

EZEKIEL 28

AGAINST TYRE, PART 3

The first 19 verses of this chapter may be viewed as a kind of addendum to the prophecy against Tyre in the two preceding chapters. It adds nothing new to the subject-matter that we have already considered in reference to the great merchant-city that ruled the seas; but it does present the same theme in a somewhat new aspect, by prominently bringing forward the king of Tyre to our view. In him, as the natural head and representative of his city, the prophet sees the full personification of the spirit by which the whole city was pervaded – the spirit of self-sufficiency, carnal security, and extreme pride. These feelings were the natural outcome of unsanctified prosperity, and they penetrated the whole community of Tyre; but in the heart of its monarch, they might justly be spoken of as having their ripest development (verses 1-10). They assumed an attitude of lofty indifference, and even of high disdain, toward the God of Israel.

In a strain of severe and cutting irony, the prophet describes the imaginary superhuman greatness of the king of Tyre. He sarcastically speaks of the godlike independence and power of the king of Tyre, in order to magnify the infinite power and supremacy of Him Whose overruling Providence was to lay all such arrogance and pride in the dust. The words which are presented as coming from the heart and mouth of the king of Tyre reveal a proud consciousness of strength and security – which was engendered by the naturally strong position of his great city, and the immense maritime resources of the state over which he reigned. This gave him such a sense of elevation and independence, that he is represented as claiming the name and posture of God Himself! The proud heart of this monarch was essentially reaching as high as heaven, and declaring himself to be the Most High; but he would soon find himself being cast down to the stones of the pit, and trodden upon like a dead carcass under the feet of men.

The judgment that was to be executed upon the king of Tyre would force him to confess that he did not have the might and wisdom of God at his command, after all. Rather, like other frail and erring mortals, he was liable to be overcome and brought to destruction. The Lord would provide Himself with terrible instruments of vengeance, which would be able and ready to execute His Divine purpose of retribution. Destruction and death will certainly come – in their appointed time – to all persons who have no part in the blessings of the covenant of heaven.

This description of the high presumption and peerless glory of the king of Tyre, and of his Divine chastisement and utter ruin, is followed by another pic-

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ Judgment is prophesied against the proud and haughty king of Tyre – verses 1-10
- ❖ A lamentation over the king of Tyre – verses 11-19
- ❖ The prophet predicts the destruction of Zidon – verses 20-23
- ❖ A promise of restoration for the people of God – verses 24-26

ture (verses 11-19), in which the proud monarch is described as a man who is the perfect representation of humanity in its best form. It is clear from the mention that is made of the Garden of Eden, that the representation contained in these verses is essentially a historical parable. The kings of Tyre are personified as one individual – complete in all natural excellence and perfect manhood. This makes sense; for Tyre had sprung from a barren rock, and grown until she had become the ruler of the world’s commerce. In this sense, she was a kind of new creation in the earth – the most singular product of human energy and enterprising skill. “And so,” runs the mind of the prophet, “you think, O king of Tyre, that you are the concentration of human excellence, and the quintessence of human greatness and pride. You may think so. But you are still a man! And like all the rest of humanity – even in its most favored condition, in the Garden of Eden – you have not been perfect before God. You have yielded yourself as a servant to corruption. Therefore, you must be cast down from your proud elevation; and you shall henceforth be a public monument of forfeited honors, wasted privileges, and hopeless ruin.”

The city of Zidon was an integral portion of the great maritime power of which Tyre was the center. However, the prophet makes a separate mention of Zidon because of the corrupting influence that historically flowed in upon Israel from Zidon – even as early as the time of the Judges. The prophecy against Zidon was of the most general description (verses 20-23). Suffice it to say that she suffered many successive blows. For ages, she has possessed nothing of the greatness and importance which belonged to her in the time of Ezekiel; and therein, God’s words have indeed been fulfilled.

And now the prophet turns from these scenes of desolation to the prospect of better days to come for God’s covenant-people (verses 24-26), to whom the downfall of these neighboring heathen powers would be a token of good – for it would be the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise to rid them from what had hitherto been a spiritual snare to them. The result of these judgments against Tyre and Zidon, which God was now going to execute, would put an end to their troublesome idolatrous influences upon His children. He would extirpate these annoying briars and thorns, and allow His people to enjoy – in undisturbed freedom and rest – the heritage which He had given in covenant to their forefather Jacob. And if the Lord so loves and protects His children – notwithstanding all our unworthiness – then how much we ought to love Him, and delight to adore His distinguishing grace and unparalleled mercy!

Lord, we pray for our government leaders, that they may be preserved from such pride as the king of Tyre was guilty of. Bless them with humility and help them bow the knee to King Jesus before it is too late! Amen.

