

Ezekiel 25—God’s Sovereignty Over The Nations And Satan

Memory Verse

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Introduction

“The first twenty-four chapters of the Book of Ezekiel consist of warnings to the people of Jerusalem that judgment was coming. Chapters 25 through 32, however, consist of prophecies directed not to Jerusalem but to the surrounding nations because, although judgment begins at the house of God (1 Peter 4:17), it is not limited to the house of God. He will judge not only Judah, but the nations surrounding Judah.” (Jon Courson)

Background—the ancient hatred

Jerusalem is under siege by the Babylonians. It’s only a matter of time before Nebuchadnezzar breaks through Jerusalem’s defences and kills most of the remaining people and destroys the city and temple. As a result, the surrounding nations were laughing at Israel and rejoicing over Jerusalem’s destruction. Why? Because many of these nations were “Arab nations”. At least some, if not most, Arabs back in Ezekiel’s day and even in our day, are descended from Abraham’s other sons, especially Ishmael, and also Lot’s two sons, Ammon and Moab, who all hated Isaac and his descendants. We call this the “ancient hatred”, because it goes back to when Ishmael mocked Isaac when he was weaned (see Genesis 21:9)—thus the hatred and persecution of the nation of Israel started way back then. The Arab peoples have long hated Israel, God’s chosen people, and have always sought to destroy her. This continues today; consider the many wars fought against Israel by the Arab nations surrounding Israel over the past 75 years.

However, this hatred is not limited to the Arabs. Many other nations, in fact the whole world it would seem, also hate Israel because it is Satan’s longstanding goal to eliminate Israel. We will see as we go how God was, is, and always will defend His people Israel.

Revelation 12:1-6 NKJV

Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars [Israel—see Genesis 37:9-10].

² Then being with child [Jesus], she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

³ And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads [satan—see Revelation 12:9].

⁴ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven [angels] and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman [Israel] who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child [Jesus] as soon as it was born. ⁵ She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron [The Messiah—see Psalm 2]. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne [the ascension—see Acts 1:9-11]. ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God [Edom or modern day Jordan], that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days [the last three and a half years of the seven year Tribulation].

God’s Sovereignty

What we will also clearly see is God’s sovereignty over the nations. Here we see that God is really, actually, and practically in control of the nations, as much as it might seem from external appearances that He is not. We will see God outline exactly why and how He will deal with the nations surrounding Israel. We read in Revelation chapters 5 and 6 that God is on the throne. This means that He is ruling and in control. God the Father has never left His throne. He has always been in control of world events.

Amazingly detailed and specific prophecies covering hundreds of years.

We will see amazingly detailed prophecies that will astound you as you realise that it is humanly impossible to predict such events with 100% accuracy. We will also see that powerful nations were not so powerful in God's eyes. They might think of themselves as indestructible, but in God's eyes, they all had a shelf life, an expiry date.

An international audience

We will also see that Ezekiel and Jeremiah had a wide audience. Their prophecies were well known far and wide. God would make Himself known to the gentiles by foretelling exactly what would happen before it happened. Ezekiel's prophecies in chapters 25-28 concern the future of the following nations:

1. Ammon (descendants of Lot, Abraham's Nephew)—25:1-7
2. Moab (descendants of Lot, Abraham's Nephew)—25:8-11
3. Edom (descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother)—25:12-14
4. The Philistines (not blood related)—25:15-17
5. Tyre (not blood related)—26:1-28:19
6. Sidon (not blood related)—28:20-24
7. Israel (their future blessing)—28:25-26

Ezekiel 25:1-7 NKJV—*Proclamation Against Ammon*

The word of the Lord came to me, saying, ²“Son of man, set your face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against them. ³Say to the Ammonites, ‘Hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God: **“Because you said, ‘Aha!’ against My sanctuary when it was profaned, and against the land of Israel when it was desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into captivity [the ancient hatred].** ⁴indeed, therefore, I will deliver you as a possession to the men of the East, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings among you; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. ⁵And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels and Ammon a resting place for flocks. Then you shall know that I am the Lord.”

