

# CHAPTER 28

In this chapter we have,

- I.** A prediction of the fall and ruin of the king of Tyre, who, in the destruction of that city, is particularly set up as a mark for God's arrows (v. 1-10).
- II.** A lamentation for the king of Tyre, when he has thus fallen, though he falls by his own iniquity (v. 11-19).
- III.** A prophecy of the destruction of Zidon, which as in the neighbourhood of Tyre and had a dependence upon it (v. 20-23).
- IV.** A promise of the restoration of the Israel of God, though in the day of their calamity they were insulted over by their neighbours (v. 24-26).

## ~~330~~ EZEKIEL 28:1-10

### FALL OF THE PRINCE OF TYRE

We had done with Tyrus in the foregoing chapter, but now the prince of Tyrus is to be singled out from the rest. Here is something to be said to him by himself, a *message to him from God*, which the prophet must send him, whether he will hear or whether he will forbear.

**I.** He must tell him of his pride. His people are proud (~~327B~~ Ezekiel 27:3) and so is he; and they shall both be made to know that *God resists the proud*. Let us see,

**1.** What were the expressions of his pride: *His heart was lifted up*, v. 2. He had a great conceit of himself, was puffed up with an opinion of his own sufficiency, and looked with disdain upon all about him. Out of the abundance of the pride of his heart he said, *I am a god*; he did not only say it in his heart, but had the impudence to speak it out. God has said of princes, *They are gods* (~~380B~~ Psalm 82:6); but it does not become them to say so of themselves; it is a high affront to him who is *God alone*, and will not give his glory to another. He thought that the city of Tyre had as necessary a dependence upon him as the world has upon the God that

made it, and that he was himself independent as God and unaccountable to any. He thought himself to have as much wisdom and strength as God himself, and as incontestable an authority, and that his prerogatives were as absolute and his word as much a law as the word of God. He challenged divine honours, and expected to be praised and admired as a god, and doubted not to be deified, among other heroes, after his death as a great benefactor to the world. Thus the king of Babylon said, *I will be like the Most High* (<sup>2344</sup>Isaiah 14:14), not like the *Most Holy*. “*I am the strong God, and therefore will not be contradicted, because I cannot be controlled. I sit in the seat of God; I sit as high as God, my throne equal with his. Divisum imperium cum Jove Caesar habet — Caesar divides dominion with Jove. I sit as safely as God, as safely in the heart of the seas, and as far out of the reach of danger, as he in the height of heaven.*” He thinks his guards of men of war about his throne as pompous and potent as the hosts of angels that are about the throne of God. He is put in mind of his meanness and mortality, and, since he needs to be told, he shall be told, that self-evident truth, *Thou art a man, and not God, a depending creature; thou art flesh, and not spirit,* <sup>233B</sup>Isaiah 31:3. Note, Men must be made to know that they are *but men,* <sup>498B</sup>Psalms 9:20. The greatest wits, the greatest potentates, the greatest saints, are *men, and not gods*. Jesus Christ was both God and man. The king of Tyre, though he has such a mighty influence upon all about him, and with the help of his riches bears a mighty sway, though he has tribute and presents brought to his court with as much devotion as if they were sacrifices to his altar, though he is flattered by his courtiers and made a god of by his poets, yet, after all, he is *but a man*; he knows it; he fears it. But *he sets his heart as the heart of God*; “Thou hast conceited thyself to be a god, hast compared thyself with God, thinking thyself as wise and strong, and as fit to govern the world, as he.” It was the ruin of our first parents, and ours in them, that they would be *as gods,* <sup>418B</sup>Genesis 3:5. And still that corrupt nature which inclines men to set up themselves as their own masters, to do what they will, and their own carvers, to have what they will, their own end, to live to themselves, and their own felicity, to enjoy themselves, *sets their hearts as the heart of God*, invades his prerogatives, and catches at the flowers of his crown — a presumption that cannot go unpunished.

