

# Pride Cometh Before the Fall

## The Rise and Fall of Tyre

- | A   | B  | C  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>1 <sup>27:1</sup> The word of the Lord came to me: <sup>2</sup> “Now you, son of man, <b>raise a lamentation over Tyre,</b></p>  | <p><b>28</b> The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> “<b>Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre,</b> Thus says the Lord GOD:</p>  | <p><sup>11</sup> Moreover, the word of the LORD came to me: <sup>12</sup> “Son of man, <b>raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre,</b> and say to him, Thus says the Lord GOD:</p>   |
| <p>2 <sup>3</sup> and say to Tyre, who dwells at the entrances to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands, thus says the Lord GOD:<br/>“O Tyre, you have said,<br/>‘I am <b>perfect in beauty.</b>’<br/><sup>4</sup> Your borders are in the heart of the seas;<br/>your builders made perfect your beauty.</p>   | <p>“Because your heart is <b>proud,</b><br/>and you have said, ‘I<br/>am a god,<br/>I sit in the seat of the<br/>gods,<br/>in the heart of the<br/>seas,’<br/>yet you are but a man,<br/>and no god,<br/>though you make your<br/>heart like the heart<br/>of a god—</p> | <p>“You were the signet of<br/>perfection,<br/>full of wisdom and<br/><b>perfect in<br/>beauty.</b></p>  |
| <p>3 <sup>5</sup> They made all your planks of <b>fir trees</b> from Senir;<br/>they took a <b>cedar</b> from <b>Lebanon</b> to make a mast for you.<br/><sup>6</sup> Of <b>oaks</b> of Bashan<br/>they made your <b>oars</b>;<br/>they made your <b>deck of pines</b><br/>from the coasts of <b>Cyprus,</b></p>  | <p><sup>3</sup> you are indeed wiser than Daniel;<br/>no secret is hidden from you;<br/><sup>4</sup> by your <b>wisdom</b> and your understanding</p>  | <p><sup>13</sup> You were in <b>Eden,</b> the garden of God;</p>   |
| <p>4 inlaid with <b>ivory.</b><br/><sup>7</sup> Of fine <b>embroidered linen</b> from Egypt was your sail,<br/>serving as your <b>banner</b>;<br/><b>blue and purple</b> from the coasts of Elishah was your <b>awning.</b><br/><sup>8</sup> The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers;<br/>your <b>skilled</b> men, O Tyre, were in you;<br/>they were your pilots.<br/><sup>9</sup> The elders of Gebal and her <b>skilled</b> men were in you,<br/>caulking your seams;<br/>all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in you<br/>to barter for your wares.</p> | <p>you have made wealth<br/>for yourself,<br/>and have gathered gold<br/>and silver into your<br/>treasuries;<br/><sup>5</sup> by your great <b>wisdom</b><br/>in your trade<br/>you have increased<br/>your <b>wealth,</b></p>  | <p><b>every precious<br/>stone</b> was your<br/><b>covering,</b><br/>sardius, topaz, and diamond,<br/>beryl, onyx, and jasper,<br/>sapphire, emerald,<br/>and carbuncle;<br/>and crafted in <b>gold</b> were<br/>your settings<br/>and your engravings.<br/>On the day that you<br/>were created<br/>they were prepared.</p> |

5 <sup>10</sup>“Persia and Lud and Put were in your army as your men of war. They hung the shield and helmet in you; they gave you splendor. <sup>11</sup>Men of Arvad and Helech were on your walls all around, and men of Gamad were in your towers. They hung their shields on your walls all around; they made perfect your beauty.

and your heart has become proud in your wealth—  
<sup>6</sup>therefore thus says the Lord GOD:  
Because you make your heart like the heart of a god,

(CENTRAL SQUARE)

<sup>14</sup>You were an anointed guardian cherub.  
I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God;  
in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.  
<sup>15</sup>You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you.

6 <sup>12</sup>“Tarshish did business with you because of your great wealth of every kind; silver, iron, tin, and lead they exchanged for your wares. <sup>13</sup>Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged human beings and vessels of bronze for your merchandise. <sup>14</sup>From Beth-togarmah they exchanged horses, war horses, and mules for your wares. <sup>15</sup>The men of Dedan traded with you. Many coastlands were your own special markets; they brought you in payment ivory tusks and ebony. <sup>16</sup>Syria did business with you because of your abundant goods; they exchanged for your wares emeralds, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and ruby. <sup>17</sup>Judah and the land of Israel traded with you; they exchanged for your merchandise wheat of Minnith, meal, honey, oil, and balm. <sup>18</sup>Damascus did business with you for your abundant goods, because of your great wealth of every kind; wine of Helbon and wool of Sahar <sup>19</sup>and casks of wine from Uzal they exchanged for your wares; wrought iron, cassia, and calamus were bartered for your merchandise. <sup>20</sup>Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding. <sup>21</sup>Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they did business with you. <sup>22</sup>The traders of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; they exchanged for your wares the best of all kinds of spices and all precious stones and gold. <sup>23</sup>Haran, Canneh, Eden, traders of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad traded with you. <sup>24</sup>In your market these

<sup>7</sup>therefore, behold, I will bring foreigners upon you,

<sup>16</sup>In the abundance of your trade

traded with you in choice garments, in clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of colored material, bound with cords and made secure. <sup>25</sup>The ships of Tarshish traveled for you with your merchandise. So you were filled and heavily laden in the heart of the seas.