⁶“For thus says the Lord God: **“Because you clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced in heart with all your disdain for the land of Israel, [the ancient hatred]** ⁷indeed, therefore, I will stretch out My hand against you, and give you as plunder to the nations; I will cut you off from the peoples, and I will cause you to perish from the countries; I will destroy you, and you shall know that I am the Lord.”

The Ammonites were a nomadic people who resided in the area of what is now Jordan, on the east side of the Jordan River, north of what was the land of Moab. Both Ammon and Moab were the product of incestuous relationships between Lot and his daughters—see Genesis 19:36-38). Through Lot they are related to Israel.

God promised Abraham that “I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you.” (Genesis 12:3 NKJV). Here we see that, just like all the other nations we will read about today, those who cursed Israel would themselves end up being cursed. May we, as a nation who is currently distancing itself from Israel, learn from this.

“The fulfilment of this prediction is not noted in Scripture: but *Josephus* tells us, that about *five* years after the taking of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar turned his arms against the *Ammonites* and *Moabites*, and afterwards against *Egypt*; and having subdued those nations, he returned to Babylon. *Josephus* Antiquities, l. x., c. ii.” (Clarke)

“The pronouncement of the Lord was that Ammon and Moab were not to be remembered among the nations. Both were absorbed by the Arabs.” (Feinberg)

Ezekiel 25:8-11 NKJV—Proclamation Against Moab

8 ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Because Moab and Seir say, ‘Look! The house of Judah is like all the nations,’ 9 therefore, behold, I will clear the territory of Moab of cities, of the cities on its frontier, the glory of the country, Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and Kirjathaim. 10 To the men of the East I will give it as a possession, together with the Ammonites, that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations. 11 And I will execute judgments upon Moab, and they shall know that I am the Lord.”

God will judge Moab in the same way that He judged Ammon, by the hand of the Babylonians. Notice that neither Ammon or Moab had any respect for the only True God, His Temple, or His people.

Application: Dishonouring God’s name

v 8 **Look! The house of Judah is like all the nations:** Israel were the people of God, but were not acting like it. This is the same as someone saying to a backslidden Christian today, “You call yourself a Christian, but you sure don’t act like one.” I cause people to mock God and I bring much shame upon the church when I live for myself.

Ezekiel 25:12-14 NKJV—Proclamation Against Edom

12 ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Because of what Edom did against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has greatly offended by avenging itself on them,” 13 therefore thus says the Lord God: “I will also stretch out My hand against Edom, cut off man and beast from it, and make it desolate from Teman; Dedan shall fall by the sword. 14 I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel, that they may do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury; and they shall know My vengeance,” says the Lord God.

Again we see the ancient hatred. The descendants of Esau perpetuated Esau’s hatred of Jacob. “The phrase ‘taking vengeance’ is literally ‘revenging with revenge’; it was to be an unrelieved, unabated revenge” (Feinberg). They took every opportunity to harass and hurt the Israelites. Edom is now the southern part of Jordan, below the Dead Sea.

v 14 God eventually used the nation of Israel to finish off the existence of Edom as a nation. First, in the sixth century BC, Nebuchadnezzar took away Edom’s control of their section of the kings highway, meaning that their economy tanked. Then, by the fourth century BC, the Nabateans had replaced the Edomites in Edom and the Edomites moved into southern Judah. Finally, in 109 BC, Edom “was finally subjugated by the Jewish leader, John Hyrcanus.” (Wright) God’s word always come to pass.

Ezekiel 25:15-17 NKJV—Proclamation Against Philistia

15 ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Because the Philistines dealt vengefully and took vengeance with a spiteful heart, to destroy because of the old hatred,” 16 therefore thus says the Lord God: “I will stretch out My hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites and destroy the remnant of the seacoast. 17 I will execute great vengeance on them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I lay My vengeance upon them.” ’ ’

v 15 **To destroy because of the old hatred:** Again we see the **old hatred** or ancient hatred here. Again, it’s not just Israel’s cousins, but also the other nations.