2. We are here told what it was that he was proud of.

(1.) His wisdom. It is probable that this prince of Tyre was a man of very good natural parts, a philosopher, and well read in all the parts of learning

that were then in vogue, at least a politician, and one that had great dexterity in managing the affairs of state. And then he thought himself *wiser than Daniel*, v. 3. We found, before, that Daniel, though now but a young man, was celebrated for his prevalency in prayer, <sup><344></sup>Ezekiel 14:14. Here we find he was famous for his prudence in the management of the affairs of this world, a great scholar and statesman, and withal a great saint, and yet not a prince, but a poor captive. It was strange that under such external disadvantages his lustre should shine forth, so that he had become *wise to a proverb*. When the king of Tyre dreams himself to be a god he says, I am *wiser than Daniel*. *There is no secret that they can hide from thee*. Probably he challenged all about him to *prove him with questions*, as Solomon was proved, and he had unriddled all their enigmas, had solved all their problems, and none of them all could puzzle him. He had perhaps been successful in discovering plots, and diving into the counsels of the neighbouring princes, and therefore thought himself omniscient, and that no thought could be withholden from him; therefore he said, *I am a god*. Note, *Knowledge puffeth up*; it is hard to know much and not to know it too well and to be elevated with it. He that was *wiser than Daniel* was prouder than Lucifer. Those therefore that are knowing must study to be humble and to evidence that they are so.

(2.) His wealth. That way his wisdom led him; it is not said that by his wisdom he searched into the arcana either of nature or government, modelled the state better than it was, or made better laws, or advanced the interests of the commonwealth of learning; but his *wisdom and understanding* were of use to him in *traffic*. As some of the kings of Judah *loved husbandry* (<sup><483></sup>2 Chronicles 26:10), so the king of Tyre loved merchandise, and by it he *got riches, increased his riches, and filled his treasures with gold and silver*, v. 4, 5. See what the wisdom of this world is; those are cried up as the wisest men that know how to get money and by right or wrong to raise estates; and yet really *this their way is their folly*, <sup><343></sup>Psalms 49:13. It was the folly of the king of Tyre,

[1.] That he attributed the increase of his wealth to himself and not to the providence of God, forgetting him who *gave him power to get wealth*, <sup><387></sup>Deuteronomy 8:17, 18.

[2.] That he thought himself a wise man because he was a rich man; whereas a fool may have an estate (<sup><209></sup>Ecclesiastes 2:19), yea, and a fool

may get an estate, for the world has been often observed to favour such, *when bread is not to the wise*, <sup><301></sup>Ecclesiastes 9:11.

[3.] That *his heart was lifted up because of his riches*, because of the increase of his wealth, which made him so haughty and secure, so insolent and imperious, and which *set his heart as the heart of God*. The *man of sin*, when he had a great deal of worldly pomp and power, *showed himself as a god*, <sup><310></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:4. Those who are rich in this world have therefore need to charge that upon themselves which the word of God charges upon them, *that they be not high-minded*, <sup><317></sup>1 Timothy 6:17.

**II.** Since *pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall*, he must tell him of that destruction, of that fall, which was now hastening on as the just punishment of his presumption in setting up himself a rival with God. “Because thou hast pretended to be a god (v. 6), therefore thou shalt not be long a man,” v. 7. Observe here,

**1.** The instruments of his destruction: *I will bring strangers upon thee* — the Chaldeans, whom we do not find mentioned among the many nations and countries that traded with Tyre, Ezekiel 27. If any of those nations had been brought against it, they would have had some compassion upon it, for old acquaintance-sake; but these strangers will have none. They are people of a *strange language*, which the king of Tyre himself, wise as he is, perhaps understands not. They are the *terrible of the nations*; it was an army made up of many nations, and it was at this time the most formidable both for strength and fury. These God has at command, and these he will bring upon the king of Tyre.

