



Book of Ezekiel

Chapter 28

*Theme: Judgment against the prince of Tyre,
Judgment against the king*

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Missler Introduction: The Ruler of Tyre

Now Chapter 27 was this lament, this dirge, this poetic lament on Tyre. Chapter 28 is now going to focus a bit, shifting from Tyre the city, to the king of Tyre, the ruler. But you are going to discover, if you listen carefully, that the language goes beyond the claims or the problems of any one normal human ruler.

By the time we get to verse 11, we are going to discover that the language clearly goes far beyond a literal, physical human ruler, and it is going to talk about the personage that is behind that ruler, in a very strange way. There are 2 passages clearly like this in the Old Testament: Ezekiel 28 is one of them; and Isaiah 14 is the other. What we are going to get a glimpse of is a glimpse into the power that was behind the king of Tyre, ie. Satan. Those inferences that we get about Satan's origin and destiny come in large measure from Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.¹

Wycliffe Introduction: From the city, the prophet passes to its ruler, as a representative of the genius of the community, the embodiment of the spirit of the proud commercial city. King and people constitute a corporate solidarity, the pride and self-deification of which are doomed. Other instances of "the insanity of prosperity" are Sennacherib (II Kgs 17:33-35); Pharaoh (Ezk 29:3); Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 3:15; 4:30; note particularly the autotheism of Babylon, Isa 47:7-10); Herod (Acts 12:21-23); "the man of sin" (II Thess 2:3, 4); and conquerors who rely on their weapons (Hab 1:11, 16); and all who today worship the "goddess of getting ahead."

The prophet depicts the punishment of the proud prince (Ezk 28:1-10); and utters an ironical dirge over his fall (28:11-19).²

In this chapter we find the judgment of the prince and king of Tyre and Sidon. The prophecy looks beyond the local ruler to the one who is behind the kingdoms of the world—Satan.³

Chuck Smith: Now as we get into chapter 28, the attention now is directed against the king of Tyre. Chapter 26 against the city of Tyre, chapter 27 against the merchandising of Tyre, chapter 28 now is directed against the king or the prince of Tyre. And as we get into this, suddenly there is a transition and he begins to address himself unto Satan, the power behind the earthly kingdom. Now the Bible says that Satan is the prince of this world. And unless a nation is really dedicated to God and its leaders dedicated to God, then Satan is controlling and seeks to control the leadership of the world. Hitler was a man who was controlled by the white masters, these men who after the fall of the Third Reich moved down into Peru, and still many of them are living in Peru today. Men who are into all kinds of spiritism. They controlled Hitler during the period of the Third Reich. And he was a man who was controlled by these demonic forces, guided by these men who were high in the area of white magic.

¹ Chuck Missler, Notes on Ezieliel, khouse.org

² Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament*. Chicago: Moody Press.

³ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 27:36). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Ezekiel 28:1

The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

BKC 1-5: Ezekiel’s third message against Tyre was directed specifically **to the ruler of Tyre**. “Ruler” (*nāgīd*) means “the man at the top” (cf. 1 Sam. 9:16; 10:1; 13:14; 2 Sam. 7:8). Ezekiel had prophesied against the whole city; he was now singling out the city’s leader for a special **word** from God. This ruler then was Ethbaal III, who ruled from 591-590 B.C. to 573-572 B.C.⁴

McGee 1-2: Again the word of the Lord comes to Ezekiel, and this time there are two messages: one for the prince of Tyre and one for the king of Tyre. In back of the great kingdom, the great commercial center, the great political center, and the great stronghold of Tyre, we are going to find the one who apparently also controls all the kingdoms of this world. He is Satan. He offered the kingdoms of the world to the Lord Jesus during his temptation in the wilderness: “And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine” (Luke 4:5–7). The Lord rejected Satan’s offer, but not because He didn’t recognize his ownership—Christ knew that Satan did have the kingdoms. Ultimately Christ will rule over the kingdoms of the world—but not as the vice-regent of Satan! Today, however, the Devil is still the prince of the power of the air. He is the one who is in back of the kingdoms of our world, whether we like it or not.

Here is, I believe, a type of Antichrist. Actually, it takes two persons to fulfill all that Scripture says about *the* Antichrist (and John says there are many). One will deny the Person of Christ—be His enemy; the other will imitate Him. There will be a religious ruler and a political ruler. Now here in Ezekiel we have, I believe, the combination set before us.

This is the vicegerent of Satan: “Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God”—this is exactly what the Antichrist is going to say. The apostle Paul says this of him: “Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thess. 2:4). And this prince of Tyre says, “I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas.”

But God says, “Yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God.”⁵

OTS; The Death of the Prince (28:1–10).

In his third Tyre oracle Ezekiel condemned the pride of the prince of Tyre. That ruler, like many of his counterparts in the ancient Near East, considered himself a deity. He regarded himself as completely safe in his island fortress. He thought that he was as wise as God. Ezekiel conceded that the prince was as wise as Daniel who had already achieved a reputation in the royal court at Babylon. No secret seemed too difficult for him. By that

⁴ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 28:1–5). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁵ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:2). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

wisdom he had been able to amass great wealth, to build a commercial empire. With the increase of his riches, however, came a corresponding inflation of his ego (28:1–5).

The arrogant prince would experience punishment at the hands of God. Ruthless strangers would come against him. The splendor of this ruler would be defiled. The vainglorious prince would be slain in battle. He would go down to the pit, i.e., Sheol, the afterlife. He would die on his island fortress “in the heart of the seas.” Ezekiel wondered if this prince would argue the case for his deity in the face of the men who were about to slay him. Only a confrontation with death will deflate the ego of the arrogant. At that time the prince would realize, as all rational men must, that he was mortal, not God. So this glorious prince would “die the death of the uncircumcised,” i.e., the most ignominious death. This was certain to happen, because the Lord had spoken (28:6–10).⁶

ESV 1–10: Although cast in lament form, the structure of this oracle takes the familiar pattern of grounds of indictment (vv. 2b–6) and outcome (vv. 7–10) with a formulaic conclusion. Pride is at the center of the charge, reinforced by the repetition of the word “heart” (Hb. *leb* or *lebab*), used eight times in the span of vv. 2–8.

Chuck Smith 1-2: Now immediately this causes us to think of Second Thessalonians, chapter 2, where it declares that the antichrist is going to come and stand in the temple of God and declare that he is God and demand to be worshipped as God in the last days. So the prince of Tyrus becomes an interesting type of the antichrist, declaring himself to be God and setting himself up as a god. Now this indeed did happen. The king of Tyrus assumed the god role and proclaimed himself to be God and began to demand the worship of the people.⁷

Daniel: God was also personally disgusted with the prince of Tyre. This ruler had become so prideful of his position, he actually began to think of himself as a god. God communicated through Ezekiel's prophecy, "To men, you are wise and intelligent. You are rich. You have power and influence. But you are not a god, and I will demonstrate this to everyone by your death."⁸

Ezekiel 28:2

Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:

“...prince” of Tyre: Prince and king were more or less interchangeable. The word prince was used for king, so do not think of a prince as a junior king.

⁶ Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 28:1–10). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

⁷ Chuck Smith, Pastor / founder Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, CA, Sermon notes on Ezekiel

⁸ <http://www.rondaniel.com/library/26-Ezekiel/Ezekiel2601.pdf>

Constable: Ezekiel was to speak an oracle to the contemporary leader (Heb. *nagid*, prince, ruler, king) of Tyre in the Lord's name, probably King Ethbaal II (also known as Ittobaal II and Ithobalus II, ca. 590-573 B.C.). As usual in political affairs, the king often represents the kingdom he served and even other kings that preceded him who possessed the same characteristics that he did. In this case, a spirit of pride marked the king as well as his nation.

. . . the attack is not so much a personal criticism of the ruler as a verbal onslaught on the state.

While one particular king is in view, we should view him as the representative head of his city-state. Similarly, the President of the United States personifies the policies of this country. We often speak of him when we are referring to the country as a whole. He is uniquely responsible, but he is also a representative figure. The king of Tyre had become very proud because of the prosperity of his seafaring kingdom (cf. 29:3; 2 Kings 18:33-35; Dan. 3:15; 4:30; Acts 12:21-23). He had even thought he was in God's place of control over his own and Tyre's affairs. Ancient Near Easterners often viewed their kings as the embodiment of their gods, and this king appears to have concluded that he was a god. Nevertheless he was only a man.

As probably nowhere else in Scripture, pride is set forth in this chapter as the destroying sin.⁹

Dake: [the prince of Tyrus] According to Josephus, he was Ithobalus II. He had such pride that he even claimed to be God and exalted his heart as the heart of God (Ezekiel 28:2,6,9), making a suitable picture of the coming Antichrist who will likewise exalt himself and claim to be God (2 Thes. 2:4). Satan ruled the king of Tyre, as proved by the association of Lucifer with him in Ezekiel 28:11-19. Satan will also rule through Antichrist (2 Thes. 2:8-12; Rev. 13:1-8).¹⁰

LAN: Previously Ezekiel had prophesied against the city of Tyre (Ezekiel 26-27). Here he focused his prophecy on Tyre's leader. The chief sin of Tyre's king was pride—believing himself to be a god. But Ezekiel also may have made a broader spiritual application, speaking about the spiritual king of Tyre, Satan, whom the people were really following (see the note on Ezekiel 28:12-19).¹¹

LAN 2-3: Daniel, an important official in Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom (Ezekiel 14:14), was already renowned for his wisdom. Daniel proclaimed that all his wisdom came from God (Daniel 2:20-23). By contrast, the king of Tyre thought that he himself *was* a god. When truly wise people get closer to God, they recognize their need to depend on him for guidance.