- 7 <sup>26</sup>“Your rowers have brought you out into the high seas.  
The east wind has wrecked you in the heart of the seas.  
<sup>27</sup> Your riches, your wares, your merchandise,  
your mariners and your pilots,  
your caulkers, your dealers in merchandise,  
and all your men of war who are in you,  
with all your crew  
that is in your midst,  
8 sink into the heart of the seas  
on the day of your fall.  
<sup>28</sup>At the sound of the cry of your pilots  
the countryside shakes,  
<sup>29</sup> and down from their ships  
come all who handle the oar.  
The mariners and all the pilots of the sea  
stand on the land  
<sup>30</sup> and shout aloud over you  
and cry out bitterly.  
They cast dust on their heads  
and wallow in ashes;  
<sup>31</sup> they make themselves bald for you  
and put sackcloth on their waist,  
and they weep over you in bitterness  
of soul,  
with bitter mourning.

- 9 <sup>32</sup>In their wailing they raise a lamentation  
for you  
and lament over you:  
‘Who is like Tyre,  
like one destroyed in the midst of  
the sea?’

the most ruthless of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom  
and defile your splendor.

- <sup>8</sup> They shall thrust you down into the pit,  
and you shall die the death of the slain  
in the heart of the seas.  
<sup>9</sup> Will you still say, ‘I am a god,’  
in the presence of  
those who kill you,  
though you are but a man, and no god,  
in the hands of those who slay you?

- <sup>10</sup>You shall die the death of the uncircumcised  
by the hand of foreigners;

you were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned;

- so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, O guardian cherub,  
from the midst of the stones of fire.  
<sup>17</sup> Your heart was proud because of your beauty;  
you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor.  
I cast you to the ground;  
I exposed you before kings,  
to feast their eyes on you.  
<sup>18</sup>By the multitude of your iniquities,  
in the unrighteousness of your trade  
you profaned your sanctuaries;  
so I brought fire out from your midst;  
it consumed you,  
and I turned you to ashes on the earth

<sup>33</sup> When your wares came from the seas,  
you satisfied many peoples;  
with your abundant wealth and merchandise  
you enriched the kings of the earth.  
<sup>34</sup> Now you are wrecked by the seas,  
in the depths of the waters;  
your merchandise and all your crew in your midst  
have sunk with you.  
<sup>35</sup> All the inhabitants of the coastlands  
**are appalled at you,**  
and the hair of their kings bristles with horror;  
their faces are convulsed.  
<sup>36</sup> The merchants among the peoples  
hiss at you;  
you have come to a dreadful end  
and shall be no more forever.’ ”

for I have spoken, declares the Lord  
GOD.

in the sight of all who saw you.  
<sup>19</sup> All who know you among the peoples  
are **appalled at you;**  
you have come to a dreadful end  
and shall be no more forever.”

### Ezekiel 27:1:28:19

## Two Disasters: One Root Cause

**Two disasters.** One so ancient that it only comes down to us as myth. The other so contemporary that survivors still lived into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, yet myth has already grown up around it. Both disasters deal with the sea. Both center on the absolute arrogant pride of humanity.

**The *Titanic*** was built by the renowned shipbuilding firm Harland & Wolff in Belfast, Ireland, under the ownership of the White Star Line, with construction beginning in March

1909 and completing in 1912. The project cost approximately £1.5 million (roughly \$7.5 million at the time, or about **\$200–250 million** in today's dollars), making it one of the most expensive passenger ships ever constructed. At 882 feet long, 92 feet wide, and weighing 46,000+ gross tons, Titanic was **the largest moving object ever built by man**. It featured 16 watertight compartments, luxurious first-class accommodations, a grand staircase, and a reputation as the pinnacle of Edwardian engineering. Its nearly identical sister ship, the Olympic, launched in 1910, served as the blueprint—both were designed as the trio's flagship class (with Britannic completing the set), sharing the same revolutionary scale and opulent design meant to dominate transatlantic travel.

On **April 10, 1912**, according to the official narrative (which many have questioned over the years), Titanic set sail from Southampton, England, on its maiden voyage to New York City, carrying 2,224 passengers and crew under the command of **Captain Edward Smith**—the same man who just seven months earlier (Sept 20, 1911) collided with the Royal Navy cruiser HMS Hawke as he captained the Olympic, creating devastating damage to the ship's **starboard side** near the stern and who was also the captain—again of the

Olympic—during a minor docking incident that saw a tug sucked against Olympics’ stern.

At any rate, once in the open Atlantic, despite receiving multiple iceberg warnings from other vessels, the ship maintained near-full speed—around 22 knots—reflecting the confidence of its builders and operators that the ship was “**practically unsinkable.**” This phrase, originating in 1911 from an article in *The Shipbuilder* magazine, was repeated and amplified in promotional materials, interviews, and headlines by White Star Line officials and the press, turning it into a widely circulated boast that the ship was effectively impervious to disaster. By the time James Cameron’s movie came along 86 years later, myth had cemented it in the popular mind as said in the movie by Cal Hockley, the upper-class antagonist who boasts, “**God himself couldn’t sink this ship.**”

*But pride cometh before the fall.* On the night of **April 14**, just before midnight, lookouts spotted an iceberg dead ahead; the ship struck it on its **starboard side**, tearing a gash along six compartments. Within hours, the “unsinkable” giant filled with water and sank in one of the deepest parts of the icy North Atlantic in one of history’s most infamous maritime disasters. It claimed over 1,500 lives, including three of the

richest men in the world who were opposed to the formation of the central bank which curiously began the next year. From start to finish, it's always about the money.