**2.** The extremity of the destruction: *They shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom* (v. 7), against all those things which thou gloriest in as thy beauty and the production of thy wisdom. Note, It is just with God that our enemies should make that their prey which we have made our pride. The king of Tyre's palace, his treasury, his city, his navy, his army, these he glories in as his brightness, these, he thinks, made him illustrious and glorious as a god on earth. But all these the victorious enemy shall defile, shall deface, shall deform. He thought them sacred, things that none durst touch; but the conquerors shall seize them as common things, and spoil the brightness of them. But, whatever becomes of what he has, surely his person is sacred. No (v. 8): *They shall bring thee down to the pit*, to the grave; thou shalt *die the death*. And,

**(1.)** It shall not be an honourable death, but an ignominious one. He shall be so vilified in his death that he may despair of being deified after his death. He shall die *the deaths of those that are slain in the midst of the seas*, that have no honour done them at their death, but their dead bodies are immediately thrown overboard, without any ceremony or mark of distinction, to be a feast for the fish. Tyre is *likely to be destroyed in the midst of the sea* (<sup><477></sup>Ezekiel 27:32) and the prince of Tyre shall fare no better than the people.

**(2.)** It shall not be a happy death, but a miserable one. He shall *die the deaths of the uncircumcised* (v. 10), of those that are strangers to God and not in covenant with him, and therefore die under his wrath and curse. It is *deaths*, a double death, temporal and eternal, the death both of body and soul. He shall die the *second death*; that is dying miserably indeed. The sentence of death here passed upon the king of Tyre is ratified by a divine authority: *I have spoken it, saith the Lord God*. And what he has said he will do. None can gainsay it, nor will he unsay it.

**3.** The effectual disproof that this will be of all his pretensions to deity (v. 9): “When the conqueror sets his sword to thy breast, and thou seest no way of escape, *wilt thou then say, I am God?* Wilt thou then have such a conceit of thyself as thou now hast? No; thy being overpowered by death, and by the fear of it, will force thee to own that thou art not a god, but a weak, timorous, trembling, dying man. *In the hand of him that slays thee* (in the hand of God, and of the instruments that he employed) *thou shalt be a man, and not God*, utterly unable to resist, and help thyself.” *I have said, You are gods; but you shall die like men*, <sup><482></sup>Psalms 82:6, 7. Note, Those who pretend to be rivals with God shall be forced one way or other to let fall their claims. Death at furthest, when we come into his hand, will make us know that we are men.

## <sup><481></sup>EZEKIEL 28:11-19

### FALL OF THE PRINCE OF TYRE

As after the prediction of the ruin of Tyre (Ezekiel 26) followed a pathetic lamentation for it (Ezekiel 27), so after the ruin of the king of Tyre is foretold it is bewailed.

**I.** This is commonly understood of the prince who then reigned over Tyre, spoken to, v. 2. His name was *Ethbaal*, or *Ithobalus*, as Diodorus Siculus calls him that was king of Tyre when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed it. He was, it seems, upon all external accounts an accomplished man, very great and famous; but his iniquity was his ruin. Many expositors have suggested that besides the literal sense of this lamentation there is an allegory in it, and that it is an allusion to the fall of the angels that sinned, who undid themselves by their pride. And (as is usual in texts that have a mystical meaning) some passages here refer primarily to the king of Tyre, as that of his merchandises, others to the angels, as that of being *in the holy mountain of God*. But, if there be any thing mystical in it (as perhaps there may), I shall rather refer it to the fall of Adam, which seems to be glanced at, v. 13. *Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God, and that in the day thou wast created.*

**II.** Some think that by *the king of Tyre* is meant the whole royal family, this including also the foregoing kings, and looking as far back as Hiram, king of Tyre. The then governor is called *prince* (v. 2); but he that is here lamented is called *king*. The court of Tyre with its kings had for many ages been famous; but sin ruins it. Now we may observe two things here: —

**1.** What was the renown of the king of Tyre. He is here spoken of as having lived in great splendour, v. 12-15. He as a man, but it is here owned that he was a very considerable man and one that made a mighty figure in his day.

**(1.)** He far exceeded other men. Hiram and other kings of Tyre had done so in their time; and the reigning king perhaps had not come short of any of them: *Thou sealest up the sum full of wisdom and perfect in beauty*. But the powers of human nature and the prosperity of human life seemed in him to be at the highest pitch. He was looked upon to be as wise as the reason of men could make him, and as happy as the wealth of this world and the enjoyment of it could make him; in him you might see the utmost that both could do; and therefore *seal up the sum*, for nothing can be added; he is a complete man, perfect *in suo genere* — *in his kind*.