Wycliffe: The prince of Tyre is called a *nâgîd*, "leader," a term used only of Israelite rulers except here and in Dan 9:25, 26. Its appearance here suggests that he held his office only at God's appointment. He is designated "king," *melek* in verse 12, illustrating the concept of the Fertile Crescent that the ruler was the representative of the gods, and

⁹ Dr. Thomas Constable, Notes on Ezekiel, 2010 Edition

¹⁰ Dale Study Notes, Dake's Study Bible

¹¹ Life Application Bible Notes

more than human. Ittobaal II was king of Tyre at this time (Jos *Against Apion* I. 21), but it is the autotheism of Tyre rather than any specific ruler that is denounced. **The seat of the gods** (RSV; not *God*, AV) may refer (1) to an empty throne in the Tyrian temple reserved for the king, (2) to the impregnable situation of Tyre, or (3) to the island as sacred to its own gods.¹²

The king's claims to deity were false. God said, You are a man and not a god. Ethbaal III was only a mortal. Evidently he felt he had wisdom that only a god could possess.

ESV: The king of Tyre is designated **prince** (Hb. *nagid*). It could simply be a stylistic variation for "king" (cf. Ps. 76:12, where it is a poetic parallel to "kings"). If it has further value beyond a simple designation for a national leader, this term could imply a divinely appointed, charismatic leader as it does in older Hebrew usage. If so, it further emphasizes the hubris of this figure.

Ezekiel 28:3

Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:

Missler: There was, in fact, a throne in Tyre to their god, and some scholars believe that the king of Tyre did in fact assume that throne. As was the case in many of the ancient empires, the king got carried away with his own ego, and declared himself to be a god of sorts. That may be part of what was going on here.

Something else you pick up is the reference to Daniel. That was put in there sort of sarcastically, or as the claim he made or inferred. But for that claim to even have any meaning, here was Ezekiel talking. The fame of Daniel was very widespread. Ezekiel mentioned it earlier in Chapter 14. If you read Daniel carefully, in Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6, Daniel frequently got involved in affairs of state for Babylon.

Daniel was active in the court of Babylon for some 25 years; so Daniel was an international figure well known at that time; and his wisdom was legend even outside of Babylon. This king of Tyre boasted of being wiser than Daniel.

This claim to godship was laid out as a lure as early as Genesis Chapter 3. The serpent told Eve, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." That was the promise the serpent used to get Eve to sin.

It is interesting, too, that in Isaiah 14, the first sin was in Satan's heart where he aspired to be God.

When we get to 2 Thessalonians 2, the "man of sin," as Paul calls him, speaking of what some people continue to refer to as the antichrist, he is speaking great things. Also, in Revelation 13 we find incredible, blasphemous boasts of the antichrist. Those things are cut out of the same mold.

Dake: [thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee]

This does not mean that he was wiser than Daniel in reality—only wiser in his own eyes; and he thought that nothing could be hidden from him. He did have wisdom and

¹² Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 28:2). Chicago: Moody Press.

understanding enough to rule Tyre and oversee the affairs in that city for the purpose of making riches (Ezekiel 28:4-5). His heart was lifted up because of his prosperity (Ezekiel 28:5), as Lucifer's was lifted up in pride over his beauty and authority as sole ruler of the earth before the days of Adam (Ezekiel 28:11-17).

Constable 3-5: Indeed, the king was a very wise man, wiser even than Daniel, who had revealed divine secrets to Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel had been in Babylon since 605 B.C., almost 20 years, so he was by this time well-known. Another possible interpretation is that the king thought he was wiser than Daniel, not that he knew of Daniel necessarily, but Ezekiel used Daniel as a standard of great wisdom. The king of Tyre had understanding of matters that were obscure to other people, or he believed that he did. His wisdom had enabled him to become rich personally and to make Tyre wealthy. His wise trading had enabled him to increase those riches. He had become very proud because of the success he had enjoyed. Note that the character of Daniel was the opposite of this ruler, though they were both very intelligent. It is not uncommon for people today, even Christians, to deify themselves in their own minds when they experience great success.

Wycliffe: Wiser than Daniel. This may be the Dan'el of the Ras Shamra tablets (cf. on 14:14, 20); or the Biblical Daniel (Dan 1:17-20; 2:48; 4:8, 9). 4, 5. This wisdom was devoted to the amassing of wealth.¹³

BKC: In a statement dripping with irony Ezekiel asked the king, Are you wiser than Daniel? Is no secret hidden from you? The "Daniel" in view was probably the Prophet Daniel (see comments on 14:14, 20). He had already achieved a reputation for his wisdom in the courts of Nebuchadnezzar (cf. Dan. 1:19-20; 2:46-49). The irony was that Ethbaal III felt his wisdom exceeded that of even Daniel who served the country that would ultimately defeat Tyre. Daniel, who attributed all his wisdom to God (cf. Dan. 2:27-28), was much wiser than Ethbaal III, who claimed to be a god.

Ethbaal III had been able to use his wisdom and skill to acquire material possessions. His lucrative trade had produced great wealth, including gold and silver, but it also increased his pride (his heart had grown proud).¹⁴

McGee: Here is another reference to Daniel. Ezekiel and Daniel, you remember, were contemporaries. This young man Ezekiel had great respect for Daniel, who was prime minister in Babylon, and who really stood for the Lord. I personally think that Ezekiel had the hardest job. He lived with and preached to the captives. As I said earlier, I would have much preferred to live in the palace and spend one night in the lions' den than to work with the captives, but Ezekiel had no choice in the matter.

Ezekiel refers to Daniel's wisdom. Ezekiel says that this prince of Tyre was a smart boy. If you don't think there were wise men in that day, you are wrong. I think the wise

¹³ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 28:3). Chicago: Moody Press.

¹⁴ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 28:1-5). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

men in that day would make the so-called intellectual crowd that centers in Harvard today look like beginners in kindergarten. These great men in Ezekiel's day were really *wise* men.

Now I believe that this prince of Tyre represents the religious ruler aspect of the Antichrist. And I think he comes out of Israel. You see, the Antichrist, the political ruler, comes out of the sea of the nations of the world. I think he will be a Gentile. His advisor, the religious ruler, will come out of the land. The religious ruler will be like a prime minister to the political ruler, like Daniel was in Babylon, or like Joseph in Egypt, or Disraeli in England. Perhaps I should not make that kind of comparison, but I think it serves to illustrate the two positions.¹⁵

you are wiser than Daniel: The Hebrew name Daniel is spelled here the same way as in 14:14: **Dan-El**. It might refer to a different person otherwise unknown in Israel's ancient history. The fame of Daniel's wisdom was already widely spread, even in Ezekiel's day. When the fall of Tyre came, Daniel had been in Nebuchadnezzar's court at least 25 years. He was well known as a man of wisdom (Dan 1:20; 2:48; 4:18; 5:11, 12; 6:3).

Chuck Smith: That is what he was saying of himself, that he was wiser than Daniel. Of course, it is interesting that again Daniel is mentioned who was a contemporary to Ezekiel. And already Daniel's fame was no doubt being spread abroad, and probably because of his interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. That probably brought Daniel to instant fame and recognition, because after he had interpreted the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar made him one of the chief counselors for the Babylonian kingdom. And so Daniel's fame, especially, of course, among the children of Israel, had spread abroad.

So Ezekiel, who was a contemporary to Daniel, lived at the same time in Babylonian captivity, makes mention of Daniel, not only here but in other passages. And here the wisdom of Daniel is referred to.

Ezekiel 28:4

With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures:

ESV 4-5: Trade and commerce were the foundation of Tyre's wealth, but then that wealth led Tyre to become proud, which led to aspirations to deity.

Chuck Smith 4-5: The Bible tells us that it's hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Then it qualifies it and says, "How hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of heaven." Jesus said, "It's easier for a camel to go through an eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:24). The Bible says that they that will be rich will fall into divers

¹⁵ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:3). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

temptations or lust which drown men's souls in perdition. But again the Bible says, "If riches increase, just don't set your heart upon them."

Now that was the problem with the king of Tyrus, his heart was set upon his riches. He was increased with riches and his heart was lifted up because of his riches.

Ezekiel 28:5

By thy great wisdom *and* by thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches:

Oh, how easy it is to imagine the traps that lie in wealth, yet we forget where the wealth comes from. The sin here was not in the wealth; the sin was in ascribing the source of wealth to his own wisdom, rather than recognizing who the wealth really belonged to.

Ezekiel 28:6

Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God;

Constable 6-7: Almighty God announced that because the king had exalted himself in pride the Lord would bring ruthless strangers against him from among other nations. They would fight against his commercial empire, resist his wisdom, and mar the beauty of Tyre's splendor. Nebuchadnezzar was one of the first of these strangers (cf. 26:7).

LAN 6-10: The enemy army ("foreigners") that attacked Tyre was the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar. This attack occurred in 573/572 B.C.

BKC 6-10: God would not let the pride (vv. 2, 5) of Tyre's ruler go unchallenged. The foreigners whom God would bring against Tyre had already been identified as the Babylonians (26:7-11). Babylon was ruthless (*'ārîš*, "terror-striking") in her treatment of others (cf. 30:11; 31:12; 32:12). Unimpressed with Ethbaal's beauty and wisdom, Babylon would destroy him in a violent way in the heart of the seas (cf. 27:26). When slain by his enemies, it would be evident that he was no god. Ethbaal III was removed from his throne by Nebuchadnezzar in 573-572 B.C. and Baal II was put in his place. Ethbaal III paid a high price for rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar. In fact Ethbaal would die the death of the uncircumcised at the hands of foreigners. While the Phoenicians practiced circumcision, Ezekiel's words conveyed a meaning that went beyond this cultural practice. To "die the death of the uncircumcised" meant to die in shame (cf. 32:30; 1 Sam. 17:26, 36). This king who claimed to be a god would suffer an ignoble death as a man.¹⁶

ESV: The entire **because ... therefore** structure (vv. 2, 7) is distilled in this single "hinge" verse.

¹⁶ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 28:6-10). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Ezekiel 28:7

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.

Wycliffe: Strangers ... the terrible of the nations; i.e., the Chaldeans. See also 7:21, 24; 30:11; 31:12; 32:12; Hab 1:5-10.

ESV 7-8: Here the agents of divine punishment are unnamed **foreigners**, elsewhere identified with the Babylonians (26:7; 29:18; cf. 30:10–11). For descent to the **pit**, cf. 26:19–21.

Ezekiel 28:8

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.*

Constable 8-9: The enemy would slay the king and his city-state. Tyre would cease to exist as other empires had also died (cf. 27:26-34). She would no longer be a great sea power. This ruler and his city would then not be able to continue to believe that they were superior and all-powerful like a god.

