre

Next, the Lord speaks against the king of Tyre. As it turns out, the king of Tyre was the man against whom the Lord had prophesied in verses 1-10. This ruler is above him. This is the ruler of Tyre in the spiritual realm. This ruler is Satan himself.

There are not a lot of passages in the Bible that tell us much about Satan's origins. When he shows up in Genesis 3, he is already fallen. When he appears before the Lord's throne in Job 1 & 2 and Zechariah 3, he is already fallen. When he is shown in gospels and the book of Revelation, he is already fallen.

It is really just here in Ezekiel and In Isaiah (14:3-21) that we learn of Satan's origins. By combining the information found in both passages, some details and a scenario begin to unfold:

Satan was created (Eze. 28:13). He was beautiful and wise (Eze. 28:12), with a radiant appearance (Eze. 28:13). He was one of the cherubim (Eze. 28:14,16). He was on the holy mountain of God (Eze. 28:14) and in Eden, the garden of God (Eze. 28:13).

He was blameless until he became unrighteous (Eze. 28:15). What caused this unrighteousness? He had an abundant trade, which made him sin (Eze. 28:16,18). Isaiah says that the music of his harps brought him down (Isa. 14:11). What does all that add up to?

From our reading of Revelation, it seems that the cherubim direct the worship of God:

Rev. 4:8-11 And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME." And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on

the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, "Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created."

Our assumption is that while Satan was leading the worship of God, playing music on his harps, he began to think that he was something. He became proud because of his beauty and wisdom (Eze. 28:17). He wanted that worship for himself - He wanted to be like God. And so, he said in his heart,

Is. 14:13-14 ..."I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

As a result, he was cast out from the mountain of God (Eze. 28:16). Now, he roams about on the earth (Job 1:7), being the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2), and has his throne on earth (Rev. 2:13). That's why he is called the king of Tyre (Eze. 28:12) and the king of Babylon (Isa. 14:4).

Here in Ezekiel 28, God not only reviews Satan's history, but makes a promise to him for the future:

Ezek. 28:19 "...you will cease to be forever."

Jesus told us that there is an eternal fire prepared for the devil (Matt. 25:41).

28:20-24 Prophecy Against Sidon

About 20 miles up the coast from Tyre was Sidon. Many times the Bible makes reference to "Tyre and Sidon." Probably the most well-known mention of these sister cities was from Jesus Himself. When He sent out the seventy disciples in pairs in advance to prepare the cities to which He was coming, He instructed them,

Luke 10:10-14 "...whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'Even the dust

of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city. Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you."

During Ezekiel's day, Sidon was about to face God's judgment in the form of pestilence and attack of enemies. However, in the day of judgment, theirs won't be as severe as that which the cities who rejected the gospel will face.

28:25-26 Israel Will Dwell Securely

God is not done condemning the nations. For the next four chapters, His Words of judgment will be directed toward Egypt in the south. However, He takes a moment to offer some words of comfort to Israel. There will be plenty more words like this to come before the book of Ezekiel is over.