

THE OVERTHROW OF TYRE'S KING

28:1-2 *“The word of the LORD came again to me, saying, ‘Son of man, say to the leader 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 gods in the heart of the seas’; yet you are a man and not God, although you make your heart like the heart of God—”*

The word of the Lord - Ezekiel begins this prophecy against the king of Tyre with the same reminder that what he is about to proclaim is not his opinion, but God's truth. **Say to the leader of Tyre** - This proclamation against the prince of Tyre deals with a real man whose heart is deeply given over to his sinful pride. The ultimate lie given to man is that he can become god - like. This lie can be traced back to the fall of man recorded in Genesis 3 where we are given the account of the origins of this lie and the ultimate supernatural source behind it.

Prior to Satan's rebellion, Adam and Eve were innocent, created without sin and having no knowledge of good or evil. They were truly “free” in their original created state. Genesis 3 records the snare that Satan had devised for them to lure them into rebellion:

The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.” Gen 3:4-6(NASB)

Adam and Eve fell because of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Satan was successful at causing Adam and Eve to doubt the Word of God and question his character. Above all else is the desire to be as wise as God. While men are guilty of their own individual sin, we are shown throughout scripture that we are completely vulnerable to the spiritual realm which has a great deal of influence over man's heart and mind. The heart of it all is pride. Even Peter was rebuked by Jesus who addressed Peter as Satan for attempting to lure Jesus down a path apart from the will of the Father (Mat 16:23; Mar 8:33).

While all believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and have the necessary tools to wrestle against the spiritual influences (Eph 6:12) mankind apart from the Lord are in the clutches of the evil one (1Jo 5:19). So while we will examine the heart of a very real prince, the proclamation transitions into an examination of Satan's rebellion against God and his influence over man.

I am a god - There are many biblical examples of this level of pride (Isa 14:13,14; Ezek 29:3; Acts 12:21 are some). Many cults and pagan beliefs such as new age present the idea that god - like status can be achieved. Even those who would claim that there is no god and that all of creation is defined by natural causes are seeking immortality and god - like perfection through scientific means such as transhumanism and G.R.I.N. technology; the belief that “singularity” will be reached and all will be one.

The ultimate example of a man with a “god complex” will be “the man of sin” as Paul describes in 2 Thessalonians:

“Let no one in any way deceive you, for it will not come unless the apostasy comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God.” 2Thes 2:3-4(NASB)

The Bible describes this man of sin as unique to what history has witnessed prior to his coming. He is the very “seed of the serpent” (Gen 3:15) accompanied even with lying signs and wonders (2Thes 2:9) that he will receive directly from Satan in order to deceive man to worship him. He will be the ultimate example in a man of what Satan is as an angel. Both will see eternal destruction and so will all of unredeemed humanity.

I sit in the seat of gods in the heart of the seas - Tyre was nick - named the “holy Island” and as it seemed impregnable from any would be attackers because of its rock cliffs that rose out of the water. Tyre was the heart of a vast economic, political and religious system and therefore was the heart of it all.

Yet you are a man - God is not mocked and will share His fame and glory with no one. No matter how fantastic, accomplished or talented a man can be. No matter what mankind collaborates to pursue, he will always fall short of the glory of God (Rm 3:23). Even the Satanic prototype of the ultimate super - human is still marked by his created status “666”. No created being is beyond the reach of the judgement and sovereignty of God (Mat 10:28). There is no greater deception than to believe ones self to be God!

28:3-5 *“Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee: with thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures: by thy great wisdom and by thy traffick hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches:”*

Wiser than Daniel - Clearly not reality, but his perception of himself. This is a rare insight as to the reach of Daniel’s reputation. The Chaldeans were world famous for wisdom and understanding, but Daniel had demonstrated the power of the living God and influenced leaders of two empires. Over time, many of the sages of the Chaldeans had transitioned into acknowledging God and highly respecting Daniel and the prophetic words that the Lord had given him. His reputation reached to Tyre and this prince of Tyre was so prideful and deceived that he proclaimed to have more wisdom and insight than Daniel.

Daniel always sought God for insight into dreams, visions and mysteries and gave God the glory for what was revealed to him by God. This mans pride has caused him to believe he knows everything there is to know. All of the wealth that Tyre had accumulated brought forth a smug confidence. The final picture of the world described in Revelation will be all of the power and wealth consolidated into a single economic, political and religious system.

