

Pentwater Bible Church

Book of Ezekiel

Message 58

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Pentwater Bible Church

The Book of Ezekiel
Message Fifty-Eight

THE LORD JUDGES TYRE PART IV

October 23, 2016

Daniel E. Woodhead

Ezekiel 27:28-28:10

²⁸At the sound of the cry of thy pilots the suburbs shall shake. ²⁹And all that handled the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships; they shall stand upon the land, ³⁰and shall cause their voice to be heard over thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes: ³¹and they shall make themselves bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee in bitterness of soul with bitter mourning. ³²And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, saying, Who is there like Tyre, like her that is brought to silence in the midst of the sea? ³³When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many peoples; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise. ³⁴In the time that thou wast broken by the seas in the depths of the waters, thy merchandise and all thy company did fall in the midst of thee. ³⁵All the inhabitants of the isles are astonished at thee, and their kings are horribly afraid; they are troubled in their countenance. ³⁶The merchants among the peoples hiss at thee; thou art become a terror, and thou shalt nevermore have any being.

28 *The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying, ²Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyre, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because thy heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art man, and not God, though thou didst set thy heart as the heart of God;— ³behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that is hidden from thee; ⁴by thy wisdom and by thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures; ⁵by thy great wisdom and by thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches, and thy heart is lifted up because of thy riches;— ⁶therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because thou hast set thy heart as the heart of God, ⁷therefore, behold, I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. ⁸They shall bring thee down to the pit; and thou shalt die the death of them that are slain, in the heart of the seas. ⁹Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou art man, and not God, in the hand of him that woundeth thee. ¹⁰Thou shalt die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah (ASV, 1901).*

THE NEIGHBORING DISTRICTS OF TYRE QUAKE

Ezekiel 27:28-29

²⁸At the sound of the cry of thy pilots the suburbs shall shake. ²⁹And all that handled the oar, the mariners, and all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships; they shall stand upon the land (ASV, 1901).

The description of Tyrus as a ship was given in the first part of this chapter. Here it is now following their end as being shipwrecked. The east wind is Nebuchadnezzar, who came against the proud city to accomplish part of her ruin on the mainland portion. Alexander the Great, completed the work in 332 B.C. when the central island fell. They who manned the ship also perish with the cargo,—“the seamen,” i.e., sailors, rowers, repairers of leaks (calkers). So too would the merchants on board, and the mercenary army who defended the ship as well as its goods against pirates. All would sink into the heart of the sea.

Now the Lord says that even the mariners in neighboring districts, which were on dry land will shake at the announcement of Tyre’s destruction. All the seemingly hyperbolic statements related to Tyre’s destruction are meant to convey the thoroughness of the destruction as well as its effect on the neighboring areas and countries. Like the foretold earth’s perverse economic destruction in Revelation chapter eighteen this was complete. This is total destruction of all the seafaring trade that was led by and dominated by the Tyrians.

THEY SHALL WAIL FOR THE LOSS

Ezekiel 27:30-31

³⁰and shall cause their voice to be heard over thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes: ³¹and they shall make themselves bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee in bitterness of soul with bitter mourning, ³²And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, saying, Who is there like Tyre, like her that is brought to silence in the midst of the sea? (ASV, 1901).

Tyrians will cause all to lose jobs and watch and even wail at the loss of their economic benefits. The sailors will sing a dirge lamenting the destruction of Tyre. They will follow ancient grieving practices such as *cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes: ³¹and they shall make themselves bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee in bitterness of soul with bitter mourning.* These are ancient pagan methods of exhibiting grief. Now that they have no ships they move to dry land and express their grief in the strongest visible manner known to them.

THE REGIONAL KINGS LOSE COMFORT AT TYRE’S DESTRUCTION

Ezekiel 27:33-36

³³When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many peoples; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy

merchandise. ³⁴*In the time that thou wast broken by the seas in the depths of the waters, thy merchandise and all thy company did fall in the midst of thee.* ³⁵*All the inhabitants of the isles are astonished at thee, and their kings are horribly afraid; they are troubled in their countenance.* ³⁶*The merchants among the peoples hiss at thee; thou art become a terror, and thou shalt nevermore have any being (ASV, 1901).*

Tyre's commercial trading had caused many others to be wealthy. The nations who profited the most from Tyre's monopolistic trading in the Mediterranean would be appalled at her destruction. The kings of the nations who benefited the most would become afraid of what might happen to them too if mighty Tyre could be taken down so easily and swiftly. The text shows their troubled facial expressions as they learn the news of Tyre's fate. The merchants would initially be shocked at what was happening to Tyre. But, just as quickly they would realize that they were now independent of the economic monopoly that Tyre had commanded. They would stand to benefit from this as trade freed up in the Mediterranean. They would be glad to be rid of their confiscatory trading partner. This would cause them to hiss at them in derision. The fickleness of the trading partners was not much different than Tyre's attitude toward Jerusalem when they rejoiced over Jerusalem's downfall (Ezekiel 26:2).