The Philistines “were originally Mediterranean ‘sea peoples’ from the Aegean.” (Taylor) They had a long history of animosity against the Israelites. It was the Philistines that killed Saul and Jonathan.

Application: The purpose of God’s judgement

v 17 **And they shall know that I am the Lord:** “As with the Ammonites (Ezekiel 25:7), the Moabites and Edomites (Ezekiel 25:11), God would reveal Himself to these pagan, disobedient nations through His judgment. God’s purpose was always greater than just judgment or vengeance; there was and always is a strong purpose of His self-revelation.” (David Guzik)

v 17 **With furious rebukes:** “In fierceness of anger, and without pity. They, as other stupid nations, will not see till they feel, and then they shall confess it is the hand of an angry, but just, and mighty God.” (Poole)

“It is solemn to consider that all four nations of this chapter showed vindictive jealousy and hatred toward Israel. The nations of earth refused to learn that God meant every word in the Abrahamic covenant of Genesis 12:1–3, 7. No nation under heaven could touch Israel for ill without bringing down upon them the wrath of almighty God.” (Feinberg)

The amazing prophecy of the sequential destruction of the city of Tyre

Ezekiel 26:1-2 NKJV—*Tyre’s hatred of Israel*

And it came to pass in the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, because Tyre has said against Jerusalem, ‘Aha! She is broken who was the gateway of the peoples; now she is turned over to me; I shall be filled; she is laid waste.’”

Once again we see the irrational, unreasonable, and satanic ancient hatred against the Jewish people. We know that it’s satanic by what we read in Revelation at the start, but we can also see that this hatred is satanic by looking at the source in chapter 28—satan was the mover and shaker behind the king of Tyre (now a part of the country of Lebanon).

Ezekiel 26:3-6 NKJV—*A summary of the destruction of Tyre*

“Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against you, as the sea causes its waves to come up. ⁴ And they [Nebuchadnezzar] shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. ⁵ It shall be a place for spreading nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,’ says the Lord God; ‘it shall become plunder for the nations. ⁶ Also her daughter villages which are in the fields shall be slain by the sword. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.’”

Verses 3 to 5 are a broad summary of what would happen eventually to the city of Tyre. What follows is an amazingly detailed breakdown of exactly how it would happen. Notice it says in verse 3 that many nations would come up against Tyre. We will see this to be true.

Ezekiel 26:7-11 NKJV—Nebuchadnezzar's role in the destruction of Tyre

“For thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, I will bring against Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses, with chariots, and with horsemen, and an army with many people. ⁸ He will slay with the sword your daughter villages in the fields; he will heap up a siege mound against you, build a wall against you, and raise a defense against you. ⁹ He will direct his battering rams against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. ¹⁰ Because of the abundance of his horses, their dust will cover you; your walls will shake at the noise of the horsemen, the wagons, and the chariots, when he enters your gates, as men enter a city that has been breached. ¹¹ With the hooves of his horses he will trample all your streets; he will slay your people by the sword, and your strong pillars will fall to the ground.

Notice the pronoun **he**. Nebuchadnezzar's 13 year siege of Tyre began in 586 BC, around the time when Jerusalem fell. The siege lasted 13 years because Tyre had a good source of fresh water (in the form of the fast flowing Resilen fresh water spring), and being a coastal city, could get food supplies from the sea.

Eventually, after 13 years of laying siege to Tyre, Nebuchadnezzar did break through the wall of Tyre, but not before the citizens had retreated to an Island about half a mile or almost 1 kilometre off the coast. Thus all that was left when Nebuchadnezzar did break through was a small garrison and a few people. Nebuchadnezzar did destroy the city, but all the riches had been moved out to the island off the coast where the new city had been built. Ezekiel tells us what this 13 year siege was like for Nebuchadnezzar.