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*Atlantis*. Great island capital of the world before the Flood. At least according to Plato's account in *Timaeus* and *Critias*. We first learn about this story, **Plato** (428–347 BC) says, from the account that came down to him from his ancestor Solon (630 – c. 560 BC). Solon had travelled to Egypt where he learned the story from the Egyptian priests. Atlantis, he tells us, was **allotted to Poseidon** (see *Critias* 113; 109b; cf. **Deut 32:7-8**), who even more curiously was said to be the ancestor of both Solon and Plato!<sup>1</sup> But Atlantis was destroyed some 9,000 years before Solon's time.

The Atlanteans began as a virtuous people, he tells us, blessed by Poseidon with perfect harbors, hot/cold springs, and matchless prosperity—a veritable Eden on earth. But over time they became **corrupted by greed**, luxury, and imperial ambition. They “**grew insolent**” and “**were no longer able to bear their prosperity**” (*Critias* 120e–121b).

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<sup>1</sup> Plato, his father Ariston, descended from Codrus the last mythical king of Athens (1089-1068 BC), whose father was Melanthus, son of Andropompus, son of Penthilus, son of Periclymenus the Argonaut, son of Neleus the Argonaut, son of Poseidon. Plato is related to Solon through his mother and Solon also traces back to Neleus this way: Perictione (Plato's mother) → Glaucon → Critias → Dropides → Solon ... → Neleus, a son of Poseidon.

*But pride cometh before the fall.* At some point, Zeus sees their moral decay and unjust aggression (conquering other peoples, including ancient Athens) and decides to **punish them**, sending earthquakes and floods to sink the island in a single day and night. The final sentence of *Critias* (121c) makes it explicit: “**Zeus, the god of gods ... seeing that an honorable race was in a most wretched state, determined to bring chastisement upon them, that they might be improved.**” Chastisement? Improvement? Or was Zeus being petty and destroying his brother’s legacy out of envy and control?

Whatever you make of either story as they come down to us through the official accounts, both serve as **eerie parallels to the three laments** of **Ezekiel 27:1-28:19** and the other oracles (**ch. 26**) given against the city of Tyre. We’ve seen in Ch. 26 how Tyre is an **island-city** that will, like Atlantis, sink beneath the waves (**Ezek 26:3, 5, 19, 20**). This will continue in ch. 27 and 28. Tyre, who dwells at the entrances to the sea (**27:3**), in the heart of the seas (**4; 25-26**), will sink into the heart of the seas (**27, 34**). It’s prince also sits “**in the seat of the gods, in heart of the seas**” (**28:2**) and will die the death of the slain in the heart of the seas (**8**).

But an **illustration** dominates ch. 27 to help us understand more about this city. That illustration is fitting. Tyre is likened to a great ship. In **vv. 5-9** they **construct** the mighty vessel. In **vs. 25** it is laden with **wealth**. In **vs. 26**, the ship **wrecks**. In **vs. 27**, it **sinks** and is lost. In **32-34**, there is a lament for the ship. Titanic. Atlantis. Both are strikingly parallel stories to the oracles and laments in Ezekiel against Tyre.

## Three Lamentations Against Tyre

Previously, we looked at ch. 26. Today we will look at the totality of Chs. **27:1-28:19**. There is a lot of text here, and so next week will do an in depth look at the more debated things going on in ch. 28. But I want to look at it all today in a fly-over, because this is **a single unit of thought**, brilliantly woven together by **three long laments** that each moves us back to **“the Word of the LORD”** as the main title for deity. **“The Word of the LORD came to me: ‘Now you, son of man, raise a lamentation over Tyre’” (27:1-2)**. **“The Word of the LORD came to me: ‘Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre...’” (28:1-2)**. **“Moreover, the Word of the LORD came to me: ‘Son of man, raise a lamentation over**

the king of Tyre’” (11-12). As you can see, these three laments move from Tyre as an earthly city, to a prince/ruler, to a king. But there is a cosmic direction in this movement. The city is a ship which represents human corporate pride. This moves to the personal prince of its singular leader. Finally, it reaches back to the supernatural pride of a fallen cherubim which stands behind the king of Tyre.

In these three laments, the single most dominant idea is very likely pride (in fact, it is the central square of the 3x9 grid). Ezek 27:3, “O Tyre, you have said, ‘I am perfect in beauty.’” 8:2, “Because your heart is proud, and you have said, ‘I am a god...’” 28:5, “By your great wisdom in your trade you have increased your wealth, and your heart has become proud.” 28:17, “Your heart was proud because of your beauty.” It’s all so very similar to the stories of Atlantis and the Titanic.

The weave unfolds as a series of parallel rows, where each new lament follows the same nine basic ideas. First, the prophetic word is introduced along with a command to raise a lamentation (*qinah*). Second, there is the introduction of pride. Third, its splendor and wisdom is presented. Fourth, it is adorned with great wealth. Fifth is its military splendor and exalted position. Sixth is its vast trade and wealth that

becomes great sin. **Seventh**, you have the wreckage and violence. **Eighth** is the fall into the pit and the depths. **Ninth**, there is a universal lament and Tyre's eternal end. These take us progressively downward from the height of pride to the lowest part of the depths of the sea. I speculate that the nine rows or ideas of each lament lay out for us a literary version of the **nine “stones of fire”** (28:13, 16; which come at the end of the central-fifth row), something we will look at in more detail next time.