Wycliffe: The pit (*shahat*). Equivalent to Sheol, the realm of the dead beneath the earth (cf. 31:15). From the root *shûah*, “sink down”; so, “hollow place,” “cavern.”

Ezekiel 28:9

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.

The irony there is hard to miss. “You say you are a god? Explain that to the guy who is cutting off your throat.”

And so his destruction is predicted. And though he declares himself to be God, when the enemy comes over the wall, you're not going to move him to thinking that you are God. You'll die like a man.

Ezekiel 28:10

Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken *it*, saith the Lord GOD.

Missler: The invaders of Tyre were Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians (Jeremiah 27). The Babylonians were feared because of their cruelty. They devised all kinds of ways to be really what you and I would call barbaric.

The word “death” here in the Hebrew is implied to be obviously a violent one (Jeremiah 16:4). But what is interesting is that in the language there is the use of a plural for intensity. It is not “your death,” but rather “your deaths,” as if you could die more than once. That same construction is used in Isaiah 53:9 of Jesus Christ. Not just a violent death, but in a plurality of deaths.

“You shall die the deaths of the uncircumcised.” If you are on your toes, you will say, “that is kind of a weird thing to threaten a Phoenician with. They were not Israelis, so what would they care if they were circumcised or not?” Wrong. Phoenicians practiced circumcision. Herodotus tells us that; and the Babylonians did not. So here was another needle into them. They were to die at the hands of the uncircumcised.

Up until now God had been talking through Ezekiel against the king of Tyre who, through pride got carried away and was going to get judged. However, when we get to verse 11, we will sense a shifting of gears.

Constable: The king would die a shameful death (cf. 32:30; 1 Sam. 17:26, 36). The Phoenicians practiced circumcision, so to die the death of the uncircumcised meant to die like a barbarian. Strangers would slay him. This is the fate that Yahweh decreed for him and his empire.

Wycliffe: Deaths of the uncircumcised. For the Phoenicians, who practiced circumcision (Herodotus II. 104), to die like the despised uncircumcised was a great shame (cf. Ezk 31:18; 32:19, 21, 24ff.).

Lamentation over the Fall of the King of Tyre. 28:11-19.

Ezekiel applies to the king of Tyre a tale current among the Phoenicians. It has only cursory resemblances to the Garden of Eden account in Genesis 2; 3. In the garden of God in Eden there lived with the cherub who kept it an ideal person (the *Urmensch*, or first man), the perfection of wisdom and beauty. Though only a man, in his pride he claimed to be a god. For his sin he was driven out of the garden by the cherub. According to God’s word to Ezekiel, the king of Tyre, for a similar offense was to be brought to ruin. Some early Church Fathers interpreted this section as having ultimate reference to the fall of Satan or the Antichrist (cf. Isa 14:4-20). This view is also held by some evangelical groups today.¹⁷

Ezekiel 28:11

Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

BKC 11-19: Ezekiel’s final prophecy against Tyre was a lament concerning the king of Tyre. The use of “king” (*melek*) instead of “ruler” (v. 2) was significant. Ezekiel used the word “king” sparingly. Apart from King Jehoiachin (1:2) he did not use the title “king” of any of Israel’s monarchs.

The change from “ruler” to “king” was also significant in light of the content of these two prophecies. In 28:1-10 Ezekiel rebuked the *ruler* for claiming to be a god though he

¹⁷ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 28:7–11). Chicago: Moody Press.

was just a man. But in verses 11-19 Ezekiel described the *king* in terms that could not apply to a mere man. This “king” had appeared in the Garden of Eden (v. 13), had been a guardian cherub (v. 14a), had possessed free access to God’s holy mountain (v. 14b), and had been sinless from the time he was created (v. 15).

Some think Ezekiel was describing Ethbaal III in highly poetic language, comparing him with Adam (both had great potential, but sinned; both were judged, etc.). But some of the language does not apply to Adam. For example, Adam was not a guardian cherub and did not have free access to the mountain of God. Also the descriptions in verses 13 and 16 do not fit the first man in the Garden of Eden. When Adam sinned he was not cast from the mountain of God to the earth (vv. 16-17), and no nations existed to be appalled at his fall (v. 19).

Other scholars have held that Ezekiel was describing the “god” behind the king of Tyre (perhaps Baal). God judged the ruler of Tyre (vv. 1-10) and the god of the city who empowered the ruler (vv. 11-19). But it seems incongruous that Ezekiel would give credence to a mythological tale of a god supporting the ruler of Tyre when much in his book showed the falsehood of pagan beliefs. Also Ezekiel’s imagery was drawn from the biblical account of Creation, not from pagan mythologies.

Ezekiel was not describing an ideal man or a false god in verses 11-26. But his switch from “ruler” to “king” and his allusions to the Garden of Eden do imply that the individual being described was more than human. The best explanation is that Ezekiel was describing Satan who was the true “king” of Tyre, the one motivating the human “ruler” of Tyre. Satan was in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-7), and his chief sin was pride (1 Tim. 3:6). He also had access to God’s presence (cf. Job 1:6-12). Speaking of God’s judging the human “ruler” of Tyre for his pride (Ezek. 28:1-10), the prophet lamented the satanic “king” of Tyre who was also judged for his pride (vv. 11-19). Tyre was motivated by the same sin as Satan, and would suffer the same fate.

Ezekiel described the beauty and perfection of Satan as God originally created him (vv. 12-15a). He was the model of perfection, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. God did not create Satan as some prime minister of evil. As with all God’s Creation, Satan was a perfectly created being—one of the crowning achievements in God’s angelic realm.

Satan was given an exalted place; he was in Eden, the garden of God. Eden was the epitome of God’s beautiful Creation on earth (cf. Gen. 2:8-14). Satan’s beauty matched that of Eden: every precious stone adorned him. Ezekiel listed nine gemstones in describing Satan’s beauty. These were 9 of the 12 kinds of stones worn in the breastplate of Israel’s high priest (cf. Ex. 28:15-20; 39:10-13). The precious stones probably symbolized Satan’s beauty and high position.

God had anointed Satan as a guardian cherub (Ezek. 28:14). The cherubim (pl. of cherub) were the “inner circle” of angels who had the closest access to God and guarded His holiness (cf. 10:1-14). Satan also had free access to God’s holy mount (28:14), heaven, and he walked among the fiery stones (cf. v. 16). Some associate “the fiery stones” with the precious gems (v. 13), but the stones there were part of Satan’s attire whereas the stones in verses 14 and 16 were part of the abode where Satan dwelt. Others have identified the “fiery stones” with God’s fiery wall of protection (cf. Zech. 2:5). They see Satan dwelling *inside* or *behind* God’s outer defenses in the “inner courts” of heaven itself. This view is possible, and the word translated “among” (*mitôk*) can have the idea

of “between” or “inside.” Whatever the exact identification, Ezekiel was stating that Satan had access to God’s presence.

As originally created by God, Satan was blameless . . . till wickedness was found in him (Ezek. 28:15) and he sinned (v. 16). The sin that corrupted Satan was self-generated. Created blameless, his sin was pride (1 Tim. 3:6) because of his beauty. Satan spoiled his wisdom because of his splendor (cf. Ethbaal’s similar problem, Ezek. 28:1-2, 5, 7). Satan’s pride led to his fall and judgment.

Though Ezekiel presented the fall of Satan as a single act, it actually occurred in stages. Satan’s initial judgment was his expulsion from the position of God’s anointed cherub before His throne. God expelled him from the mount of God (heaven, v. 16; cf. v. 14). Satan was cast from God’s government in heaven (cf. Luke 10:18) but was still allowed access to God (cf. Job 1:6-12; Zech. 3:1-2). In the Tribulation Satan will be cast from heaven and restricted to the earth (Rev. 12:7-13); in the Millennium he will be in the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:1-3); and after his brief release at the end of the Millennium (Rev. 20:7-9) he will be cast into the lake of fire forever (Rev. 20:10).

One of the elements of Satan’s sin was his widespread dishonest trade. The word for trade comes from the verb *rākal* which means “to go about from one to another.” Ezekiel had used that noun in speaking of Tyre’s commercial activities (Ezek. 28:5). Does this mean Satan was operating a business? Obviously not. Instead, Ezekiel was comparing the human “prince” of Tyre and his satanic “king.” So Ezekiel used a word that could convey a broad meaning. Satan’s position in heaven involved broad contact with many elements of God’s creation much as the prince of Tyre’s position enabled him to contact many nations.

Though Ezekiel was describing the “ultimate” ruler of Tyre, Satan, the purpose of the lament was to speak of the city’s destruction. So he began to blend the characteristics of the satanic king with the human ruler. Satan would be cast to the earth (v. 17), and the king of Tyre would also be cast down before other kings, his enemies. Satan’s ultimate destiny will be the lake of fire (cf. Rev. 21:10), and the defeat and death of the human ruler of Tyre was pictured as being consumed by fire (Ezek. 28:18). Both Satan’s and Tyre’s defeats would shock thos¹⁸

McGee: Ezekiel is not going to let anyone forget that he is not giving his own opinion, but he is telling forth God’s message.

We have had a lamentation of the city of Tyre. We have talked about the prince of Tyre, and now we come to a lamentation of the king of Tyre. Immediately we pass beyond the local king of Tyre—there were many of them. It wasn’t safe to be a king in those days. Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown. The glory did not last long. It was like the bromide *sic transit gloria mundi*, which is Latin for “thus passeth the glory of the world.”

In back of the kingdom of Tyre is Satan. Ezekiel 28 is one of the few passages in the Word of God that gives us the origin of the Devil and of evil. I don’t want to press this too much, but read carefully these words—¹⁹

¹⁸ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 28:11–19). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

¹⁹ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:11). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

ESV 11–19: The final anti-Tyre oracle adds a plethora of detail. As in ch. 27, there is no indictment (like in 28:1–10) but rather a narrative lament culminating in inevitable doom. The imagery is kaleidoscopic. Tyre is likened to a second Adam, clearly a created being (vv. 13, 15) and yet a “cherub” (v. 14). It is in the “garden of God” in v. 13, and on the “mountain of God” in vv. 14 and 16. Some would see v. 17 as a poetic allusion, wherein Ezekiel likens the downfall of the proud king of Tyre to the fall and curse on Satan in Gen. 3:1–15. At minimum, the extravagant pretensions of Tyre are graphically and poetically portrayed (cf. note on Ezek. 28:4–5), along with the utter devastation inflicted upon Tyre as a consequence (vv. 18–19).