Ezekiel 29:18-20 NKJV

“Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon caused his army to labor strenuously against Tyre; every head was made bald, and every shoulder rubbed raw; yet neither he nor his army received wages from Tyre, for the labor which they expended on it. ¹⁹ Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Surely I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; he shall take away her wealth, carry off her spoil, and remove her pillage; and that will be the wages for his army. ²⁰ I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor, because they worked for Me,’ says the Lord God.

So far the prophecy in verses 7 to 11 has been exactly fulfilled—but what about the rest of it? Notice the change in pronoun from **he (Nebuchadnezzar)** to **they (Alexander the Great)** in verse 12. 241 years later, about 345 BC, Alexander the Great comes along and exactly fulfils the next part of the prophecy.

Ezekiel 26:12 NKJV—Alexander the Great's role in the destruction of Tyre

They [Alexander the Great and his Grecian army] will plunder your riches and pillage your merchandise; they will break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses; they will lay your stones, your timber, and your soil in the midst of the water.

Tyre had a powerful navy and Alexander the Great was afraid that they would attack Greece while he was attacking the Medes and Persians. So Alexander decided to attack Tyre first. He demanded that they surrender. They laughed at him, being half a mile off the coast and having a powerful navy. So Alexander, being a smart man, took all the stones and timbers from the original coastal city of Tyre and made a causeway out to the island. It only took Alexander seven months to cover the distance. Once the causeway or road to the island city of Tyre was complete, he was able to roll his war machines out to the island and defeat it, plundering them, as was predicted by Ezekiel around 250 years prior.

Ezekiel 26:13-14 NKJV—The Saracen's role in the destruction of Tyre

I will put an end to the sound of your songs, and the sound of your harps shall be heard no more. ¹⁴ I will make you like the top of a rock; you shall be a place for spreading nets, and you shall never be rebuilt, for I the Lord have spoken,' says the Lord God.

We move forward in time to the 14th century AD. The final wave of destruction against Tyre was by the Saracens who destroyed the city so thoroughly that it's location was unknown until modern times. *"For years, even the sight of the ancient city of Tyre was unknown, it had been so thoroughly destroyed. Less than 200 years ago, as a group of archaeologists were watching some fishermen spreading their nets on the bare rocks to dry, one of them noticed that the rocks were not in a natural formation, and it was then realised that this peninsula that they were on was not natural, but one formed by the siege of the Island city of Tyre by Alexander and his forces."* (Chuck Smith)

The modern city of Tyre is built in a nearby location and the site of the ancient city is still used as a place for fisherman to dry their nets—it has never been rebuilt, as God foretold.

Ezekiel 26:15-18 NKJV—The Nations Mourn over the destruction of Tyre

"Thus says the Lord God to Tyre: 'Will the coastlands not shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded cry, when slaughter is made in the midst of you?

¹⁶ Then all the princes of the sea will come down from their thrones, lay aside their robes, and take off their embroidered garments; they will clothe themselves with trembling; they will sit on the ground, tremble every moment, and be astonished at you. ¹⁷ And they will take up a lamentation for you, and say to you:

"How you have perished, O one inhabited by seafaring men, O renowned city, who was strong at sea, she and her inhabitants, who caused their terror to be on all her inhabitants! ¹⁸ Now the coastlands tremble on the day of your fall; yes, the coastlands by the sea are troubled at your departure."'

The coastal nations had good reason to be fearful. If Alexander the Great could defeat Tyre, then what chance did they have. It would be like if China defeated America—what chance would Australia have with our powerful ally defeated.

Ezekiel 26:19-21—The end of the wicked: the pit (torments in hades)

"For thus says the Lord God: 'When I make you a desolate city, like cities that are not inhabited, when I bring the deep upon you, and great waters cover you, ²⁰ then I will bring you down with those who descend into the Pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lowest part of the earth, in places desolate from antiquity, with those who go down to the Pit, so that you may never be inhabited; and I shall establish glory in the land of the living. ²¹ I will make you a terror, and you shall be no more; though you are sought for, you will never be found again,' says the Lord God."