## The Ship (First Lamentation/Col 1)

The first poetic lament portrays Tyre as a beautifully crafted, heavily laden merchant ship, built from the finest global materials and crewed by skilled peoples. It catalogues her vast international trade network, military alliances, and wealth that enriched kings and peoples. This perfectly exemplifies what the city of Tyre was in the ancient world, as perhaps it was the greatest of all maritime ports of old. But pride in its own perfection leads to **a catastrophic wreck by the east wind in the heart of the seas**. The response is widespread mourning among mariners, coastlands, and merchants—culminating in the refrain of her irreversible end.

Our fallen human conditions inevitably take commercial glory which then leads to pride and inevitably sinks our ship. There's only one remedy for this: humility before the sovereign LORD.

After the initial opening command from the Word of the LORD telling the son of man to raise his lamentation (**Ezek 27:1-2**), he begins by **identifying Tyre** as it which “**dwells at the entrances to the sea**” (**3**). This fits Tyre as an island seaport which opens up to the vast world of the Mediterranean.

It calls Tyre the “**merchant of the peoples to many coastlands,**” and indeed this was the renowned status that Tyre held throughout the ancient world. **Thus says the Sovereign Lord,** “**O Tyre, you have said, ‘I am perfect in beauty’**” (**3b**). Oh **the arrogance and deception** that sees itself not as flawed and fallen but perfect. Who in this world is perfect but God? It's **perfection** is then said to have come from its placement “in the heart of the seas” and its builders who made it that way (**4**). How so?

**Vv. 5-6** describe the “**fir trees from Senir,**” the “**cedar from Lebanon,**” the “**oaks of Bashan,**” and the “**pin**es from the coasts of Cyprus,” that made up its planks, its mast, its oars, and its deck. This all describes the geography around

Tyre from the island of Cyprus (lit. Kittim) to its northwest, to its famed forest to the east from which Solomon took cedars to build the temple, over which towers Mt. Hermon (Senir is Hermon), and it's once mighty oaks that became famous in the Gilgamesh Epic.

But these are not just places of renown. They are places of cosmological significance in the Bible and ANE. Senir (meaning “Coat of Mail” or “Bear the Lamp”) is the cosmic mountain of El and the Amorites (Deut 3:8-9) where the Watchers once descended (1En 6:6). Lebanon's trees emulate the world tree idea which is why this wood was used in God's temple. In Isaiah 14:8, they “rejoice” at the fall of the proud king. Bashan is the home of Og (Num 21:33 etc.) and demonic “bulls” who mock Messiah (Ps 22:12), it's oaks are “high” and proud (Isa 2:13), and is used synonymously for Hermon (Ps 68:15). Cyprus is distant and represents the far edge of the world of beyond the Sea. The cosmic mountain and world tree are links between heaven and earth. So, they walk upon the planks of the cosmic mountain, have sails made of the world tree, reduce the proud oaks to oars to steer their ship, and take their boat to the farthest reaches of the world. Tyre has tamed and merchandised the *spiritual* world

for its own enrichment and glory, the pinnacle of hubris. It thinks it is a god.



Map of the Places of Ezekiel 27<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> “Tyre’s International Trade,” *Biblemapper.com* (Mar 9, 2024).

The Ship of Tyre is then inlaid with expensive **ivory**, which only comes from things like elephants or whales (**6b**). It's sail and banner is embroidered with linen from **Egypt** (**7**). It's awning is blues and purples from **Elishah**. Elishah is found with Kittim in **Gen 10:4** (many places in this chapter are found in Gen 10, including Lud, Put, Tarshish, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, Dedan, Sheba, Raamah, Haran, Asshur) and is a son of Javen from Japheth. It could very well be Rhodes or even Greece. They were so rich that they could take men from their mother city **Sidon** and as far away as the Syrian island of **Arvad** and enlist them as rowers and pilots (**Ezek 27:8**). **Gebal** ("Boundary") is the Greek *biblos*, from which we get "book" or "Bible." It's men caulked its seams (**9a**), while ships from the entire world came to the Ship of Tyre to barter, as if it were really the Good Ship Lollipop.

**Vv. 10-11** shows us this was also a war-ship which goes to the ends of the earth to adorn itself. **Persia, Lud, and Put** are each at the extreme ends of the known world: one down in **Iraq**, one up in **Asia Minor**, one west of **Egypt**. They hang shields and helmets as decorations. **Arvad** and **Helech** are essentially western Syria up to Tarsus, where Paul would later come from, while **Gamad** is in Lebanon, north of Sidon. All

these places are lining the ship with weapons of war to make the boat more beautiful.

Next, we get an extensive list of places that “did business,” “traded,” “exchanged,” and “dealt” as merchants. Tarshish traded silver, iron, and tin (12). Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded in bronze (13). Bethtogarmah exchanged horses (14). Dedan, the coastlands, Syria, Judah, Damascus, Arabia, Sheba, a place called Eden, and others (15-25) all traded ivory, emeralds, purple, embroidery, linen, coral, ruby, honey, oil, wine, wool, basically everything wonderful in the ancient world went through Tyre.