Chuck Smith 11-12: Now, at this point there is a switch and we go behind the scenes and God is now addressing Himself unto Satan. And this is probably one of the most graphic descriptions of Satan that exists in the Bible. And he isn't, contrary to popular notion, wearing a red suit, holding a pitchfork and having a forked tail. And some evil sinister-looking creature with pointed ears and a goatee.

Daniel: 11-19 The King Of Tyre Next, the Lord speaks against the king of Tyre. As it turns out, the king of Tyre was the man against whom the Lord had prophesied in verses 1-10. This ruler is above him. This is the ruler of Tyre in the spiritual realm. This ruler is Satan himself.

There are not a lot of passages in the Bible that tell us much about Satan's origins. When he shows up in Genesis 3, he is already fallen. When he appears before the Lord's throne in Job 1 & 2 and Zechariah 3, he is already fallen. When he is shown in gospels and the book of Revelation, he is already fallen.

It is really just here in Ezekiel and In Isaiah (14:3-21) that we learn of Satan's origins. By combining the information found in both passages, some details and a scenario begin to unfold:

Satan was created (Eze. 28:13). He was beautiful and wise (Eze. 28:12), with a radiant appearance (Eze. 28:13). He was one of the cherubim (Eze. 28:14,16). He was on the holy mountain of God (Eze. 28:14) and in Eden, the garden of God (Eze. 28:13).

He was blameless until he became unrighteous (Eze. 28:15). What caused this unrighteousness? He had an abundant trade, which made him sin (Eze. 28:16,18). Isaiah says that the music of his harps brought him down (Isa. 14:11). What does all that add up to?

From our reading of Revelation, it seems that the cherubim direct the worship of God:

Rev. 4:8-11 *And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within; and day and night they do not cease to say, “HOLY, HOLY, HOLY is THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, WHO WAS AND WHO IS AND WHO IS TO COME.” And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because*

of Your will they existed, and were created.”

Our assumption is that while Satan was leading the worship of God, playing music on his harps, he began to think that he was something. He became proud because of his beauty and wisdom (Eze. 28:17).

He wanted that worship for himself - He wanted to be like God. And so, he said in his heart,

Is. 14:13-14 ... *"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."*

As a result, he was cast out from the mountain of God (Eze. 28:16). Now, he roams about on the earth (Job 1:7), being the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2), and has his throne on earth (Rev. 2:13). That's why he is called the king of Tyre (Eze. 28:12) and the king of Babylon (Isa. 14:4).

Here in Ezekiel 28, God not only reviews Satan's history, but makes a promise to him for the future: Ezek. 28:19 "...you will cease to be forever."

Jesus told us that there is an eternal fire prepared for the devil (Matt. 25:41).²⁰

Ezekiel 28:12

Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

This was saying, "you are the ultimate." "You sealest up the sum; you are the most there is." Full of wisdom, perfect in beauty. This was not like a quote, like the king was saying it. God was saying this; He was saying, "You are great." However God may not be talking to or about the King of Tyre here and is beginning to talk about the power behind the King of Tyre.

There are many who say this is not Satan and put up some fair arguments. However this passage doesn't stand alone. Isaiah Chapter 14:12-15 is too similar to ignore and I believe the two portions should be taken together.

Constable 11-12: Ezekiel received instruction from the Lord to lament the king (Heb. *melek*) of Tyre. Evidently the same person addressed in the previous speech (vv. 1-10) is in view in this lament. The writer's use of a different title from the one in verse 1 has led some scholars to conclude that a different person is in view, possibly the patron god of the city, Melkart. Others believe the Antichrist is in view in verses 1-10 and Satan in verses 11-19. But "king" elsewhere in Ezekiel describes a human ruler. He had been the model of perfection in the sense that he was full of wisdom and beauty (cf. vv. 2-5; 27:3). "The seal of perfection" is literally "the one sealing a plan." He had been the leader responsible for affixing his seal to the plans that resulted in Tyre's maritime glory.

²⁰ <http://www.rondaniel.com/library/26-Ezekiel/Ezekiel2601.pdf>

Dake: The King of Tyre

All that is said of the king of Tyre here must be understood as having a double reference—to the earthly king of Tyre, a man (Ithobalus II; Ezekiel 28:2); and to the supernatural king, Satan or Lucifer, who ruled Tyre through the earthly monarch, and who is mostly referred to in this prophecy (Ezekiel 28:11-19), as proved by many statements that could not possibly apply to an earthly man. Both the earthly and supernatural kings are referred to and addressed in this prophecy. Statements that could refer to the human being must be understood as concerning him; and those that could not be spoken of a man must be recognized as referring to the supernatural being. Then the passage will be clear. See The Law of Double Reference.

[Thou sealest up the sum]

Twenty-one References to Lucifer (Dake)

1. You seal up the sum (pattern as in Ezekiel 43:10); that is, You are the finished pattern (Ezekiel 28:12).
2. You are full of wisdom and perfect in beauty (Ezekiel 28:12,17).
3. You have been in Eden the garden of God.
4. Every precious stone was your covering when you were in Eden.
5. You were created (not born).
6. You are the anointed cherub (angel) that covers (protects or overshadows, Ezekiel 28:14).
7. I have set you so.
8. You were upon the holy mountain of God.
9. You have walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.
10. You were perfect in your ways (the laws I required you to walk in) from the day that you were created, till iniquity was found in you (Ezekiel 28:15).
11. You have sinned by the multitude of your merchandise (traffic). I will cast you out of the mountain of God.
12. I will destroy you, O covering cherub (angel), from the midst of the stones of fire.
13. Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty (Ezekiel 28:17).
14. You have corrupted your wisdom by reason of your brightness (splendor, beauty).
15. I will cast you to the ground (Ezekiel 28:17; Luke 10:18; Isaiah 14:12-14).
16. I will lay you before kings (Ezekiel 28:17; Matthew 25:41; Rev. 20:10).
17. You have defiled your sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of your traffic (Ezekiel 28:18).
18. I will bring a fire from the midst of you that will devour you (Ezekiel 28:18; Matthew 25:41; Rev. 20:10).
19. I will bring you down like ashes (Ezekiel 28:18).
20. All among the people that know you will be astonished (Ezekiel 28:19).
21. You will be a terror and never be loosed anymore to be among men to exalt yourself and oppose God.

It is true that a few of these statements could also refer to the earthly king of Tyre, but most of them (points 3-12, for instance) could never apply to a human being. Recognizing that the law of double reference applies to this passage, we can say that Lucifer is the only person in Scripture who could possibly fulfill all the statements here;

so he must be the person referred to and fitting the supernatural elements. In view of this we can then say that we have here another of many scriptures revealing the origin of Satan, his position before his fall as ruler of the pre-Adamite world, the cause of his fall, and other interesting facts about him and the past, before Adam. See *The Pre-Adamite World..*²¹

[sum] Hebrew: *tokniyth* (HSN-8508), pattern. Only here and in Ezekiel 43:10 where it refers to the pattern of the millennial temple.

[full of wisdom] This was and still is true of Lucifer in a special sense which could not be true of any earthly king of Tyre.

[perfect in beauty] Lucifer was perfect in beauty, which could never be said of any fallen man. It was the cause of his pride and fall (1 Tim. 3:6).

LAN 12-19: Some of the phrases in this passage describing the human king of Tyre may describe Satan. Great care must be taken to interpret these verses with discernment. It is clear that, at times, Ezekiel describes this king in terms that could not apply to a mere man. This king had been in the Garden of Eden (Ezekiel 28:13), had been “anointed as a guardian cherub” (Ezekiel 28:14), and had access to the holy mountain of God (Ezekiel 28:14), but was driven from there (Ezekiel 28:16-17). Ezekiel, therefore, may have been condemning not only the king of Tyre, but Satan, who had motivated the king to sin.

Wycliffe: Lamentation. Ezekiel’s lamentation over the king of Tyre, though in *qînâ* meter, is irony rather than a dirge. You were the signet of perfection (RSV). The MT reads, *You are* (or were) *one sealing up, or a sealer-of (hôtēm) proportion, measure, symmetry, i.e., “perfection” (toknît).* This usage occurs nowhere else in the OT, and the versions vary considerably. One manuscript, the LXX, Syriac, and Vulgate read, *You are* (or were) *the signet-ring (seal) (hôtam) of proportion, etc.,* as in the MT. The Syriac and Vulgate read, *the seal-ring of the likeness (tabnît) of God.* Another proposed reading is: *You were wise to perfection (.atâ ḥākām lftaklît).*²²

McGee: Satan was the wisest creature God ever created. Keep in mind that Satan is a created being. He was created perfect in beauty. If you think of Satan as a creature with horns, a forked tail, and cloven feet, you are wrong. You have been reading the literature of the Middle Ages which has its origin in Greek mythology that goes back into Asia Minor. There was a great temple of Apollo in Pergamum; also there was one in Corinth, and in Ephesus, just to name a few. This is a description of the god Pan, or Bacchus, the god of pleasure. He has horns, he runs through the grape vineyard, he is the god of the grape, the god of wine. From his waist down he is represented as a goat. The creature with horns, a forked tail, and cloven feet is right out of Greek mythology.

The Word of God does not present Satan in that manner. The Bible presents him as perfect in beauty. If you could see him, you would find that he is the most beautiful

²¹ Dake Study Notes, Dake’s Study Bible

²² Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 28:12). Chicago: Moody Press.

creature you have ever seen. I have heard many people say how good looking the men of certain cults are. When I was a boy, I heard such a man. He was in one of the cults. He had silver gray hair and was a fine looking man—in fact, he was very handsome. Some women would almost swoon at his presence. People treated him as if he were a god, a claim that he almost made. Do you know what he was? He was a minister of Satan; I don't mind saying it. When I was a boy, with no instruction in the things of God, he almost led me astray. Oh, how terrible the ministers of Satan are!