Even though believers in Jesus Christ, who will be conformed to His perfected humanity, are not so perfect this side of the transformation as Paul declared when speaking of himself in light of the ultimate outcome for those who trust in Christ:

“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead. Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” Phil 3:7-15(NASB)

28:6 -10 *“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God; Behold, therefore 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. They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas. Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee. Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.”*

Just as the Lord was able to bring Nebuchadnezzar to his knees in humble recognition of the sovereignty of God, He mockingly asks of the prince of Tyre about his status in his mind during his defeat and judgement. No matter what mankind does to deceive himself now in trivializing the living God and His holiness and glory, they too will have to stand before Him to be judged (Heb 9:27). The answer is NO! No one will be able to claim to be a god, rather every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Phil 2:10-11). Ethbaal II was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar in 573 - 572 BC..

THE POWER BEHIND THE THRONE

In verses 1-11, Ezekiel has been addressing the “nagid” or “man at the top” and his declarations would be aimed at not just the ruler, but the people and city. In verses 11- 19, the term “melek” or “king” will be used to define a different character who is directly influencing the ruler of Tyre.

28:11-12 *“Again the word of the LORD came to me saying, ‘Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, ‘You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.’”*

You had the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty - Unlike the imagined status of the ruler of Tyre, Ethbaal II, this “king” actually had perfection given to him as part of his created existence. All that the Lord had desired to impart to angels was fully given to this king. He did not have to pretend to have it. While angels have a vastly superior understanding than man, they are not the possessors of all wisdom; (compare perfect in beauty to full of wisdom). This idiom applying Satan’s nature to a human ruler will have it’s fullest exercise in his “son”; the false Christ (Dan 7:25; 2Thes 2:4; Rev 13:6).

28:13 *“You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the ruby, the topaz and the diamond; the beryl, the onyx and the jasper; the lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald; and the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets, was in you. On the day that you were created they were prepared.”*

You were in Eden, the garden of God - Lets let scripture say what it says here. The Word only ever speaks of one Eden and the fact that it is connected to this idiomatic king links this unique king directly to Satan who showed up on the scene to direct mans fall into sin.

Every precious stone was your covering - These stones are in conjunction with the breastplate of the high priest and the 12 tribes of Israel. Each stone represents a tribe and to the Jews were synonymous with light which represents life. While the MT only list nine stones, the LXX and the Latin Vulgate lists all 12 stones and these texts were established some 900 years earlier than the MT. The number 12 is also heavily linked to the kingdom and heaven. There are 12 tribes, apostles, kingdom parables, and kingdom mysteries. In Revelation there are also 12,000 from each of the 12 tribes to establish the first of redeemed Israel from out of the Tribulation. The dimensions of the New Jerusalem are given in 12’s and so on. So the number 12 links this king to heaven in the past tense.

Light is linked to Satan’s deception by Paul;

“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.” 2Cor 11:13-15(NASB)

But unlike Christ, the false Christ and his father were created and therefore ultimately subject to God’s wrath. There are many false religions that will acknowledge Christ, but see Him as merely a created being. The Mormon’s see Him as the created brother of Satan.

28:14 *“You were the anointed cherub who covers, and I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.”*

the anointed cherub who covers - the anointed indicates a singular special role; a consecrated role. The cherubim seem to be set out as a sort of “super” angel with unique guardian type roles (Isa 6; Ezek 1 & 10; Rev 4 & 5). They seem to be associated with guarding the glory of God.

the holy mountain of God - This would be Zion; the heavenly reality. What is on the earth is merely a representation of what is in heaven. So this again places this cherub in the celestial court. The stones of fire are objects of the glory of God and this speaks to his position of association to God.

28:15 *“You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until unrighteousness was found in you.”*

This angel, like all of creation, was created “good” as God was satisfied with what He had made. All things created possess the potential to fall from God’s holy standard and enter into sin by virtue of the fact that His attributes are intrinsic to Him alone. No creature, while innocent at creation, owns perfection outside of God. So the angels who did not fall were preserved by God’s sovereign power and choice to sustain them in their holiness (elect angels - 1Tim 5:21).

28:16-17 *“By the abundance of your trade you were internally filled with violence, and you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane from the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you.”*

At some point, this anointed cherub became consumed with envy and pride and sinned. He was corrupted by his own splendor. All of the glory God arrayed him with had gone to his head and wisdom fled. What was the violence that filled his heart and caused his fall? Many scholars speculate that it was when God presented the image of the pre-incarnate Christ on the throne of God; a man above the authority of the angels.

In Ezekiel chapter 1 we read about this appearance and it is quite possible that the story of the purpose of creation, the central theme of redemption through the Son becoming a man in order to redeem man, was merely hinted at in this appearance (Ezek 1: 26-28). Is it possible that this “man” on the throne of God triggered the pride of Satan to become “violent” and launch him into open rebellion? Lets consider the parallel passage from Isaiah 14.