But something happened. The ship got too full. It started to weigh too much. “So you were filled and heavily laden in the heart of the seas” (25). Too much booty for these pirates of the high seas. Their greedy eyes couldn’t say no. So “rowers brought you out into the high seas” and there “the east wind has wrecked you in the heart of the seas” (26). An east wind? Remember how I just mentioned a place called Eden? Remember that they went east of there? And what happened when this east wind came? Everyone and everything, its riches, its wares, its merchandise, its mariners, its pilots, its caulkers, its dealers, its men of war, its

crew **all sank** into the heart of the seas (27). This was “**the day of your fall.**”

When the pilots started crying, the countryside shook (28). Down from their ships came all the rowers and mariners and pilots of the sea (29). They stood on the land and **started shouting aloud over the fall of Great Ship.** They shouted and cried out bitterly (30). They cast dust on their heads. They wallow in ashes (30b). They made themselves bald and put on sackcloth, and wept in bitterness of soul with great mourning (31). And this is what they sang, “**Who is like Tyre, like one destroyed in the midst of the sea? When your wares came from the seas, you satisfied many peoples; with your abundant wealth and merchandise you enriched the kings of the earth. Now you are wrecked by the seas, in the depths of the waters; your merchandise and all your crew in your midst have sunk with you. All the inhabitants of the coastlands are appalled at you, and the hair of the kings bristles with horror; their faces are convulsed. The merchants among the peoples hiss at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever**” (32-36).

It all sounds very much like **Mystery Babylon** in Revelation. I grew up hearing that Mystery Babylon in Revelation was actually secret prophetic code for the United States.

Therefore, such prophecies are actually against us! The reality is, Tyre is but [the first in a long line](#) of opulent nations that have become corrupt from within because of their power and wealth. It is the way of all nations, because it is the way of sinful human hearts to forget God, to trust in their own power, to flaunt that power, to increase that power, that glory, to always need “more.” It is the god of consumerism, materialism, avarice, greed, the insatiable appetite to always need more.

[Steve Taylor](#) has an old song, a kind of Christian rock opera in three parts that begins,

[Mooooooooove. Move in closer. Move in closer. Move in closer to the middle of the frame.” “It was a morning just like any other morning In the Sini desert, 1200 BC. It glistened, it glowed, it rose from the gold of the children of Israel, and most of the adults. The cash cow! The golden cash cow had a body like the great cows of ancient Egypt. And a face like the face of Robert Tilton without the horns. And through the centuries, it has roamed the earth like a ravenous bovine seeking whom it may lick. Cash cow! Cash cow! From the valley of the shadow of the outlet mall, to the customize petwear boutique, from the trailer of the fry chef to the palace of the sheikh, The cash cow lurks ... Cash cow, coming’ to get ya! Why? ‘Cause you think this is stupid, don’t you? The cash](#)

cow will not be mocked! The cash cow's planning a coup! The cash cow chews cud bigger than you! Woe, woe, woe to you who blow off this warning. Perhaps you've already been licked. I, too, was hypnotized by those big cow eyes the last time I uttered those three little words, "I deserve better!"<sup>3</sup>

## The Prince (Second Lamentation/Col 2)

But this, in fact, is a prophecy against a single city: Tyre. The Rock that now becomes desolate in the middle of the seas. And so we continue on to **our second lament**, a direct prophetic rebuke against **the human leader** who arrogantly claims, "**I am a god**," enthroned in the heart of the seas. God promises to bring ruthless foreigners to defile his splendor, thrust him into the pit, and slay him as a mere man—no longer able to claim divinity. This lament ends with death as an uncircumcised (uncovenanted) outsider by alien hands. Mortal hubris is judged by violent human agents. Pride is reduced to humiliating mortality.

We begin in **28:1-2** with the Word of the LORD coming to the son of man to raise a lamentation against the "prince of Tyre." "**Because your heart is proud, and you have said, "I am a god, I sit in the sea of gods, in the heart of**

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<sup>3</sup> Steve Taylor, "[Cash Cow \(A Rock Opera in Three Small Acts\)](#)," *Squint*, Warner Alliance (1993).

the seas...” (2a). Earlier I said that the ship was making that claim. But in ch. 27 it was not explicit. You had to deduce it from the language. But now, it is right there. “Yet you are but a man, and no god, though you make your heart like the heart of a god.”

Suddenly, we have an old figure return. “You are indeed wiser than Daniel; no secret is hidden from you; by your wisdom and your understanding” (3), the prophet mocks sarcastically. We previously saw Daniel in Ch. 14, where he paralleled Job and Noah. We saw there that this person could be the biblical Daniel, and certainly that fits here in one way, for the biblical Daniel is known for his wisdom (Dan 1:17; 20; 2:20-23, 47; 5:11-12; 6:3). However, we saw that there is a Ugaritic hero named Danel who was also known for his wisdom.

Previously, the oracle was against Judah and so the biblical Daniel did make some sense. But this is an oracle *against a prince of Tyre*—not a Jew at all! Would he even have known or cared about Daniel, who was a young man in Jerusalem and Babylon? On the other hand, he very much would have known the story of Danel and Aqhat, for it was the myth of his own Canaanite people. Danel was the wise pagan culture

hero who judged the cause of the widow and the fatherless in the city gate.

Furthermore, this Danel did something that has already been alluded to in the Trye oracle of ch. 26 and will be again in ch. 32. After receiving divine blessing and the birth of his son Aqhat, he invites the **Rephaim** (*rpum*)—a group of deified or heroic royal ancestor/warriors to a feast or banquet (**KTU 1.20-1.22**). He summons these dead warriors to his house or threshing floor (a place of cultic ritual and spiritual portal<sup>4</sup>). They arrive on chariots in their thousands to eat, drink, and celebrate like some kind of ghostly army of Vikings come back from Valhalla (at Ugarit, the Rephaim are not giants; though they are in the Bible). This ritual cultic feast reinforces that Danel is a just ruler who maintains harmony between the living and the dead. But curiously, **Ezek 26:20** had talked about “**the people of old**” who had gone down to the pit. This is where Tyre is now going with no hope of resurrection. These people in the Bible are often called the Rephaim (**Isa 14:9; 26:14; Ps 88:11; Prov 9:18**). In fact, there is good reason to believe that the Rephaim/Nephilim actually appear in **Ezek 32:21** as the *gibborim*, the word used

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<sup>4</sup> See **Sharon K. Gilbert** and Derek P. Gilbert, *Veneration* (Crane, MO: Defender Publishing, 2019), ch. 10.

for the giants in **Gen 6:4**.<sup>5</sup> In other words, the story of Danel fits like a glove here.