Paul has something to say about the ministers of Satan. “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness ...” (2 Cor. 11:13–15).

Ezekiel says of this one: “Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.” What was it that brought him down? We will see that when we come to verse 15.²³

BSB: This lamentation directed toward the king of Tyre defies explanation unless an allusion is being made to that malignant spiritual being called “Satan” or the “devil,” for whom the king of Tyre becomes a type. The king is described as perfect in beauty, living in Eden, the anointed cherub, a created being, and proud and corrupt because of his arrogance and beauty. Those words were true of the king of Tyre, but they also are a perfect description of Satan. The word “satan” is derived from a Hebrew verb meaning “to lie in wait.” From this the word develops the nuance of “adversary” (cf. Num 22:22) or “opponent” (cf. Zech 3:1). Other prominent names for Satan include “devil” (*diabolos*, Gk.), which means “accuser”; the “ruler of the power of the air” (Eph 2:2); the “prince of this world” (John 12:31); the “adversary” (*antidikos*, Gk., in 1 Pet 5:8); “Beelzebub” (Matt 12:24); “the great dragon” (Rev 12:9). Based upon information gleaned from a comparison of this passage with Isa. 14; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6, and other passages, the following picture of Satan begins to emerge. Satan was created (v. 15) as one of a host of angelic beings. He was exquisitely beautiful and was the anointed cherub, i.e., the captain of the cherubic hosts (v. 14). Sometime prior to the creation of the natural order, Satan became vain about his beauty and position, and his heart became rebellious against God. Apparently, he was able to secure a considerable following among the angels, resulting in the expulsion of himself and his followers from heaven (Luke 10:18; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6; Rev 12:4). Since that day, Satan has devoted himself to opposing the work of God in every way possible (cf. 1 Tim 3:7; 2 Tim 2:26), and has attempted to destroy all of the good that God has created in the natural order (1 Pet 5:8). He is allowed to continue this way for a period but will ultimately be confined to hell for eternity (Rev 20:10). As a matter of fact, hell was originally prepared for Satan (Matt 25:41). Too often Satan is viewed only in his role as tempter (1 Cor 7:5). Actually, the Scriptures ascribe to him a variety of malignant activities. He is also “the accuser,” discouraging and weakening believers by reminding them of forgiven sin, and accusing unbelievers to the extent that they despair of possible forgiveness. Satan perverts the Scriptures (Gen 3:4, 5; Matt 4:6), hinders the gospel (Matt 13:19; 16:23), appears as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14; cf. Acts 5:3), performs miracles in order to deceive (Rev

²³ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

16:14), and opposes God's work (John 8:44; 13:2, 27; 1 Thess 2:18). Despite all of his power, Satan is neither omniscient, omnipresent, nor omnipotent (cf. Eph 6:11; James 4:7; 1 Pet 5:9). He is limited to the power that God temporarily allows him (cf. 1 Cor 10:13) and can even be used by God for good (2 Cor 12:7). However, he is assisted by a host of other malignant spirits, who add to the effectiveness of his work. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). In fact, it was the death of Christ that was preeminently the fatal blow to Satan (Gen 3:15; John 12:31-33; Col 2:14, 15; Heb 2:14). The work begun at the cross, which is the beginning of the end for Satan, culminates in Satan's destruction at the close of the millennial age (Rev 20:10)²⁴.

Ezekiel 28:13

Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

Missler: "Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God.." - wait a minute... there is no way the king of Tyre was ever back in Eden! When Adam and Eve left Eden, a flaming sword was placed there to guard the way to the Tree of Life. However, the person God was speaking to in this passage was said to have been in Eden, the Garden of God. To the best of our knowledge there were only 3 there before Adam fell: Adam, Eve and the shining one.

Nine stones were specified here, and those same nine were also on the breastplate of the High Priest in Exodus 28. The breastplate had 12 stones, and the three which were not included in Ezekiel's description of Satan were those stones which had the tribal names of Ephraim, Manasseh and Benjamin engraved upon them. Those three were for the sons of Rachel, grouped together on the west side of the Tabernacle. 12 stones also show up in Revelation 21; but here in Ezekiel, Satan only had nine. Here in Ezekiel it was talking about something very beyond the scope of the literal king of Tyre. Verse 14 tells us who he was:

Constable: This king had been in Eden, the garden of God, or Ezekiel was comparing him to someone who had been there. Some authorities believe Ezekiel had Adam in view, but the comparison with Adam quickly breaks down in the passage. Much less likely are the views that the tower of Babel or the Flood is in view or that the prophet was thinking of an ideal man. Eden, the garden of God, is probably a figurative way of describing the blessing that this ruler had enjoyed at God's hand (cf. 31:9; Gen. 13:10). If we take the statement literally, this must refer to someone who was in the Garden of Eden, probably Satan. The description of this ruler covered with precious gems and gold indicates the extent of his wealth. The suggestion that Israel's high priest is in view here because he bore such precious stones on his shoulders and breastpiece is farfetched. There are no other connections with the high priest in this passage. God had prepared this king for this privileged destiny from the time that He had created him (cf. Exod. 9:16; Rom. 9:17).

²⁴ Believer's Study Bible Notes

Dake: Pre-Adamite Eden No earthly king of Tyre was ever in Eden, as was this angel, nor does this Eden refer to Adam's Eden although Lucifer was in it also (Genesis 3; 2 Cor. 11:3). The Eden here was a garden in the earth when he ruled in perfection and sinlessness before he fell (Ezekiel 28:13).

[wast created] Lucifer was a created angel (Ezekiel 28:13,15; Col. 1:15-18).

McGee: “Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God”—no king of Tyre has been in the Garden of Eden!

“Every precious stone was thy covering”—can you imagine what a beautiful creature he was!

“The workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee.” Not only could he sing, he was a band; he was music itself. Do you know the origin of music on this earth? Go back to Genesis 4:21, and you will see that it originated with the progeny of Cain. And when I hear some of the music of my contemporaries, I am confident that it came out of the pit—it couldn't come from any place else! Satan was a musician.²⁵

ESV: Putting Tyre in **Eden, the garden of God**, forges a link with Genesis 2–3, but avoids connecting pagan Tyre with “the garden of Yahweh,” as in Gen. 13:10 and Isa. 51:3. Some of the precious stones in this difficult list cannot be identified with confidence. It parallels similar lists in Exodus of the composition of the breastpiece of the priestly garments (see Ex. 28:17–20; 39:10–13).

He was there and was talking to Eve and tempting her to eat of that fruit that God had forbidden.

Chuck Smith: So here is a description of Satan prior to his... of course, prior to his fall, after his fall, he had been in Eden, but every precious stone is covering and all. And there are some who say that Satan is the author of music because of "the workmanship of your tabrets and of your pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created." And so that Satan is the author of music. I think that that is just stretching the point beyond breaking. I can't stand that type of biblical exposition that takes a verse like this and then builds an entire case from it. And how that music is evil because Satan was the originator of music because he was the one with the tabrets and pipes and so forth. And so that music is satanic in its origin and all and that he is the master over music. That's stretching scripture; it's taking it out of context. It is taking one verse and just blowing it beyond its intent and beyond what it declares. And yet, there are those foolish and ignorant men who will take some kind of a passage like this and try to make a big discourse out of it and a big theory and come down on all kinds of musical instruments and everything else. Of course, some book has been written lately against rock music and saying it's of Satan and this is the scripture that proves it. If they can find proof of that in this scripture then they have done phenomenal bit of scriptural jugglery.

²⁵ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:13). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Ezekiel 28:14

Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

Missler: Who is this guy? We know that there are different ranks of angels, the “principalities and powers,” the hierarchies that Paul talks about, and their organization. Cherubim are sort of super angels. They are senior to the angels. We see them in Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 1 and 10; Revelation 4 and 5. Cherubim are very, very powerful, ultimately powerful beings above the angels.

The one being discussed here is not only a cherub, but he is “the anointed cherub that covereth.” That means he was anointed to be over all the others. He was a heavy dude. He was higher than the Archangel Michael (Jude 9). He had walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Let me tell you, that was not the king of Tyre; it was the power behind the king of Tyre. The king there was Satan’s tool at the moment.

Constable: God had given the king a position as an anointed cherub who covers or guards. This description has suggested to many readers that the king in view may be more than a man. Perhaps the Lord was looking beyond the human king of Tyre to the spiritual ruler behind him, namely, Satan (cf. Dan. 10:13; Matt. 16:21-23).⁴⁰⁷

[anointed cherub] Only Lucifer or some other angel could be an anointed cherub. No man could be one.

[I have set thee so] God set this cherub over the earth to protect it, overshadow it, and rule it. He did not set the king of Tyre on his throne, for he merely succeeded his earthly father.

[thou was upon the holy mountain of God] This cherub was upon the holy mountain of God; this could not be said of any earthly king of Tyre. The mountain of God was the place where Lucifer had his kingdom and throne before Adam's time (Isaiah 14:12-14). This was on earth as proved from the fact that it was even before the fall of this created angel (Ezekiel 28:13-17).

[thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire] The walking up and down in the midst of the stones of fire was certainly before he sinned and before Adam's time.

McGee: Satan was the “anointed cherub that covereth”—that is, he protected the throne of God. This is not the Eden which was on earth, but apparently is a picture of heaven itself. Satan had access to heaven, of course.²⁶

Chuck Smith: Now he was an anointed cherub. A cherub, of course, is an angel. Cherub is singular; cherubim is plural. Now we find in the scriptures that there are the four

²⁶ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:14). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

cherubim that are about the throne of God, plural, of cherubs. Satan once, no doubt, dwelt there near God in the heavenly scene. In fact, he would seem to have had a very high standing at one time. So high that when Michael was contending against, having respect for the position that Satan once held in high authority in the heavenly scene, Michael did not bring any railing accusation against him when they were disputing over the body of Moses, but Michael just said, "The Lord rebuke you." Satan did have an extremely high position prior to his fall in the heavenly kingdom. "The anointed cherub that covereth."