**(2.)** He seemed to be as wise and happy as Adam in innocency (v. 13): *“Thou hast been in Eden, even in the garden of God; thou hast lived as it were in paradise all thy days, hast had a full enjoyment of every thing that is good for food or pleasant to the eyes, and an uncontroverted dominion*

over all about thee, as Adam had.” One instance of the magnificence of the king of Tyre is, that he outdid all others princes in jewels, which those have the greatest plenty of that trade most abroad, as he did: *Every precious stone was his covering*. There is a great variety of precious stones; but he had of every sort and in such plenty that besides what were treasured up in his cabinet, and were the ornaments of his crown, he had his clothes trimmed with them; they were his *covering*. Nay (v. 14), he *walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire*, that is, these precious stones, which glittered and sparkled like fire. His rooms were in a manner set round with jewels, so that he walked in the midst of them, and then fancied himself as glorious as if, like God, he had been surrounded by so many angels, who are compared to a *flame of fire*. And, if he be such an admirer of precious stones as to think them as bright as angels, no wonder that he is such an admirer of himself as to think himself as great as God. Nine several sorts of previous stones are here named, which were all in the high priest's ephod. Perhaps they are particularly named because he, in his pride, used to speak particularly of them, and tell those about him, with a great deal of foolish pleasure, “This is such a precious stone, of such a value, and so and so are its virtues.” Thus is he upbraided with his vanity. *Gold* is mentioned last, as far inferior in value to those precious stones; and he used to speak of it accordingly. Another thing that made him think his palace a paradise was the curious music he had, the *tabrets and pipes*, hand-instruments and wind-instruments. The *workmanship* of these was extraordinary, and they were prepared for him on purpose; prepared *in thee*, the pronoun is feminine — *in thee*, O Tyre! or it denotes that the king was effeminate in doting on such things. They were prepared *in the day he was created*, that is, either born, or created king; they were made on purpose to celebrate the joys either of his birth-day or of his coronation-day. These he prided himself much in, and would have all that came to see his palace take notice of them.

**(3.)** He looked like an incarnate angel (v. 14): *Thou art the anointed cherub that covers or protects*; that is, he looked upon himself as a guardian angel to his people, so bright, so strong, so faithful, appointed to this office and qualified for it. Anointed kings should be to their subjects as anointed cherubim, that cover them with the wings of their power; and, when they are such, God will own them. Their advancement was from him: *I have set thee so*. Some think, because mention was made of Eden, that it refers to the cherub set on the east of Eden to cover it, <sup>Gen 1:10</sup>Genesis

3:24. He thought himself as able to guard his city from all invaders as that angel was for his charge. Or it may refer to the cherubim in the most holy place, whose wings covered the ark; he thought himself as bright as one of them.

**(4.)** He appeared in as much splendour as the high priest when he was clothed with his garments for glory and beauty: *“Thou wast upon the holy mountain of God, as president of the temple built on that holy mountain; thou didst look as great, and with as much majesty and authority, as ever the high priest did when he walked in the temple, which was garnished with precious stones (<sup>486</sup>2 Chronicles 3:6), and had his habit on, which had precious stones both in the breast and on the shoulders; in that he seemed to walk in the midst of the stones of fire.”* Thus glorious is the king of Tyre; at least he thinks himself so.