In this passage the same connection is made between an earthly king and Satan. While dealing with the king of Babylon, the passage transitions into Satan’s fall from glory and the reason for it. From it we read of the five “I will’s” of Satan.

“How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, ‘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.’ Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol, to the recesses of the pit. Those who see you will gaze at you, they will ponder over you, saying, ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, who made the world like a wilderness and overthrew its cities, who did not allow his prisoners to go home?’” Isa. 14:12-17(NASB)

In Ezekiel chapter 1 we were introduced to the image of a man on the throne of God “above” the expanse that was the celestial court. Notice where Satan wanted to be; in His place. Notice “I will make myself like the Most High”. It does not say that he desired to be God, but like Him. Seeing the Man on God’s throne above the angels filled him with the desire to be in His place. This passage transitions back to the earthly scene and asks “Is this the man who made the whole earth tremble...?”

The ultimate embodiment of Satan’s pride and desire to be like the Man will be in his false Christ that he brings upon the nations. Satan will bring about his own “son”, the man of perdition in order to draw the worship of mankind away from God and Jesus. He will bring about the false prophet to be the instrument through which man is directed to worship the beast and be like him. This is a mockery of the silent ministry of the Holy Spirit who gives life to the redeemed that they may look upon Jesus and live as they worship Him.

It is obvious that Satan has lost his position of authority and glory in the celestial court, but has he been cast down yet? In Job we see that he is still able to converse with God and we are told in Revelation 12 that he accuses the brethren day and night before God (v.10). In fact Revelation chapter 12 lays out in a story form the main “characters” in the story of history.

THE CHARACTERS OF REVELATION 12

- Woman (Israel) - represented by the imagery of the sun, moon and 12 stars; she is with child
- Red Dragon (Satan) - having 7 heads, 10 horns and 7 crowns; waiting to devour the Man - child at birth
- Man-Child (Jesus) - To rule the nations with a rod of iron, caught up to God and His throne; the woman flees into the wilderness 1260 days
- Michael and His Angels - fights the dragon and his angels
- Dragon cast down to earth - wages war against the woman and the people of God - 3.5 years

So Satan has not yet been thrown down to the earth according to the above chronology. He will bring about his “son” (seed in Gen 3:15) by nefarious means and cause all of the non-elect of the earth to not only worship him, but take his mark in their desire to be like him. The beast and the false prophet will be thrown alive into the lake of fire while Satan will be cast into the Abyss for the duration of the kingdom age; 1,000 years (Rev 20).

At the end of the 1,000 years, he will be released one last time in order to bring about the final rebellion of mankind which Jesus will put an instant end to, and Satan will then be forever judged in the lake of fire (Rev 20:7-10)

SATAN'S LONG CAREER AGAINST MAN

- Corrupting the gene pool of man (Gen 6)
- Abraham's seed (Gen 12, 20)
- Famine (Gen 50)
- Attempt to wipe out all male children (Exo 1)
- Pharaoh's pursuit (Exo 14)
- The populating of Canaan in response to prophecy to Abraham (Gen 15)
- Against David's line (2 Sam 7)
 - Jehoram kills his brothers except one (2Chron 21)
 - Arabians slew all (except Ahaziah)
 - Athaliah kills all (but Joash; 2 Chron 22)
 - Hezekiah assaulted (Isa 36,38)
 - Haman's attempts (Est 3)
- Joseph's fears (Matt 1)
- Herod's slaughter (Matt 2)
- At Nazareth (Luke 4)
- The cross
- Final attempts during the Great Tribulation

SATAN'S ATTEMPT TO DRAW JESUS AWAY

“And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, “I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. “Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.’”” Luke 4:5-9(NASB)

Satan attempted to lure Jesus away from obedience to the Father by offering Him pride and prestige. Satan is the usurper of what was given assigned to man. But he can only offer glory in a passing age. Jesus was tempted as a man here with the lust of the flesh; to take glory into His own hands without suffering mockery and persecution. A crown without the cross, but there was one small catch; pay worship to the fallen one.

Those who live for glory, fame and fortune now worship Satan whether they know it or not. The lure is so strong, but they are tethered to a passing age. They will perish with their hopes and dreams that are anchored in this age like the fool who built his house on sand instead of The Rock.

28:18-19 *“By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries. Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you; It has consumed you, and I have turned you to ashes on the earth in the eyes of all who see you. All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; You have become terrified and you will cease to be forever.”*