

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Ezekiel: Effective Ministry To The Spiritually Rebellious Part XL: The Fall Of The Prince Of Tyre Over His Self-Deification (Ezekiel 28:1-10)

I. Introduction

- A. The greatest idol a person in a Western nation today likely has is mankind himself! The widespread belief that Darwinian evolution is a fact led John C. Whitcomb, Jr. and Henry M. Morris in their landmark book, The Genesis Flood, 1978, p. 440-441 to write: "There are really only *two* basic . . . religions among mankind. The one is oriented . . . to God, the Creator, of Whom and by Whom and for Whom are all things . . . The other . . . is oriented primarily with respect to man . . . that man is inherently capable of acquiring by his own efforts all he needs in this present life and in any possible life to come."
- B. The human leader of ancient Tyre practiced this form of idolatry, and it was severely punished by God in Ezekiel 28:1-10. We view this passage for our insight and application today (as follows):

II. The Fall Of Tyre Over His Self-Deification, Ezekiel 28:1-10.

- A. The word "ruler" in Ezekiel 28:1-2a translates the Hebrew noun *nagid* that literally means "the man at the top," the human king of Tyre. (Bible Know. Com., O. T., p. 1282)
- B. Ezekiel 28:2b-6 explains four reasons *why* God singled out this ruler for personal judgment that was distinct from the punishment of the city of Tyre itself (as follows):
 - 1. First, this ruler whom we know from secular history was Ethbaal III who ruled from 591-590 B. C. to 573-572 B. C. (Ibid.) was so proud that he actually claimed that he was a god, Ezekiel 28:2b.
 - 2. Second, this ruler claimed he was a god because he sat as a god in the seat of the gods in the heart of the seas where he dominated trade with other nations, implying he was over those nations, Ezekiel 28:2c.
 - 3. Third, he claimed that he was wiser than even the Biblical prophet Daniel whose wisdom would have been known in the Ancient Near East by his ministry in Nebuchadnezzar's court in Babylon (cf. Daniel 1:19-20; 2:46-49), Ibid.; Ezekiel 28:3. In great contrast to the ruler of Tyre, Daniel humbly attributed his wisdom to God (Daniel 2:27-28) though he was much wiser than Ethbaal III who falsely claimed to be a god, Ibid.
 - 4. Fourth, Tyre's ruler claimed his supernatural wisdom had gained him the wealth of silver and gold in his treasuries by way of his trade with the nations, his wealth in turn swelling his pride, Ezekiel 28:4-6.
- C. God would thus punish Tyre's ruler, bringing against him the most ruthless of foreigners who would draw their swords against the beautiful products of his self-proclaimed wisdom and defile his splendor, Ezekiel 28:7.
- D. These foreigners would thrust the ruler of Tyre down into the pit of the grave, and he would die the death of the slain in the heart of the seas where he claimed he sat enthroned as a god, Ezekiel 28:8.
- E. The Lord then rhetorically asked the ruler of Tyre if he would still claim to be a god in the presence of those who killed him, though he was but a man and no god in the hands of his slayers, Ezekiel 28:9.
- F. Indeed, Tyre's ruler would die the death of the infamous uncircumcised Gentiles by the hand of foreign invaders, a fact that would occur since the true Lord God had made this prediction, Ezekiel 28:10.

Lesson: *Since the human ruler of the city/nation Tyre was so proud that he called himself a god who dominated the trade of many nations around him as he sat in the heart of the sea trade routes, that he was wiser than even the great Biblical Daniel and had gained great wealth by his wisdom, God would punish him for such idolatry by bringing against him foreign invaders who would slay him like the mere man that he was, humiliating him as a mere uncircumcised Gentile in the midst of the seas where he claimed to be a god.*

Application: *(1) May we repent of any ideology like Darwinian evolutionary theory that exalts man as deity and worship the Creator God by Whom and for Whom all of us human beings were created! (2) May we confess any reliance on our own wisdom that elevates us in pride, recognizing as did the great, godly prophet Daniel that all wisdom we have is a gift from the hand of God. (3) If the Lord lets us in His grace be given some degree of wealth, may we respond with humility and thanksgiving rather than viewing that wealth as a reason to consider ourselves innately superior to others who are less materially endowed, cf. 1 Timothy 6:17. (4) If God graciously lets us become involved in a business venture that causes us to become highly influential in the business community, may we not become proud like Tyre's ruler, but humbly understand that our influence is a gift from God, and use it to disciple others in the business world for Christ. (5) If God lets us be humiliated in punishment for false pride, may we confess it as sin that we might be restored and blessed.*