We will cover this concept of going down to the pit, to the lowest part of the earth, when we get to chapter 32.

Ezekiel 27:1-36 NKJV—Lamentation for Tyre: the destruction of a proud economic powerhouse

The word of the Lord came again to me, saying, ² "Now, son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyre, ³ and say to Tyre, 'You who are situated at the entrance of the sea, merchant of the peoples on many coastlands, thus says the Lord God:

“O Tyre, you have said, ‘I am perfect in beauty.’⁴ Your borders are in the midst of the seas. Your builders have perfected your beauty.⁵ They made all your planks of fir trees from Senir; They took a cedar from Lebanon to make you a mast.⁶ Of oaks from Bashan they made your oars; the company of Ashurites have inlaid your planks with ivory from the coasts of Cyprus.⁷ Fine embroidered linen from Egypt was what you spread for your sail; blue and purple from the coasts of Elishah was what covered you.⁸ “Inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your oarsmen; your wise men, O Tyre, were in you; they became your pilots.

⁹ Elders of Gebal and its wise men were in you to caulk your seams; all the ships of the sea and their oarsmen were in you to market your merchandise.¹⁰ “Those from Persia, Lydia, and Libya were in your army as men of war; they hung shield and helmet in you; they gave splendor to you.¹¹ Men of Arvad with your army were on your walls all around, and the men of Gammad were in your towers; they hung their shields on your walls all around; they made your beauty perfect.

¹² “Tarshish was your merchant because of your many luxury goods. They gave you silver, iron, tin, and lead for your goods.¹³ Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your traders. They bartered human lives and vessels of bronze for your merchandise.¹⁴ Those from the house of Togarmah traded for your wares with horses, steeds, and mules.¹⁵ The men of Dedan were your traders; many isles were the market of your hand. They brought you ivory tusks and ebony as payment.¹⁶ Syria was your merchant because of the abundance of goods you made. They gave you for your wares emeralds, purple, embroidery, fine linen, corals, and rubies.¹⁷ Judah and the land of Israel were your traders. They traded for your merchandise wheat of Minnith, millet, honey, oil, and balm.¹⁸ Damascus was your merchant because of the abundance of goods you made, because of your many luxury items, with the wine of Helbon and with white wool.¹⁹ Dan and Javan paid for your wares, traversing back and forth. Wrought iron, cassia, and cane were among your merchandise.²⁰ Dedan was your merchant in saddlecloths for riding.²¹ Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your regular merchants. They traded with you in lambs, rams, and goats.²² The merchants of Sheba and Raamah were your merchants. They traded for your wares the choicest spices, all kinds of precious stones, and gold.²³ Haran, Canneh, Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Assyria, and Chilmad were your merchants.²⁴ These were your merchants in choice items—in purple clothes, in embroidered garments, in chests of multicoloured apparel, in sturdy woven cords, which were in your marketplace.

²⁵ “The ships of Tarshish were carriers of your merchandise. You were filled and very glorious in the midst of the seas.²⁶ Your oarsmen brought you into many waters, but the east wind broke you in the midst of the seas.²⁷ “Your riches, wares, and merchandise, your mariners and pilots, your caulkers and merchandisers, all your men of war who are in you, and the entire company which is in your midst, will fall into the midst of the seas on the day of your ruin.

²⁸ The common-land will shake at the sound of the cry of your pilots.²⁹ “All who handle the oar, the mariners, all the pilots of the sea will come down from their ships and stand on the shore.³⁰ They will make their voice heard because of you; they will cry bitterly and cast dust on their heads; they will roll about in ashes; ³¹ they will shave themselves completely bald because of you, gird themselves with sackcloth, and weep for you with bitterness of heart and bitter wailing.

³² In their wailing for you they will take up a lamentation, and lament for you: ‘What city is like Tyre, destroyed in the midst of the sea?’³³ ‘When your wares went out by sea, you satisfied many people; you enriched the kings of the earth with your many luxury goods and your merchandise.

