

Explore the Bible: January 2

Warns • Ezekiel 28:11-19,25-26

By Wayne VanHorn



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□Ezekiel 1–24 deals with the sin and judgment of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Judah. Then, in Ezekiel 25:1–32:32, the prophet directs his messages of judgment against the sins of the nations surrounding Judah: Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Phoenicia (with its two major cities Tyre and Sidon), and Egypt. In Ezekiel 28, the King of Tyre is singled out as an example of divine judgment on human pride. □

Past glory (Ezek. 28:11-15). A message of judgment came upon Tyre’s king as indicated by the words, “The word of the Lord came to me,” (28:11; CSB). The word of the Lord is always authoritative and accurate; thus, the pronounced judgment is deserved. The Hebrew term, *qinah*, rendered “lament” (28:12), refers to a funeral song.

□The message highlights the past glory of the king of Tyre with several affirmations: he was the seal of perfection, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Additionally, he was said to be “in Eden, the garden of God,” and was covered with “every kind of precious stone” with mountings and settings crafted in gold (28:13).

□Moreover, this king was as “an anointed cherub,” “on the holy mountain of God,” who “walked among the fiery stones. This

lofty language lead some Bible interpreters to see a reference to Adam, the only man to have been in Eden, or to Satan himself as an “anointed cherub” (28:14). However, such interpretations are foreign to both Ezekiel’s prophecy and to his audience’s understanding. Coming as they do in the oracles against the nations, the best approach is to focus on the person identified as “the ruler of Tyre” (28:2), as “the king of Tyre” (28:12), and as being “only a man” (28:9).

□Early on, this king had been blameless, meaning he at least appeared to be a man of integrity. Later, however, “wickedness” was found in him (28:15). How often does God warn the proud to repent of their wickedness? How many leaders have acted “blameless” only to show themselves otherwise later?

Rebellion denounced (Ezek. 28:16-19). God denounces all sin, inappropriate conduct, language, or attitudes. Economic success had resulted in the king of Tyre being “filled with violence” and he “sinned.” Therefore, God expelled him in disgrace from the mountain of God, his lofty throne, and banished (the Hebrew verb means “destroyed”) him from the fiery stones (28:16). In view here is the judgment of God against this proud and arrogant king, who let pride of place and wealth develop as a haughty attitude of superiority. He had even proclaimed, “I am a god,” (28:2,9). In reality, he was no match for Yahweh, the Sovereign God over all nations.

□The king of Tyre had become proud and corrupted (28:17). His downfall was tied to personal beauty and splendor. Not acknowledging the one true God, he viewed himself as a god. The Lord dethroned him by throwing him to the ground and making a spectacle or object lesson of him to other kings. As a result, close associates now are appalled by him and view him as an object of horror (28:19). How the mighty has fallen!

□How about us? Do we allow ourselves to become prideful and arrogant because we have tasted of economic success or have been received well publicly? Do we misrepresent God by

insinuating we brought success upon ourselves? God warns all people, "Pride comes before destruction, and an arrogant spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). Both the pride and the destruction of the king of Tyre are found in today's lesson. God warns us.

Hope stirred (Ezek. 28:25-26). Ezekiel professed for the third time in this chapter, "The word of the Lord came to me," (28:1,11,20). He made this same profession 49 times in Ezekiel 13:1-38:1. Like Tyre, the fate of Sidon was sealed. Divine judgment was inevitable (28:20-24). Where is hope in the midst of these messages of unmitigated judgment?

□The Sovereign God ("Adonai Yahweh" in Hebrew), promises through Ezekiel, the people of Israel will live once again in the promised land given to His servant Jacob. Jewish exiles will be gathered from the distant lands where they were scattered by divine judgment. God's holiness will be revealed "to the nations of the world" through His people (28:25). Israel will live securely in the land, build houses, and plant vineyards. Nations who treated them with contempt will be punished, and all will know that Yahweh (the LORD) is their God (25:26).

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