

The Book of Ezekiel

Lesson 12: The Fall of Tyre and Its Proud Prince -- Ezekiel 27:1–28:26

Chapters 27 and 28 complete the long oracle against Tyre that began in chapter 26. Here the LORD instructs Ezekiel to raise a lamentation, a funeral song, over a city not yet fallen, so certain is her ruin. The dirge mourns Tyre as though she were already dead.

Chapter 27 pictures Tyre as a magnificent merchant ship, built of the finest materials, manned by skilled mariners, laden with the wealth of many lands. She is glorious and seemingly self-sufficient, yet she is wrecked in the heart of the seas, and all who depended on her wail at her sinking.

Chapter 28 turns to the prince of Tyre, who in his pride said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas. Here is the heart of the matter, a human heart exalting itself to deity. The LORD answers that he is but a man, and a man will die.

The chapter then takes up a lament over the king of Tyre, using imagery of Eden and the anointed cherub to portray proud beauty corrupted and cast down. We read this soberly as a depiction of the pride of Tyre's king, and the section closes with God's promise to gather and bless His own people.

Group Discussion: As a class, trace the two great pictures in these chapters, Tyre as a glorious ship that sinks and the prince of Tyre who claimed to be a god. Discuss what each teaches about the nature of pride, and consider where the spirit of I am a god still shows itself in human hearts today.

Personal Reflection: Examine where you are tempted to be self-sufficient, to credit your wisdom, beauty, or success to yourself rather than to God. Confess any quiet exalting of self, and ask the LORD to keep you humble and dependent on Him, remembering that you are a creature and He alone is God.

Read Ezekiel 27:1–28:26

Study Questions

1. In chapter 27 Tyre is pictured as a splendid ship perfect in beauty (27:3–11). How does this image set up the tragedy of her ruin, and what does it teach about glory built on human achievement?

2. What in your own life have you come to regard as your perfect in beauty, the thing you most quietly take pride in?
3. Tyre traded with the whole known world and grew rich and self-sufficient (27:12-25). Why does Scripture treat self-sufficiency apart from God as a spiritual danger rather than a mark of success?
4. Where are you tempted to feel that you need nothing and no one, least of all God, and how does that attitude show itself?
5. The great ship is wrecked in the heart of the seas (27:26-27), and the merchants are appalled. What does the suddenness and totality of Tyre's fall teach about the security of earthly wealth?
6. When has something you trusted in been suddenly taken away, and what did that loss reveal about where your true security lay?
7. The prince of Tyre said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods (28:2), yet the LORD answers, you are but a man, and no god (28:9). Why is the line between Creator and creature the most fundamental truth a person can forget?

8. In what subtle ways do you act as though you were the god of your own life, ordering things by your own will rather than submitting to the LORD?

9. In 28:11–19 the lament over the king of Tyre uses the imagery of Eden and the anointed cherub to portray one full of wisdom and perfect in beauty whose heart was lifted up and who was cast down for his pride and his unrighteous trade. Working carefully through these verses, explain how this picture depicts proud beauty corrupted and brought low, and how it lays bare the very nature of pride. How does Scripture elsewhere confirm that pride goes before destruction, and why must we resist building speculative doctrines from imagery meant first to describe the king of Tyre?

10. The section ends with God promising to gather His people and dwell securely among them (28:24–26). After studying the fall of proud Tyre, how does this promise to humble, gathered people shape the way you will live, and where do you most need to trade pride for trust in the LORD?

Digging Deeper

Reflect on these passages: Proverbs 16:18, pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall; Isaiah 14:12–15, the proud king brought low for saying I will ascend; James 4:6, God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble; 1 Timothy 6:17, charge the rich not to be haughty nor to set their hope on uncertain riches; Acts 12:21–23, Herod struck down for accepting the honor due to God alone

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