Chuck Smith 14-15: Now, here is what makes Satan not the opposite of God. "You were perfect in all of your ways from the day that you were created." But Satan was a created being. God is self-existent. He has always been. Satan was created. So that it is wrong for us in our minds to think of Satan as the opposite of God. He opposes God, but he in no wise is the opposite of God. And we ascribe to Satan much more power and much more than what he actually is if you think of him as the opposite of God. And thus, we should never consider or think of Satan in the terms of the opposite of God. God stands alone in the universe. The infinite, eternal God. There is nothing to compare with in likenesses or opposites. He is alone. The eternal God.

Satan was a created being, an anointed cherub. If he is the opposite, or to be thought of as the opposite, it might be of Michael or of Gabriel, these two angels that seem to have much authority and power in heaven, who remain true unto God. But never think of Satan as the opposite of God. You're ascribing much more to him than what actually is. And that is dangerous.

He was perfect until the day that iniquity was found in him. What is the iniquity that was found in him? If you turn back to Isaiah chapter 14, Isaiah gives us a little insight into this iniquity that was found in Satan. Verse 12, chapter 14 Isaiah, "How art thou fallen from heaven O Lucifer, son of the morning. How art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations. For thou hast said in thy heart," here is the iniquity, "In your heart you said, 'I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will be like the Most High.'"

The five "I wills." And that is the exercise of my will against the authority of God. "I will exalt myself. I will sit in the congregation in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the stars. I will be like the Most High." In one of Shakespeare's plays there is that phrase, "Flee ambition, for by this sin the angels fell." Satan's ambitious plans against God's authority, "I will, I will."

So up until that point, he had been a model, perfect in all of his ways. "Until iniquity was found in thee."

Ezekiel 28:15

Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

He was perfect, or complete. And he was created, as also mentioned in verse 13. Christ was the one who created him. God used the Logos to create all things, including Satan. So, Satan, even with all his power, is still in the last analysis, only a created being.

[perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created] Being perfect in his ways (the laws God gave him to live by) was before his fall, for he was perfect in them and sinless up to the time of his iniquity or sin.

Dake: [till iniquity was found in thee] Time of Lucifer's Fall

The time of his iniquity was when he rebelled against God to exalt his throne and kingdom from earth to heaven (*Isaiah 14:12-14, notes). The time of his corruption and sin was surely before the days of Adam, for Lucifer was already a fallen creature at the time he came to Adam's Eden (Genesis 2; 2 Cor. 11:4). See The Pre-Adamite World.

McGee: Satan protected God's throne. He had the highest position a created being could have. What was it that brought him down? Ezekiel doesn't tell us, but Isaiah 14:12–15 has already told us: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.” The thing that brought him down was *pride!* Satan wanted to lift up his throne. He wanted to divorce himself from God and be God. He was in rebellion against God.

Now, let me say this: If you are one of the saints today who thinks you have arrived, that you are perfect, and you have set yourself up as a standard, remember that Satan was the angel of light; he was perfect—but he fell. Since *he* fell, what about you? What about me? We are only frail human beings.

God cannot tolerate rebellion, so what is He going to do?²⁷

Ezekiel 28:16

By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

Dake: [merchandise] Lucifer's Slander Hebrew: *rekullah* (HSN-7404), traffic. It refers to Lucifer's walking up and down slandering God to his own subjects on earth, and to God's subjects among the angels, until he had all his earthly subjects rebelling against the Creator, as well as over one-third of the angels (Isaiah 14:12-14; 2 Peter 3:4-6; Rev. 12:4). Whatever it was, it is clear here that the behavior resulted in violence; and Lucifer sinned and broke with God. This could not refer to an earthly king, as the ruler of Tyre, carrying on ordinary trade with the nations. It definitely concerns the traffic of a cherub, not a man. All the trade between nations in the entire world could not cause an angel to sin, as here (Ezekiel 28:16).

²⁷ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:15). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Dake: [cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God] Mountain of God

No angel was in any holy mountain of God when an earthly king of Tyre ruled, so the reference is to the eternal past when the cherub himself had a literal throne on earth on the holy mountain of God. Here we have an insight into the position of Lucifer before his fall, and a revelation regarding the cause of his fall (Ezekiel 28:13-17). The term "mount(ain) of God" occurs 7 times (Ezekiel 28:14,16; Exodus 3:1; Exodus 4:27; Exodus 18:5; Exodus 24:13; 1 Kings 19:8). The "mount(ain) of the Lord" occurs 6 times (Genesis 22:14; Numbers 10:33; Isaiah 2:3; Isaiah 30:29; Micah 4:2; Zech. 8:3). All these scriptures do not refer to the same mountain in the same place, as can be seen from the various passages.

[from the midst of the stones of fire] At this time he was cast out of the mountain of God and destroyed from the midst of the stones of fire.

McGee: Satan will be judged for his sin. He is only a creature. I don't know about you, but this is comforting to me. I frankly would not be able to overcome him. I am no match for him. I am thankful, therefore, that God is going to deal with him.²⁸

Chuck Smith 16-17: Now going back again to Isaiah 14, it's an interesting thing that when we look upon Satan, and one day you will have a chance to look at him, and when you do, you'll be astonished. Verse 15 of chapter 14 Isaiah, "Yet," you said I'm going to be like the Most High, "yet, thou shalt be brought down to hell to the sides of the pit and they that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee and consider thee saying, 'Is this the man that made the earth to tremble and did shake kingdoms?'" Wow, is that the one that gave me such a bad time? Wow! "So I will lay thee before kings that they may behold thee." It's gonna be an awesome experience, an awesome sight when that day comes.

Now the question, of course, does remain: when did God create Satan? And when did Satan fall? Now his fall, no doubt, came before his coming into the Garden of Eden to tempt Eve. Therefore, I would have to conclude that his fall came before Genesis chapter 1, verse 3, which speaks of God beginning the re-creative processes saying, "Let there be light." And the fact that darkness covered the face of the deep. God is light; in Him is no darkness at all. That darkness that enshrouded the world must have been satanic in its origin, as he is the prince of darkness.

Now, there is what is known as a gap theory. Of late there has been an endeavor to more or less discredit the gap theory. But I still hold it open in my own mind as a very viable option. One of the chief verses that they use to destroy the gap theory is when God gave the law. He said, "For six days shalt thou do thy labor and the seventh day thou shalt rest. For in six days God created the heaven and the earth, and all that is in them, and on the seventh day God rested." And taking that in a very literal, narrow sense, it would mean that the creation days did take place somewhere around six thousand years ago or six to ten thousand years ago. And thus, the whole universe is only six to ten thousand years old, and we can't really prove that this position is wrong. It is quite possible it is.

You say, "Well, how do you explain then the fossils? And the dating processes that show that the earth is millions of years, or whatever." And of course, there is, number

²⁸ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:16). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

one, the challenging of the dating methods, which is a legitimate challenge, because a part of that lava flow from Kilauea in Hawaii that big flow in 1973 was taken to three different laboratories that have their specialty of dating processes through the carbon argon and so forth. And the three laboratories taking these samples from the 1973 flow of Kilauea came up with age dates of anywhere from 180 million years to 250 million years old. And yet, it was chipped right out of the flow of 1973. So there is reason to question and challenge the accuracy of the dating methods, because in dating, you have to assume that there was so much argon in the beginning. And this assumption is made, and so much lead in the beginning an all, and those are assumptions that we really don't know.

The second argument is how old was Adam the day God created him? You say, "Well, he was a day old." Well, then did he have teeth? How big was he? So that when God created Adam, there were, no doubt, what we would call age-dating factors built in. So that if you looked at Adam the day that God created him, you'd probably say, "Well, he must be thirty years old at least. Look at the skeleton development, the muscular development, look at the teeth and all. Well, he must be thirty years old." So that God created him not as an infant, but as a man with age-dating factors. Now, of course, we know God could do anything, so that God could have created the earth with fossils already in its structure. With age-dating factors there, if He so chose to do so. Now, the problem that I see with this using... for in six days, God created the heaven and the earth and all that is in them, the problem I see with that is that that would have to then include Satan and when did God then create Satan in this six-day creation period, you see. And then when did Satan fall? And how is it that he got into the Garden of Eden so early.

Now, the gap theory, which I do feel has a great deal of credence and is probably best set out by Pember in his book *Earth's Earliest Ages*. Take Genesis 1 as an account of original creation. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." In the beginning, whenever that was. How many billion years ago, there is no date. No estimate. And that the earth perhaps was a part of Satan's kingdom as the anointed cherub that covered. And in a beautiful mineral kingdom upon the earth, until the day that iniquity was found in him and he was destroyed and cast out. And at that time, the earth became wasted and desolate and darkness covered the face of the deep. And that what you have then in Genesis from verse 3 on is the re-creation of the earth, in order that man might inhabit it in his present form. But what types of animals, creatures that are all there in the fossil record could have existed in the billions of years prior to Genesis verse 3, chapter 1. And thus, all of the ages would be all accounted for, because we don't know when the original creation took place. And there are viable arguments, and of course, the fact that Satan came along so early; he had already fallen to tempt Eve, and that there was darkness over the face of the deep and all. All tend to give credence to this gap theory and that the earth was somehow disheveled and destroyed at Satan's rebellion in sin against God.

And a literal reading of verse 2 can read, "but the earth became wasted and desolate." And it is not consistent with God's creative acts to create something wasted and desolate. When God creates it, He creates it perfect. God saw the light that it was good. God saw the land that it was good. God saw the animals; they were good. It isn't consistent with God to create something wasted and desolate, without form and void. So there are some arguments, very powerful arguments for the gap theory, and I have not in my own mind totally set it aside as not worthy of consideration. I think that it has some very worthy

points, and thus I have no firm set in my own mind as far as creation is concerned. It's still an open chapter, an open file, and I await further information.

I know that God could have created the whole thing just ten thousand years ago, six thousand; I have no problem with that. But I also realize it could have been billions of years ago, and that between Genesis 1 and 2 you have a long gap, at which time somewhere in there Satan was created and Satan fell and rebelled against God, and the whole system was brought into a chaotic state. The earth became wasted and desolate, with form and void and all. So, you can't be dogmatic in my mind on these things, though I know many people are dogmatic on it.