Finally, it is fascinating to me that section of “**wisdom**” (**Ezek 28:3-4**) parallels the four cosmic places and their **trees** in **27:5-6** and, in a moment, the **Garden of Eden** which is known for its trees. Throughout the ancient world, trees and wisdom go together—the tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil is able to “**make one wise**,” remember. Daniel in the Bible is known for interpreting a dream of Nebuchadnezzar about a tree being cut down. However, Daniel’s wisdom realizes who God is. The prince of Tyre is the opposite. How can he be wiser than Daniel, unless it is pure sarcasm, which is certainly possible?

The prince made himself **wealthy** through gathering in much gold and silver into treasures (**Ezek 28:4**). This comes through his great wisdom in trade which increases his wealth (**5**). We’ve already seen this in the ivory, linen, blue, and purple décor of the ship. If I’m reading the text properly, **the very center** of our three laments is about pride. “**And your heart has become proud in your wealth—therefore**

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<sup>5</sup> See **Walther Zimmerli**, *Ezekiel 2: A Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 25-48*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 176. He argues that the “people of old” (el-am owlam; 26:20) are the same *gibborim* of 32:12 and 21 and 27 where you even have *gibborim nophelim me’arelim* (“mighty fallen from the uncircumcised”), an echo of the nephilim of Gen 6:4. I agree.

thus says the Lord GOD: Because you make your heart like the heart of a god...” (5b-6). Yes, indeed. **Pride** dominates over Tyre like nothing else. It is the chief of all sins.

Therefore, behold, I will bring **foreigners** upon you (28:7a). Ironically, we saw how in 27:12-25, it was about all these foreigners who traded with Tyre. Now, the foreigners will come upon them ... “the most ruthless of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your wisdom” (7b), precisely paralleling the ship now being wrecked in the heart of the seas. “They will thrust you down into the pit, and you shall die the death of the slain in the heart of the seas” (8), again paralleling the ship sinking into the heart of the seas.

God mocks though the lament, “Will you still say, ‘I am a god,’ in the presence of those who kill you, though you are but a man, and no god, in the hands of those who slay you?” (9). God’s don’t **die**, Tyre. But you will. In the immortal words of the Hulk in one of the great all time movie scenes ever, as he beats Loki to a pulp: “**Puny god.**” No. “You shall die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of foreigners; for I have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD” (10). And thus, the lament ends.

## The King (Third Lamentation/Col 3)

Thus, we come to the third and final lament against Tyre: **Ezekiel 28:11-19**. As we will see much more next time, this adds a deeper mythic layer over the “king of Tyre.” “The Word of the LORD came to the son of man to raise his lamentation “over the king of Tyre” (11-12a). King here is the word *melek*. It differs from the *nagid*, the prince or leader or commander of the previous lament. *Nagid* keeps us firmly in the realm of the human-political leader of Tyre who will die the death of the slain and uncircumcised.<sup>6</sup> *Melek* is a more exalted title and could evoke a divine or semi-divine ruler. Why? Look at the language.

“You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty” (12b), language that maps perfectly to Tyre saying, “I am perfect in beauty” (27:3). But then it says of this “king,” “You were in Eden” (13). Amazingly, we’ve seen Eden already. It was back in the long list of ancient places in 27:23. Where was that Eden? Block says of it, “Eden represents an abbreviated form of Beth-eden, Assyrian *Bīt Adini*, an Aramean state situated west of the Balikh and incorporated into the Assyrian empire by Shalmaneser

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<sup>6</sup> The LXX here has *archon*, which of course can be either a human or angelic “prince.”

III in 856.”<sup>7</sup> But it was abbreviated, I believe deliberately to echo this new Eden. What is *this* Eden? “The garden of God.” This is none other than the original paradise, filled with trees for wisdom, as its parallels in the other laments show us.

It talks about how “every precious stone was your covering,” and then mentions nine of them: Sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle. They were all laid out in a fine setting and engravings of gold (13b). Again, we’ll have more to say about all of this next time. Today, I will only note that the LXX has twelve stones, not nine. The reason seems to be to harmonize this with the twelve stones of the high priest’s breastplate. In fact, the LXX changes the order to give us the perfect reflection of the breastplate (Ex 28:17-20), and it seems almost certain to me that this harmonization was not original.<sup>8</sup> This is not a replication of the priest’s breastplate, but a paganization of it, which is why it is nine (again, perfectly reflecting our total rows), not twelve.

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<sup>7</sup> Daniel Isaac Block, *The Book of Ezekiel, Chapters 25–48*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997–), 79.

<sup>8</sup> Cynthia L. Miller-Naudé; Jacobus A. Naudé, “Textual Interrelationships Involving the Septuagint Translations of the Precious Stones in the Breastpiece of the High Priest,” *HTS* 76.4 (HTS Theological Studies, 2020).