34 But you are broken by the seas in the depths of the waters; your merchandise and the entire company will fall in your midst. 35 All the inhabitants of the isles will be astonished at you; their kings will be greatly afraid, and their countenance will be troubled. 36 The merchants among the peoples will hiss at you; you will become a horror, and be no more forever.’ ” ’ ”

Here we see just how affluent and influential Tyre was as she was portrayed as a beautifully made ship (v 3-8), that would eventually sink and be destroyed (v27). As we know, money gives power, because it allows it's owner to control others. Also, the nations who traded with Tyre would have suffered a massive financial hit as their whole economy and supply chains were severely disrupted—we are having a very small taste of this due the impact of covid and war today. This is also a foretaste of what will happen when God destroys the world economic system at the end of the Tribulation as described in Revelation 18.

Application: Living in a materialistic world

This gives us insight into how satan has organised his evil world system. One of the greatest hooks that satan has is our desire pleasure and the absence of pain and suffering. What do people in western countries fear the most? The loss of our high standard of living which we take so much for granted. What are the issues that politicians generally focus on to try to get into power? Economics, money, and generally just giving the people what they want. However, in contrast to what satan offers and encourages, Scripture says this regarding money and wealth or riches:

1 Timothy 6:6-12 NLT paraphrase

Yet true godliness with contentment is itself great wealth [gain]. 7 After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. 8 So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content.

9 But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

11 But you, Timothy, are a man of God; so run from all these evil things. Pursue righteousness and a godly life, along with faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness.

12 Fight the good fight for the true faith. Hold tightly to the eternal life to which God has called you, which you have declared so well before many witnesses.

Ezekiel 28:1-10 NKJV—*Proclamation Against the (human) prince of Tyre*

28 The word of the Lord came to me again, saying, 2 “Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, ‘Thus says the Lord God:

“Because your heart is lifted up, and you say, ‘I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, in the midst of the seas,’ yet you are a man, and not a god, though you set your heart as the heart of a god 3 (Behold, you are wiser than Daniel! There is no secret that can be hidden from you! 4 With your wisdom and your understanding you have gained riches for yourself, and gathered gold and silver into your treasuries; 5 By your great wisdom in trade you have increased your riches, and your heart is lifted up because of your riches),” 6 ‘Therefore thus says the Lord God: “because you have set your heart as the heart of a god, 7 Behold, therefore, I will bring strangers against you, the most terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom, and defile your splendor. 8 They shall throw you down into the Pit, and you shall die the death of the slain in the midst of the seas. 9 “Will you still say before him who slays you, ‘I am a god’? But you shall be a man, and not a god, in the hand of him who slays you. 10 You shall die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of aliens; for I have spoken,” says the Lord God.’ ”

Application: Absolute power corrupts absolutely—the danger of pride

Now God focuses on one man, the earthly prince of Tyre. We have mentioned that his great wealth gained through trading made him very powerful. Let this be a warning to us: *positions of authority are dangerous*. Listen to Scripture's warning:

1 Timothy 3:6-7 NLT paraphrase

A church leader must not be a new believer, because he might become proud, and the devil would cause him to fall. ⁷ Also, people outside the church must speak well of him so that he will not be disgraced and fall into the devil's trap.

This section is a lead into one of the most insightful passage in the entire Scriptures concerning the fall of satan. It is no wonder that the king of Tyre was proud, when we consider that he allowed himself to be controlled by satan, at least to some degree as he worshipped the demons behind the idols. There are demonic lords who reign over regions—see Daniel 10:13 and 20, and it appears that satan himself was the demon leader behind the prince of Tyre. However, we don't need to be controlled or influenced by a demon to be proud. It comes naturally to us all. Why? Because it's a part of our sinful nature. *Pride is the root or cause of all sin*, both for satan and for us humans.