**2.** Let us now see what was the ruin of the king of Tyre, what it was that stained his glory and laid all this honour in the dust (v. 15): *“Thou wast perfect in thy ways; thou didst prosper in all thy affairs and every thing went well with thee; thou hadst not only a clear, but a bright reputation, from the day thou wast created, the day of thy accession to the throne, till iniquity was found in thee; and that spoiled all.”* This may perhaps allude to the deplorable case of the angels that fell, and of our first parents, both of whom *were perfect in their ways till iniquity was found in them.* And when iniquity was once *found in him* it increased; he grew worse and worse, as appears (v. 18): *“Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries; thou hast lost the benefit of all that which thou thoughtest sacred, and in which, as in a sanctuary, thou thoughtest to take refuge; these thou hast defiled, and so exposed thyself by the multitude of thy iniquities.”* Now observe,

**(1.)** What the iniquity was that was the ruin of the king of Tyre.

**[1.]** The *iniquity of his traffic* (so it is called, v. 18), both his and his people's, for their sin is charged upon him, because he connived at it and set them a bad example (v. 16): *By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thus thou hast sinned.* The king had so much to do with his merchandise, and was so wholly intent upon the gains of that, that he took no care to do justice, to give redress to those that suffered wrong and to protect them from violence; nay, in the multiplicity of business, wrong was done to many by oversight; and in his dealings he made use of his power to invade the rights of those he dealt with. Note, Those that have much to do in the world are in great danger of



doing much amiss; and it is hard to deal with many without violence to some. Trades are called mysteries; but too many make them mysteries of iniquity.

[2.] His pride and vain-glory (v. 17): “*Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou wast in love with thyself, and thy own shadow. And thus thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of the brightness, the pomp and splendour, wherein thou livedst.*” He gazed so much upon this that it dazzled his eyes and prevented him from seeing his way. He appeared so puffed up with his greatness that it bereaved him both of his wisdom and of the reputation of it. He really became a *fool in glorying*. Those make a bad bargain for themselves that part with their wisdom for the gratifying of their gaiety, and, to please a vain humour, lose a real excellency.

(2.) What the ruin was that this iniquity brought him to.

[1.] He was thrown out of his dignity and dislodged from his palace, which he took to be his paradise and temple (v. 16): *I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God.* His kingly power was high as a *mountain*, setting him above others; it was a *mountain of God*, for the powers that be are ordained of God, and have something in them that is sacred; but, having abused his power, he is reckoned profane, and is therefore deposed and expelled. He disgraces the crown he wears, and so has forfeited it, and shall be destroyed *from the midst of the stones of fire*, the precious stones with which his palace was garnished, as the temple was; and they shall be no protection to him.

[2.] He was exposed to contempt and disgrace, and trampled upon by his neighbours: “*I will cast thee to the ground* (v. 17), will cast thee among the *pavement-stones*, from the midst of the *precious stones*, and will lay thee a rueful spectacle *before kings, that they may behold thee* and take warning by thee not to be proud and oppressive.”

[3.] He was quite consumed, his city and he in it: *I will bring forth a fire from the midst of thee.* The conquerors, when they have plundered the city, will kindle a fire in the heart of it, which shall lay it, and the palace particularly, in ashes. Or it may be taken more generally for the fire of God's judgments, which shall devour both prince and people, and bring all the glory of both *to ashes upon the earth*; and this fire shall be *brought forth from the midst of thee*. All God's judgments upon sinners take rise from themselves; they are devoured by a fire of their own kindling.

[4.] He was hereby made a terrible example of divine vengeance. Thus he is reduced *in the sight of all those that behold him* (v. 18): *Those that know him shall be astonished at him*, and shall wonder how one that stood so high could be brought so low. The king of Tyre's palace, like the temple at Jerusalem, when it is destroyed shall be *an astonishment and a hissing*, <sup><402></sup>2 Chronicles 7:20, 21. So fell the king of Tyre.

## <sup><389></sup>EZEKIEL 28:20-26

### THE FALL OF ZIDON

God's glory is his great end, both in all the good and in all the evil which *proceed out of the mouth of the Most High*; so we find in these verses.