Ezekiel 28:17

Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

[Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness] This gives the cause of the fall of Satan. His heart was lifted up because of his beauty, the brightness (splendor) of his kingdom, and his authority (1 Tim. 3:6).

Dake: [I will cast thee to the ground] Lucifer Cast out of Heaven

He was cast from heaven back to the ground at the time of his invasion of heaven (Ezekiel 28:17; Isaiah 14:12-14; Luke 10:18), and he will be cast down to the ground again in the middle of Daniel's 70th week (Rev. 12:7-12). Then he will be put into the bottomless pit for the 1,000 years, to be loosed a short season again at the end of that time. After that he will be cast into the lake of fire to be tormented forever (Rev. 20:1-10).

Dake: [I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee] Lucifer Humbled

He has already been humbled before kings, for he was cast down to the ground before all the nations over whom he ruled previous to the time of Adam (Isaiah 14:12-14). He will again be brought down in the deepest humiliation before the kings of the earth whom he will lead with Antichrist in the battle of Armageddon (Rev. 12:7-12; Rev. 16:13-16; Rev. 19:11-21; Rev. 30:1-3). Then again at the end of the Millennium he will be brought down to hell before all kings and others who will spend eternity with him in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

McGee: "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty"—pride.

"Thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." You see, Solomon, the wisest man, played the fool. And here we see that the greatest creature whom God ever created, perfect (filled with all that could be learned), played the fool. Oh, my friend, God's children can do the same today!

“I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.” God is going to make a spectacle of Satan someday.²⁹

Ezekiel 28:18

Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

[thy sanctuaries] These sanctuaries were the ones he had in the pre-Adamite world where he and his subjects worshiped God. Here he put forth his greatest efforts to cause his subjects and those of Jehovah to rebel against Him

[iniquity of thy traffick] The iniquity of his traffic was that of slandering God to his subjects and gradually leading them and some of the angels to rebel openly against Him.

[fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee] This fire coming forth will bring Lucifer down to eternal torment (Matthew 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

Dake: [bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee] Brought Down Like Ashes He will be brought down like ashes to the ground. Ashes speak of the deepest humility and like them he will literally be brought down to the ground, and even down to hell where men will behold him (Ezekiel 28:17-18). This has no reference to his body being burned to ashes at all; if he were but ashes then these men could not see him or know that it was Satan. Therefore, it is not to be taken that he has a mortal body which can be burned to ashes. People will be astonished at him, not at his ashes (Ezekiel 28:18-19).

Chuck Smith: Satan will ultimately be cast into the lake that is burning with fire, and this is the reference to it here. Right now Satan has great liberties. God has allowed him these liberties. They are liberties within boundaries. Satan works within prescribed boundaries that God has placed upon him.

When he came to God concerning Job, he said, "You've put a hedge around him. I can't touch him." God put the boundaries upon Satan, the perimeters in which he can work. As far as I'm concerned, he still has too much liberty. When Jesus comes again and establishes the kingdom of God upon the earth, Satan will at that point be bound and placed into the abusso, the bottomless pit, where he will stay for almost a thousand years. Right out towards the end of that thousand-year period, he'll be released again for a short season to deceive people and to create a rebellion against the Lord, that the Lord might be righteous when He makes the final judgment. For there will be those who will have been born during the Kingdom Age or those who have lived into the Kingdom Age who have never really made a real commitment of their lives to Jesus Christ, will have to live righteously by force during the Kingdom Age. But towards the end, they'll be given their

²⁹ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:17). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

opportunity to express what has been in their heart the whole time--the rebellion against God that is there. And then at the culmination of this final rebellion, Satan will be cast into the Gehenna, the lake burning with fire, and there the final judgment of God upon him as is expressed here.

Ezekiel 28:19

All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never *shalt thou be* any more.

This summary is a sweeping passage that has a large overview. Let us look at Isaiah 14 passage, where Isaiah is instructed to lament over the king of Babylon. But when we get to verses 12-17 the same thing occurs as did in Ezekiel, the language and focus goes far beyond the local application.

See Isaiah 14:12-17. This is the famous Isaiah 14 passage about the fall of Lucifer through pride and ambition in his heart. Both Ezekiel 28 and Isaiah 14 close by God pointing out that, despite his power and loftiness, Satan is going to be brought down and embarrassed before all that look upon him.

Missler: The Laodicean Church

Now let us look at another Revelation text, one which focuses on the Laodicean Church. See Revelation 3:14-22. The problem with the Laodiceans was that they were rich and felt the need for nothing. Christ was counseling them to purchase the true riches, and to be clothed with his righteousness, not by their own filthy rags. See Revelation 3:19-22.

In each letter to the churches there was placed a promise. In Laodicea, in the place where the promise to that church should appear, there was a promise, but it was not to the church; it was to the individual. Revelation 3:20, so often used as an evangelical call to the Lord, is, in the context where it was placed, almost a scathing indictment to come out of the Church. Individuals to come out of that church...

What was the problem with Tyre? It was rich and did not feel the need for anything. Because of their wealth and power and pride, they did not perceive their need for God. I suspect that is where you and I are coming from tonight.

We may be sensitive to the fact that we live in an era of plenty and prosperity in a world where there is need and want and fear. We can be subject to blindness if we allow the prosperity we have to be misconstrued as something we did. Our lives tend to be endangered by our prosperity, because it can stand in the way of our moment by moment recognition that the Lord is our real need.

Constable: Conservative interpreters of this passage divide into three basic groups. Some believe that only the human king of Tyre is in view throughout the passage.⁴¹⁶ Others believe only Satan is in view.⁴¹⁷ The third view is that both the human king and Satan are in view. Some who hold this opinion believe that the king is the primary referent and that Satan is seen as the power behind his throne.⁴¹⁸ Others hold that the primary referent is Satan and that the king comes into view only secondarily.

As far as I have been able to determine, the view that this passage reveals something about Satan before the Fall (Gen. 3) originated with the church fathers, including Origin,

in the third and fourth centuries A.D. They applied the teaching of the passage to Satan and even interpreted it as specifically teaching things about Satan.

[shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more] He was to be a terror to those who would behold him, and he would never be loose on earth again among men to carry out his evil designs. Being a terror simply means that men who see him in hell will have a horror of such an end (Isaiah 66:22-24; Rev. 11:9-11).

McGee: At some time in the future God is going to get rid of Satan in His universe, and we pray for that day to come.

In verses 20–24 judgment is pronounced on Sidon, but not complete destruction. He says that there will be blood in the streets, and that is exactly what happened. It is a matter of history. It is interesting to note that Tyre, the prominent city and capital city, was destroyed, scraped like a rock, never to be rebuilt; yet Sidon, about fifteen miles from Tyre, was also judged, but not destroyed. That city exists today; it is the place where oil is brought in from the Near East. It comes by pipeline and is loaded onto ships. Sidon is a thriving port, whereas down the coast is Tyre lying in ruins, with only a little fishing village there. God says that Tyre will never be rebuilt. God knew what He was talking about. In this chapter He has made the prophecies clear-cut: Tyre would be destroyed and never be rebuilt; Sidon would be judged but not destroyed. Today after approximately twenty-five hundred years, Tyre is gone and Sidon lives on.³⁰

Ezekiel 28:20

Again the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

LAN 20-21: Sidon was another famous seaport, located about 25 miles north of Tyre. God charged this city with contempt for his people. Sidon's economy was bound to Tyre's, so when Tyre fell to Nebuchadnezzar, Sidon was doomed to follow.

BKC 20-24: Judgment on Sidon (28:20-26)

This judgment against Sidon begins the same way as the oracles against Tyre. The word of the LORD came to me (cf. 26:1; 27:1; 28:1, 11). Sidon, a sister city of Tyre (cf. Jer. 25:22; 47:4; Joel 3:4; Zech. 9:2; Luke 6:17; 10:13-14), was 20 miles farther up the Mediterranean coast. Because of their close association, Ezekiel may have used this same introductory formula to link the two cities in judgment. Sidon was so closely allied with Tyre that perhaps Ezekiel felt it unnecessary to cite the same sins. She had violated God's holy character and He would not allow her sin to remain unpunished. He would gain glory within Sidon and show Himself holy. God's judgment would be by a plague and the sword.

The judgment on Sidon would have two results: (1) It would force the Sidonians to acknowledge God's righteous character—They will know that I am the LORD (stated in Ezek. 28:22, repeated in v. 23). (2) The judgment would remove an obstacle to Israel's

³⁰ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:19). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

walk with God. Their malicious neighbors with their wicked influence on Israel had been like a pain in Israel's side (painful briars and sharp thorns). The sinful practices of Baal worship had entered Israel through "Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians" (1 Kings 16:31).³¹

Chuck Smith 20-24: Notice there is nothing said about ultimate destruction or complete destruction or never be rebuilt. Sidon still exists on the ancient site of the city of Sidon, and it's still a city there to the present day.

OTS: Judgment on Sidon (28:20–26).

The Lord now directed Ezekiel to turn his attention to Tyre's sister city Sidon. The God of Israel was hostile towards Sidon too. By executing judgments on that place God would be glorified. A siege of the city would result in pestilence. Blood would be shed in the streets. The sword of judgment would be against Sidon on every side. Thus would God remove this painful thorn in the side of Israel. All sources of danger, opposition, and ridicule for Israel would be removed from Canaan. Then they—both the antagonists and the Israelites—would realize that Yahweh alone is deity (28:20–24).

In contrast to Canaanite culture represented by Sidon, God's people would have a future. The Lord would gather them from where they were scattered. In so doing he would manifest his "holiness" in them in the sight of the nations. God would execute judgments upon all the surrounding nations who had scorned his people. Therefore they would be able to dwell safely upon the land which God gave to their ancestor Jacob. Then they would realize that Yahweh was their God (28:25f.).³²

ESV 20–23: Oracle against Sidon. Sidon is often mentioned alongside Tyre (e.g., Jer. 25:22; 47:4; Joel 3:4; Zech. 9:2), an association that survived into NT times (e.g., Matt. 11:21–22; Luke 10:13–14). This brief oracle is, on one hand, reminiscent of the collection in Ezekiel 25 (cf. 25:1–2 and 28:20–21) and continues the geographical sequence begun there. On the other hand, it contains no accusation against Sidon, but simply announces divine opposition to it.