THE DOWNFALL OF THE PRINCE OF THE CITY

Ezekiel 28:1-2

¹*The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying,* ²*Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyre, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because thy heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art man, and not God, though thou didst set thy heart as the heart of God (ASV, 1901).*

This chapter will conclude the oracles that God gave Ezekiel about Tyre. In this new message that God wanted to convey to the earthly ruler of Tyre called a prince (Hebrew *nagid*) which means the man at the top of the city state of Tyre. God wanted to specifically address him in a special message. He says that this man's heart was lifted up in pride and so much that he declared himself to be a god. But more than that he said he sits in the of the genuine *seat of God* in the midst of the Mediterranean. Here he is referring to the economic prowess he was able to administer in the shipping and trading with her partners. God says that never the less *thou art man, and not God*. The kings of Tyre believed they were divine. This ruler was Ethbaal III, who ruled from 591–590 B.C. to 573–572 B.C. Josephus calls him Ithobalus II. This chapter is full of unique expressions and because of its timing before the invasion of Nebuchadnezzar is clearly referring in the first part to the Babylonian invasion. The attitude of the king is more to the point that God is making here than a particular king. It was extreme pride brought on by massive success and control exercised over all the seafaring trade at that time in the Mediterranean Sea. The subsequent portion of this chapter will refer to the source of the spiritual wickedness driving this king. But for here it is definitely a reference to an actual human king with pride and self-sufficiency on a grand scale. When the king proclaimed his self deification he was displaying the same spirit as the anointed cherub Hallal (aka Lucifer) who promised Adam and Eve that they could be as God (Genesis 3:5; Isaiah 14:13-14; II Thessalonians 2:4).

IS THE KING WISER THAN DANIEL?

Ezekiel 28:3-5

³behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that is hidden from thee; ⁴by thy wisdom and by thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures; ⁵by thy great wisdom and by thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches, and thy heart is lifted up because of thy riches (ASV, 1901).

In his pride he was so lifted up that he claimed to be a god and that he occupied the seat of God. He also boasted of wisdom greater than the wisdom of Daniel, the Israeli captive in Babylon. By now many in the Mid-East had heard of Daniel, his ascension to the role of prime minister of Babylon, his leadership of the Magi, and his prophecies. By Ethbaal's cunning and wisdom, as well as by the economic traffic in the Mediterranean, he had heaped up riches, and because of these riches he became still more lifted up. Similar to the prosperous and wealthy king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, who gloried in his achievements by saying, "*Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the Kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty*" (Daniel 4:30), the Prince of Tyrus also boasted in arrogant pride.

GOD WILL DESTROY THE PRINCE OF TYRE

Ezekiel 28:6-8

⁶therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because thou hast set thy heart as the heart of God, ⁷therefore, behold, I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness. ⁸They shall bring thee down to the pit; and thou shalt die the death of them that are slain, in the heart of the seas (ASV, 1901).

God now says that "*because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God.*" He would bring nations against him and his city, and "*they shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the heart of the seas.*" By using the plural for the "strangers" God is making reference to the final end of Tyre in 332 B.C. with Alexander the Great in addition to the impending invasion of the Babylonians. Instead of having endless personal delusion of being a god he would die a sudden and violent death. Unimpressed with Ethbaal's beauty and wisdom, Nebuchadnezzar would destroy him in a most violent way in the heart of the seas. The Babylonians were known for their extreme cruelty toward the nations they invaded and conquered. The pit is a reference to the underworld realm where all dead people and civilizations go. For the king to go there, as representative of his city and all it stood for, was God's verdict against Tyre's arrogance.

THE DEATH OF THE UNCIRCUMCISED

Ezekiel 28:9-10

⁹Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou art man, and not God, in the hand of him that woundeth thee. ¹⁰Thou shalt die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah (ASV, 1901).

God is specifically addressing the prince of Tyre when He asks if he will declare to Nebuchadnezzar that he is God? Surely the invader will laugh at him and just give him an extra painful death. But God says that He should die the death of the uncircumcised, typifying vile and wicked men who are far away from God. While the Phoenicians practiced circumcision, God's words conveyed a meaning that went beyond this cultural practice. To "*die the death of the uncircumcised*" meant to die in shame (Ezekiel 32:30; 1 Samuel 17:26, 36). This king who claimed to be a god would suffer an ignoble death as a man. To call someone "uncircumcised" was a contemptuous remark, regardless of whether the person was circumcised or not. God uses a term of extreme offense without implying that its literal truth as applied to Tyre or its king. This strong language was representative of Hebrew scorn (1 Samuel 17:36; 31:4). It was also used of those whose bodies were either left unburied or cast into the earth without and proper service or acknowledgement. By stating the plural dying deaths, which means a physical death and that which follows the wicked after death, an eternal separation from God, with conscious punishment.

NEXT MESSAGE: THE PROPHECY AGAINST THE ANOINTED CHERUB WHO BECAME SATAN

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