What is pride? Pride is not having the correct or an accurate understanding of who we are. We can either think we are better than we really are, or worse. Humility, the opposite of pride, is simply having the correct or accurate understanding of who we are. It's not being proud to think that you are good at something, if in fact you really are good at it. But we often demonstrate pride by either denying the gifting that God has blessed us with, or exaggerating it. Of course, the most pride killing statements are these—“Without Christ I can do nothing” (see John 15:5), and “What do you have that you did not first receive” (see 1 Corinthians 4:7). Remembering these two truths causes us to realise that whatever gifting and ability we have is a blessing from God, and therefore we must give God the glory for anything good in our lives; thus we not only accurately perceive or understand our strengths and weaknesses, but we also correctly recognise God as being the *source* of our gifts and of every good thing that happens to us (see James 1:17)—this is true humility.

1 Corinthians 4:7 NKJV

For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

Ezekiel 28:11-19 NKJV—Lamentation for the King of Tyre (satan)

¹¹ Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ¹² “Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold.

The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created. ¹⁴ “You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. ¹⁵ You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you.

¹⁶ “By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones.

17 “Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, that they might gaze at you. 18 “You defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your trading; therefore I brought fire from your midst; it devoured you, and I turned you to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all who saw you. 19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; you have become a horror, and shall be no more forever.” ’ ’ ”

Where was satan when God created the world? Watching and rejoicing (see Job 38:7), and in the garden once it was created (v 13). Satan, or lucifer (see Isaiah 14:12-15), was the most powerful and beautiful angel that God created. He was like the worship leader of heaven, the angel with the most prominent position. His problem was that he thought to himself, “I will be like the Most High” (Isaiah 14:14). Lucifer wanted to be like God, to receive all the praise, honour, and glory that only God is worthy of. He forgot 1 Corinthians 4:7, that everything he had and was was a gift from God—I **established you** (v 14), and therefore he had nothing to boast about. Satan used the same lie in the garden of Eden, “*Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil”* (Genesis 3:4-5). Pride is what causes people to refuse to come to God, because they refuse to accept that, apart from God, there is nothing good in and of themselves, and also, they want to live life their own way, independent of God. Keep in mind the foreboding parallel here; as the prince of Tyre was judged and destroyed because of his pride, so will satan eventually be destroyed, and so will anyone else who dares to rebel against God.

Ezekiel 28:20-24 NKJV—Proclamation Against Sidon

20 Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 21 “Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, and prophesy against her, 22 and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I am against you, O Sidon; I will be glorified in your midst; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I execute judgments in her and am hallowed in her. 23 For I will send pestilence upon her, and blood in her streets; the wounded shall be judged in her midst by the sword against her on every side; then they shall know that I am the Lord.

24 “And there shall no longer be a pricking brier or a painful thorn for the house of Israel from among all who are around them, who despise them [The ancient hatred]. Then they shall know that I am the Lord God.””

Sidon is the city north of Tyre, in what is now Lebanon. Once again we see the ancient, irrational, illogical, unreasonable, and satanic in origin hatred towards Israel—it’s simply satan using or manipulating the nations to try to destroy Israel.

Ezekiel 28:25-26 NKJV—Israel’s Future Blessing

25 ‘Thus says the Lord God: “When I have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and am hallowed in them in the sight of the Gentiles, then they will dwell in their own land which I gave to My servant Jacob. 26 And they will dwell safely there, build houses, and plant vineyards; yes, they will dwell securely, when I execute judgments on all those around them who despise them. Then they shall know that I am the Lord their God.” ’ ’ ”

What a beautiful way to end this section describing the judgement of the nations surrounding Israel. Once again, as they are suffering God’s severe discipline, God reassures His chosen people of His unconditional promises to them. This shows the reality of Psalm 30:5, “*For His anger is but for a moment, His favour is for life; weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.*”

“The holy people are the channel through whom the Holy God reveals himself. There is no mention of judgments upon Israel: that is presumably thought of as a thing of the past.” (Taylor) The same is true for the church—one day we will stand faultless before Christ.