Daniel: 20-24 Prophecy Against Sidon

About 20 miles up the coast from Tyre was Sidon. Many times the Bible makes reference to "Tyre and Sidon." Probably the most wellknown mention of these sister cities was from Jesus Himself. When He sent out the seventy disciples in pairs in advance to prepare the cities to which He was coming, He instructed them,

Luke 10:10-14 *"...whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city. Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had been performed in Tyre and Sidon*

³¹ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 28:11–24). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

³² Smith, J. E. (1992). *The Major Prophets* (Eze 28:20–26). Joplin, Mo.: College Press.

which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. But it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the judgment than for you."

During Ezekiel's day, Sidon was about to face God's judgment in the form of pestilence and attack of enemies. However, in the day of judgment, theirs won't be as severe as that which the cities who rejected the gospel will face.³³

Ezekiel 28:21

Son of man, set thy face against Zidon, and prophesy against it,

Missler: Sidon

Next, we focus on the sister city of Tyre: Sidon. We know it today as the city of *Saida*. It became corrupt under the judges in Judges 10:6. About the time of Solomon it was the headquarters of Baal worship, Ashtoeth, and Tammuz worship. The city was founded by Canaan's firstborn.

Jesus Christ made an interesting contrast about both Sidon and Tyre, saying that if the works Israel saw would have been seen by Tyre and Sidon, they would have been turned around. (Luke 10:14; Mark 3:8; and 7:24.)

Constable: Another oracle concerning Sidon, Tyre's neighbor about 20 miles to the north, came to the prophet from the Lord. God may have condemned Sidon because of its close association with Tyre, though it was responsible for its own actions.

Other maledictions against Sidon occur at Joel 3:4-8; Zech 9:2. Sidon (present day Saida, probably connected with the deity *Sid*, from the root *šûd*, "to hunt") is located twenty-five miles north of Tyre. It is mentioned in the Amarna Letters (75. The tribe of Asher did not drive out the Sidonians (Judges 1:31; 10:12). Sidon later became subject to its daughter city Tyre (Jos *Antiq.* IX. 14. 2). It was destroyed by Esarhaddon in 677; with Tyre it became subject to Pharaoh-hophra in 588; it submitted to Cambyses in 526 (Herodotus VII. 89; VIII. 67); it sold cedar for the rebuilding of the Jerusalem Temple (Ezr 3:7); it was destroyed by the Persians in 345; it surrendered to Alexander the Great in 333; and it passed to the Romans in 64. In several NT references it is mentioned in connection with Tyre (cf. introd. to ch. 26), and Paul touched at its port (Acts 27:3).³⁴

³³ <http://www.rondaniel.com/library/26-Ezekiel/Ezekiel2601.pdf>

³⁴ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 28:20). Chicago: Moody Press.

Ezekiel 28:22

And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I *am* against thee, O Zidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee: and they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be sanctified in her.

Constable: The Lord announced His antagonism against Sidon and His plan to receive glory through the way He would deal with this town. The people would know that Yahweh was the only true God when He judged Sidon and thus manifested His holiness. Klein believed this verse states the theological key to the oracles against foreign nations, namely, Yahweh would vindicate His holiness and glorify His name when He judged the nations.

ESV: **Behold, I am against you** will also be the opening formula in the Egypt oracles (29:3), forming a link to the following collection. Concern for God's **glory** and **holiness** picks up the underlying theme of ch. 25 (see note on 25:3).

Ezekiel 28:23

For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Like so many of these passages, this one closes now with a few verses that shifts focus back to Israel, and their restoration in the land. This is yet future.

God would send disease, bloodshed, and soldiers against Sidon, and many of her people would die in her streets (cf. 6:11-12; 14:21). This would teach the Sidonians that God is the Lord.

This trio of **pestilence**, **blood**, and **sword** is characteristic of Ezekiel.

Ezekiel 28:24

And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor *any* grieving thorn of all *that are* round about them, that despised them; and they shall know that I *am* the Lord GOD.

LAN 24-26: This promise that God's people will live in complete safety has yet to be fulfilled. While many were allowed to return from exile under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, and although the political nation is restored today, the inhabitants do not yet live in complete safety (Ezekiel 28:26). Therefore, this promise will have its ultimate fulfillment when Christ sets up his eternal kingdom. Then all people who have been faithful to God will dwell together in harmony and complete safety.

Wycliffe house of Israel: God's providence is clearly marked in these verses. The captivity of Israel among her neighbors (v. 24) will lead to her repentance and restoration

(25) to God's judgment on her ungodly enemies, and to peace and prosperity for Israel (v. 26).³⁵

ESV 24–26: Israel Gathered in Security. Strategically, this hopeful note is struck precisely at the halfway point in the collection of foreign-nation oracles. Verses 24 and 26 make explicit what is sometimes implicit and often simply absent from foreign oracles: the subduing of God's enemies will result in the well-being of God's own people. Since “scattering” is one of the primary judgments on Israel (e.g., Lev. 26:33; Deut. 28:64), “gathering” (Ezek. 28:25) is one of God's distinctive saving responses (cf. Deut. 30:3), a theme to be repeated throughout the latter part of Ezekiel's book. The peaceful settlement in a bountiful land (Ezek. 28:26) anticipates the prophecy of the “covenant of peace” (34:25–30).

Ezekiel 28:25

Thus saith the Lord GOD; When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the people among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the heathen, then shall they dwell in their land that I have given to my servant Jacob.

As in numerous other prophetic Scriptures, promises of Israel's restoration accompanied predictions of judgment on the nations (e.g. 34:27; 38:8; 39:26; Isa. 65:21; Jer. 23:6; Amos 9:14-15). The Lord also promised to re-gather His people to their land and to manifest His holiness in them so that all the nations would see it (cf. v. 22; 20:41; chs. 33—39). They would then live in the land that God had promised to His servant Jacob (Gen. 35:12; cf. Gen. 12:7; 26:3).

McGee: God says, “I intend to regather Israel.” Satan cannot disturb His plan and program with the children of Israel. Neither can any theologian today dismiss God's plan to restore Israel to the land in peace. One reason that so many theologians are believed when they say that God is through with the nation Israel is because God's people are not acquainted with Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the minor prophets. The theme song of these prophets is that God is *not* through with Israel as a nation. For this reason they should be studied. They throw new light on the Word of God so that it is no longer a jigsaw puzzle, but everything falls into place.³⁶

BKC 25-26: The second part of Ezekiel's prophecy against Sidon focused on the results of the destruction for Israel. As God would reveal His holiness by destroying Sidon (v. 22), so He would reveal His holiness by rescuing Israel from the nations. Several times in the Book of Ezekiel God said, I will show Myself holy (20:41; 28:22, 25; 36:23; 38:16; 39:27). God punished Israel for her sin, but He has not abandoned her. She is unique among all nations because God had established His covenant with her. Though all nations

³⁵ Pfeiffer, C. F. (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible commentary : Old Testament* (Eze 28:24). Chicago: Moody Press.

³⁶ McGee, J. V. (1997). *Thru the Bible commentary* (electronic ed.) (Eze 28:26). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

would be punished, only Israel was promised a restoration of fellowship. The land promise made to Abraham (Gen. 13:14-17; 15:17-21) and renewed to Jacob (Gen. 35:11-13) has not been revoked. Israel will live in her own land, because God has given it to Jacob.

Restored to her land, Israel will enjoy God's blessings, including safety and prosperity. This promise, made through Ezekiel, has never been literally fulfilled; it awaits fulfillment in the millennial kingdom. After the Babylonian Captivity, some Israelites did go back to the land (cf. Neh. 1:3) but they did not live there in safety. When God finally punishes Israel's enemies and blesses His Chosen People, they will recognize their Lord: they will know that He is the LORD their God.³⁷

Chuck Smith: Now that is not yet come. That will take place when the invading Russian army is destroyed.

God is not done condemning the nations. For the next four chapters, His Words of judgment will be directed toward Egypt in the south. However, He takes a moment to offer some words of comfort to Israel. There will be plenty more words like this to come before the book of Ezekiel is over.

Ezekiel 28:26

And they shall dwell safely therein, and shall build houses, and plant vineyards; yea, they shall dwell with confidence, when I have executed judgments upon all those that despise them round about them; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD their God.

Missler: This was sort of a comforting parenthesis here. It was really looking ahead. Ezekiel is going to spend a lot of time speaking about how Israel will be regathered, but already we are starting to get that hint.

This is a passage we can do well to keep in mind, because we live in a day where not only is Israel being regathered, but there is a lot of talk in Washington and in the press and so forth, about Israel's role in the land. Do not misunderstand my remarks; I am not suggesting that our politics should be such as to sanction anything that Israel happens to do. However, to deny that the land belongs to Israel is to impugn the clear statements of God.

There are people debating the right of Israel to even be there; but from our point of view, their right to the land is Biblically based. God's promise to restore them in the land is repeatedly reaffirmed in the Scriptures; so I get nervous about taking positions that would cloud their right to be there.

The Israelites would live there securely, building houses and planting vineyards, when the Lord punished all the nations that had scorned His people. This would teach them that He is God.

³⁷ Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary : An exposition of the scriptures* (Eze 28:25-26). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

After the Babylonian Captivity some Israelites returned to live in the Promised Land, but they did not live there in safety. In fact, the Jews have never yet lived safely in their own land. Fulfillment awaits the return of Jesus Christ and His millennial kingdom.

Chuck Smith: That's, of course, going on into the Kingdom Age when God has finally brought His judgment upon all of the nations for the treatment that they have given to the Jews.

Six Predictions—Fulfilled:

1. Because your heart is lifted up, and you have said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet you are a man, and not God, though you set your heart as the heart of God; therefore, I will bring strangers upon you, the terrible of the nations; and they will draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom (Ezekiel 28:2-7).
2. They will defile your brightness (Ezekiel 28:7).
3. They will bring you down to the pit (Ezekiel 28:8).
4. You will die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.
5. You will be a man and not God in the hands of him that slays you (Ezekiel 28:9).
6. You will die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers (Ezekiel 28:10).