**1.** God will be glorified in the destruction of Zidon, a city that lay near to Tyre, was more ancient, but not so considerable, had a dependence upon it and stood and fell with it. God says here, *I am against thee, O Zidon! and I will be glorified in the midst of thee*, v. 22. And again, “Those that would not know be gentler methods shall be made to *know that I am the Lord*, and I alone, and that I am a just and jealous God, *when I shall have executed judgments in her*, destroying judgments, when I shall have done execution according to justice and according to the sentence passed, and so shall be *sanctified in her*.” The Zidonians, it should seem, were more addicted to idolatry than the Tyrians were, who, being men of business and large conversation, were less under the power of bigotry and superstition. The Zidonians were noted for the worship of Ashtaroth; Solomon introduced it, <sup><4115></sup>1 Kings 11:5. Jezebel was daughter to the king of Zidon, who brought the worship of Baal into Israel (<sup><4158></sup>1 Kings 16:31); so that God had been much dishonoured by the Zidonians. Now, says he, *I will be glorified, I will be sanctified*. The Zidonians were borderers upon the land of Israel, where God was known, and where they might have got the knowledge of him and have learned to glorify him; but, instead of that, they seduced Israel to the worship of their idols. Note, When God is sanctified he is glorified, for his holiness is his glory; and those whom he is not sanctified and glorified by he will be sanctified and glorified upon, by executing judgments upon them, which declare him a just avenger of his own and his people's injured honour. The judgments that shall be executed upon Zidon are war and pestilence, two wasting depopulating

judgments, v. 23. They are God's messengers, which he sends on his errands, and they shall accomplish that for which he sends them.

*Pestilence and blood shall be sent into her streets; there the dead bodies of those shall lie who perished, some by the plague, occasioned perhaps through ill diet when the city was besieged, and some by the sword of the enemy, most likely the Chaldean armies, when the city was taken, and all were put to the sword. Thus the wounded shall be judged; when they are dying of their wounds they shall judge themselves, and others shall say, They justly fall. Or, as some read it, They shall be punished by the sword, that sword which has commission to destroy on every side. It is God that judges, and he will overcome. Nor is it Tyre and Zidon only on which God would execute judgments, but on all those that despised his people Israel, and triumphed in their calamities; for this was now God's controversy with the nations that were round about them, v. 26. Note, When God's people are under his correcting hand for their faults he takes care, as he did concerning malefactors that were scourged, that they shall not seem vile to those that are about them, and therefore takes it ill of those who despise them and so help forward the affliction when he is but a little displeased,* <sup><3115></sup>Zechariah 1:15. God regards them even in their low estate; and therefore let not men despise them.

**2.** God will be glorified in the restoration of his people to their former safety and prosperity. God had been dishonoured by the sins of his people, and their sufferings too had given occasion to the enemy to blaspheme (<sup><2916></sup>Isaiah 52:5); but God will now both cure them of their sins and ease them of their troubles, and so *will be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen*, will recover the honour of his holiness, to the satisfaction of all the world, v. 25. For,

**(1.)** They shall return to the possession of their own land again: *I will gather the house of Israel out of their dispersions, in answer to that prayer* (<sup><2967></sup>Psalms 106:27), *Save us, O Lord our God! and gather us from among the heathen;* and in pursuance of that promise (<sup><29104></sup>Deuteronomy 30:4), *Thence will the Lord thy God gather thee.* Being gathered, they shall be brought in a body, to  *dwell in the land that I have given to my servant Jacob.* God had an eye to the ancient grant, in bringing them back, for that remained in force, and the discontinuance of the possession was not a defeasance of the right. He that gave it will again give it.

(2.) They shall enjoy great tranquillity there. When those that have been vexatious to them are taken off they shall live in quietness; there shall be no more *a pricking brier nor a grieving thorn*, v. 24. They shall have a happy settlement, for they shall *build houses*, and *plant vineyards*; and they shall enjoy a happy security and serenity there; they shall  *dwell safely*, shall  *dwell with confidence*, and there shall be none to disquiet them or make them afraid, v. 26. This never had full accomplishment in the body of that people, for after their return out of captivity they were ever and anon molested by some bad neighbour or other. Nor has the gospel-church been ever quite free from pricking briars and grieving thorns; yet sometimes *the church has rest*, and believers always dwell safely under the divine protection and may be *quiet from the fear of evil*. But the full accomplishment of this promise is reserved for the heavenly Canaan, when all the saints shall be gathered together, and every thing that offends shall be removed, and all griefs and fears for ever banished.