We continue. “You were anointed guardian cherub” (Ezek 28:14a). This is a word (*kerub*) that never refers to a human in the Hebrew. Yet, there are two cherubs that are placed at the gate of the Garden of Eden in Gen 3:24. It is fascinating to me that this parallels both the “men of war” with their shields and helmets (27:10-11) and the prince calling himself “a god” (28:6) in the central square of the entire passage.

The Eden imagery continues. “I placed you...” This parallels “You were anointed...” Who put the king here? God did. Not himself. “I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked” (14b). This is where we learn about Eden as a mountain and the stones here clearly parallel the nine stones we just saw. What are they? Stay tuned for next week to learn the answer to that one!

Now we come to his fall. “You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you” (15). How did it get there? Through his pride. The pride came through “the abundance of your trade...” (16), as we’ve already seen as 27:12-25 explained in such detail.

But that trade turned into something **much worse**. “**You were filled with violence in your midst, and you sinned**” (16b). The **violence** parallels the wreck of the ship and the ruthless nations who come down upon the prince with their swords. “**So I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you, I guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire**” (16c). Right the same place in each lament, the **ship sinks** into the heart of the seas, the **prince is thrust down** into the pit to die the death of the slain, and guardian cherub is destroyed and cast as profane from the holy mountain. The ship, the prince, and cherub behind them both all suffer the same fate.

It returns to **the theme of pride**. “**Your heart was proud because of your beauty**” (17a). It returns to the **theme of wisdom**, “**You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor**” (17b). It returns to **the casting down**, “**I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you**” (17b).

This repeats like the ending of a Beethoven Symphony. It returns to **his sin**. “**By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade**” (18a). It returns to the sanctuary of wisdom, “**You profaned your sanctuaries**” (18b). It returns to the judgment. “**So I brought fire out**

from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. All how know you among the peoples are appalled at you” (just as they were at the ship; 27:35). “You have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever” (19).

## The Greatest of the Seven Deadly Sins

Two disasters — one lost to myth, one seared into modern memory Atlantis, blessed with perfect harbors and prosperity, grew insolent and unjust, until Zeus sank it in a day and night. Titanic, billed as “practically unsinkable,” steamed full speed into warnings, believing no force — not even God — could stop it. Both fell because they thought human achievement could rival divine order. Both were rooted in the same sin: [pride. The sin of Tyre.](#)

So what is pride? For millennia it has been [one of the seven deadly sins](#) (pride, greed, wrath, envy, lust, gluttony, and sloth). In fact, it is always listed either first because it is chief or last because it the worst. The Scottish preacher [James Stalker](#), who wrote on the Seven Deadly Sins helps us think properly about this word,

It may not seem obvious that pride is the primary sin; but this has been the pretty unanimous conclusion of those who have investigated the subject most deeply; and it will reward any one to think out for himself the reasons why they have come to this conclusion. It will be remembered that this was the first sin of which we have any knowledge, for it was pride through which the angels fell; and the outstanding feature of the character of the leader of the angels in that tragic drama, as Milton has depicted it, is arrogance. 'Better,' he cries, 'to reign in hell than serve in heaven.' In like manner, the sin of our first parents, which has brought woe to all their descendants, was pride; for the tempter whispered to them, 'Ye shall be as gods.' Besides, if any one reflect, he will perceive that in no other sin is the very essence of all sin so concentrated. The essence of sin is selfishness, and pride is the inordinate assertion of self; it would annihilate others, and it disdains to be prescribed to even by God.

The Latin name for pride, *superbia*, means aiming at what is above, and Chaucer says that the proud man is he who will always be swimming aloft. But the mere desire of what is above us is not pride. Not to desire what is above us would be not to desire any kind of improvement. Those, indeed, who aim at excellence will always be exposed to the charge of pride, but the accusation may be groundless. A learned man cannot help being aware that he knows many things which an ignorant man does not; and by the latter it may be

supposed that he must be proud on this account; but the increase of knowledge may, on the contrary, be making him every day more humble. In a promiscuous company, if a woman refuses to join in an uncomely game, she will be reproached as proud; but her maidenly modesty is really beautiful and virtuous. It is impossible to display any constancy or zeal in religion without being accused of pride, as if one considered oneself better than one's neighbours; indeed, there are those who call every one who will not join with them in riot and excess a Pharisee and a hypocrite, without more ado: but God himself has said, 'Come out from among them, and be ye separate.' There is such a thing as proper pride; and, when an accusation of pride is brought, the accuser requires to be judged as well as the accused.

In pride, justly so called, there is always an element of falsehood. It is a claim to merits which are not possessed; or, if we possess them at all, we deceive ourselves and attempt to deceive others as to the degree in which we possess them. We deny and ignore the claims of others, in order that our own may be pre-eminent. We hate those who estimate us exactly for what we are worth; and arrogance, in its extreme manifestations, demands that all should suspend their own judgments and accept its self-estimate at the point of the sword. This falseness seems to me to be the distinctive mark of pride.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> James Stalker, *The Seven Deadly Sins* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1901), 3–7.

In a day and a culture that so greatly surpasses the wealth and power of Tyre, the reach of the British Empire, and has amassed more glory than even Rome itself, where everyone from our presidents to our athletes to our doctors to our entertainers to our pastors seem to swim in pride, we must take to heart this sin, for we have seen what it did to Tyre, to its prince, and to its king. Jonathan Edwards said,

Pride is the worst viper that is in the heart, the greatest disturber of the soul's peace, and of sweet communion with Christ: it was the first sin committed, and lies lowest in the foundation of Satan's whole building, and is with the greatest difficulty rooted out, and is the most hidden, secret, and deceitful of all lusts, and often creeps insensibly into the midst of religion, even, sometimes, under the disguise of humility itself...<sup>10</sup> and nothing is so hateful to God, and contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, or of so dangerous consequence; and there is no one sin that does so much let in the Devil into the hearts of the saints, and exposes them to his delusions.<sup>11</sup>

Thomas Watson, the great Puritan of old reminds us of Nebuchadnezzar who said, “Is not this great Babylon, which

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<sup>10</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 1 (Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), xcvi.

<sup>11</sup> This quote is similar and appears to come from Jonathan Edwards, *Distinguishing Marks*, Yale 4:277–78; see Sam Storms, *Biblical Studies: Proverbs* (Edmond, OK: Sam Storms, 2016): On Pride.

I have built?” (Dan 4:30). So says the proud man, “Are not these the prayers I have made? Are not these the works of charity I have done?” When Herod had made an oration and the people cried him up for a god (Acts 12:22), he was well content to have that honor done to him. *Pride is the greatest sacrilege; it robs God of his glory!*<sup>12</sup>

We are living in the era of pride like none other, especially as it takes the form of *narcissism*, perhaps the single greatest sin of our age. It is absolutely everywhere. We use **technologies that feed it**: Facebook, iPhone, MeWe, MySpace. So naturally, what do people post about? *Me, Myself, and I*. Obviously, that isn't necessarily wrong, but consider this bit from Brian Regan to get the point across, because so many people are this way. I know so very few people who will actually listen in a conversation. They just talk and talk and talk like they are the most important, no, the only person in the universe. Brian begins,

I'm actually kind of quiet off stage. A lot of people don't realize that. I was at a dinner party recently with bunch of people I don't know. One guy talking plenty for everybody: “*Me! Myself! Right? And then I! And then Myself. And me!*”

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<sup>12</sup> Thomas Watson, *The Godly Man's Picture* (Monergism, circa. 1666): A Godly Man is a Humble Man 10.5.

Me, right? I couldn't tell this one cuz *I*. And *I* was about *myself*! And then Me. Me! ME ME MEEEEEE!" Beware the me monster.

So I tried to jump in with a little story. I don't want to just sit there the whole night, right? When I'm done with my story this guy goes, "*That ain't nothing!*"

"Oh well didn't mean to waste everybody's time telling my nothing story. Here, let Marco Polo speak. He's back with Tales of Adventure. My story ain't nothing."

Maybe it was cuz I made the mistake of trying to tell a story about having only *two* wisdom teeth pulled, and I learned a lesson. Don't ever try to tell a two wisdom teeth story, because you ain't going nowhere. The four wisdom teeth people are going to parachute in and cut you off at the pass. "Halt halt, with your two wisdom tooth tail!" You will never complete one. Trust me.

I'm trying to tell my story, "You know, I had some wisdom teeth pulled. I had um I had two..."

"I had four pulled. Oh, no *five*! No, *nine*! I had *nine* wisdom teeth pulled! All of mine were impacted. They were all coming in upside down. The roots were wrapped around my tongue, coming out my nose. They were tusks. I was a warthog. No anesthesia. They pulled 'em out with pliers. I was eating corn on the cob that afternoon."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Brian Regan, "[Brian Regan – Me Monster \(HD\)](#)," *YouTube* (Feb 15, 2014).

When we trust our own beauty, wisdom, or wealth instead of God, we become prideful. Pride in turn easily shows itself through narcissism—the whole world revolves around *me*. You must be weary of yourselves and look to the best interests of others. Put them first, not you. Listen to others, let them talk. Beware how subtle pride creeps in to destroy. Pride builds unsinkable ships, claims divine thrones, and trades in cosmic secrets — and it **always ends in ashes**. Most narcissists end up as total trainwrecks. **Proverbs 16:18** tells us plainly: “**Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.**” Tyre is the living illustration, with Atlantis and Titanic.

But here’s the twist — the story doesn’t end in ashes. Ezekiel’s oracles judge the nations for gloating over God’s people, but the prophets never leave us in judgment alone. The same God who says, “**They shall know my vengeance**” (**25:14**) also says **the nations will rejoice with His people and the gods will bow** (**Deut 32:43**). The same Jesus who warns of cutting off also offers **to graft us in** (**Rom 11**). The same pride that sank Tyre is **the pride Christ crucified on the cross** — so that we who once were far off might be brought near, cut off from our old rebellion, and made one new people in Him (**Eph 2:13–16**).

Next week we'll zoom in on **the third lament** — the fallen cherub — and ask: who really stands behind Tyre's throne? Who walked in Eden, among the stones of fire, until iniquity was found? What does it mean that this being was cast down, exposed before kings, and consumed by fire from within? And what does it tell us about the deeper cosmic rebellion that started long before Tyre or Babylon?

For today, the application is simple: **pride builds empires and ships that sink. Humility** bows before the One who alone is perfect in beauty, wisdom, and power. **“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble”** (James 4:6). You cannot be a proud person to receive Christ. Christ himself is lowly and meek—and he created you! Where are you claiming, **“I am perfect?”** Where are you trusting your own trade, wealth, or strength? **“The Lord tears down the house of the proud but maintains the widow's boundaries”** (Prov 15:25). **“The meek shall inherit the earth”** (Matt 5:5). May the Spirit cut off the old self so you can be clothed in Christ's humble garments and so stand before the throne of heaven in his righteousness.

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