

10. Divine judgment on pride

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What is the oldest sin of mankind? Pride. Every sin has come from there. Without pride, people would not seek to hurt someone; without pride, people would not deceive others; without pride, people would not cheat on their spouses; without pride, people would not try to be on the throne in their hearts to compete with God.

I am sure that we all have come across a poem called "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley one time or another. The 'invictus' comes from Latin and it means "unconquered". The person in the poem proclaims his strength in the face of adversity:

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

It sounds cool for those who want to stand tall against all odds. But in the presence of our Lord which is in everywhere, we must realize that we are not the master of our fates and the captain of our souls. Rather, ourselves were the downfall of our own fates without Christ.

In tonight's study from chapter 28 to 32, we find three individuals who thought that they were gods, but later only to find themselves, they were not even in the same dimension with the only true God. Unfortunately as long as we have these sinful bodies, that pride will continuously raise its ugly head in our hearts. We must learn how to fight against it at all time.

A. JUDGMENT AGAINST THE PRINCE OF TYRE

Ezekiel 28:1-5 The word of the Lord came to me again, saying, 2 "Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Because your heart is lifted up, And you say, 'I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods, In the midst of the seas,' Yet you are a man, and not a god, Though you set your heart as the heart of a god 3 (Behold, you are wiser than Daniel! There is no secret that can be hidden from you! 4 With your wisdom and your understanding You have gained riches for yourself, And gathered gold and silver into your treasures; 5 By your great wisdom in trade you have increased your riches, And your heart is lifted up because of your riches),"

In chapter 28 we find two different persons – the first one was known as ‘the prince of Tyre’, the other ‘the king of Tyre’. Both of these individuals were guilty of great pride because of their knowledge, power, and wealth, and they both abused their privileges and offended the Lord.

The Lord dealt with these two differently. For the prince of Tyre, He used the Babylonian army. And for the king of Tyre, the Lord Himself punished him. We will talk about this one more a little later.

Though this prince claimed to be a god, the Lord proved to him that he was a mere mortal man. When we read the Bible, we find several occasions when God judged arrogant kings and other rulers, such as Pharaoh, whom the Egyptians treated as a god; Nebuchadnezzar, and Herod Agrippa in Acts 12 as we studied a couple of months ago. It doesn’t matter how much power they have, all world leaders who ignore the Lord and act as if they are gods will all be exposed and judged by the Lord.

B. JUDGMENT AGAINST THE KING OF TYRE

Ezekiel 28:11-19 Moreover the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 12 “Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “You were the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. 14 “ You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones. 15 You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. 16 “By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. 17 “Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. 18 “ You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you. 19 All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And shall be no more forever.””

As we read these verses, we get the impression that this ‘king’ is much more than a human. Yes, it is talking about satan himself. Whether we’d like to admit the fact or not, satan owns this world and controls just about every nation:

*Isaiah 14:12 “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!*

In v13, the Lord said that the king of Tyre was in Eden, the garden of God. There were only two humans were in the garden of Eden. In other words, it couldn’t be another human, rather satan himself. In v14, the phrase “holy mount” is consistently used in the OT to describe Jerusalem and/or Zion as the central place of worship and the dwelling place of the Lord.

Did you notice that the nine jewels that were mentioned here were also mentioned for the 12 stones that were found in the breastplate of the Jewish high priest accord-

ing to Exodus 28? The settings and mountings for these jewels were of the finest gold. His pride and selfish ambitions led him into sin and God judged him by casting him out.

Satan has many names recorded in the Bible. For some we know well, but for the others, we don't. The following is not a complete list:

The names of satan

Accuser of our brethren (Revelation 12:10); Adversary (1 Peter 5:8); Angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14); Abaddon, Angel of the bottomless pit, Apollyon, King of the bottomless pit (Revelation 9:11); Beast (Revelation 14:9-10); Beelzebub (Matthew 12:24); Belial (2 Corinthians 6:15); Deceiver, Devil, Dragon (Revelation 12:9); Enemy (Matthew 13:39); Evil one (John 17:15); Father of lies (John 8:44); God of this age (2 Corinthians 4:4); King of Babylon (Isaiah 14:4); Lawless one (2 Thessalonians 2:8-10); Lucifer (Isaiah 14:12-14); Man of sin, the son of perdition (2 Thessalonians 2:3-4); Power of darkness (Colossians 1:13-14); Prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:1-2); Rulers of the darkness (Ephesians 6:12); Ruler of demons (Luke 11:15); Ruler of this world (John 12:31-32); Serpent of old (Revelation 12:9); Tempter (Matthew 4:3); Thief (John 10:10); Wicked one (Ephesians 6:16)

Make no mistake about it: the devil is a master manipulator and imitator. One of his most effective tactics is to imitate, offering a counterfeit version that is close enough to be believable, but far away enough to be damaging. And he has done this effectively with the Gospel. I believe much of what we hear today that is offered as Gospel preaching actually is a false gospel.

Jesus told us that in latter time, even many believers will be deceived by false teachers and their false gospels:

Matthew 24:24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

That is why Scripture in 2 Timothy 2:15 tells us as believers to rightly divide the word of truth. The Apostle Paul warned against straying from the Gospel when he wrote, *Galatians 1:6-8 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the Gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*

A false gospel would tell you that all you have to do is believe, but not that you need to repent. A false gospel would tell you there is a heaven, but would not warn you of a hell. It is not what they teach, rather what they do not teach. That is not the true Gospel. Think of repentance and believing as two wings of an airplane – you need both. They are connected. Believing is grabbing hold of something that uplifts us to the Lord while repentance is letting go of something that destroys us.

Paul wrote to the young pastor Timothy and cautioned:

1 Timothy 4:16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

We need to keep both our understanding and our presentation of the Gospel true to God's Word.

You might get tired of me repeating the same mantra: "Read the Bible; stay in the Word; keep everything in context; test everything with the Word of God, etc." But

bear with me and stay in the course, because I've seen way too many people have fallen away from the Lord because they didn't take the Word of God seriously and their sins too lightly because of their pride.

C. JUDGMENT AGAINST THE KING OF EGYPT

Ezekiel 29:1-7 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 2 "Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt. 3 Speak, and say, 'Thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt, O great monster who lies in the midst of his rivers, Who has said, 'My River is my own; I have made it for myself .' 4 But I will put hooks in your jaws, And cause the fish of your rivers to stick to your scales; I will bring you up out of the midst of your rivers, And all the fish in your rivers will stick to your scales. 5 I will leave you in the wilderness, You and all the fish of your rivers; You shall fall on the open field; You shall not be picked up or gathered. I have given you as food To the beasts of the field And to the birds of the heavens. 6 "Then all the inhabitants of Egypt Shall know that I am the Lord, Because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. 7 When they took hold of you with the hand, You broke and tore all their shoulders; When they leaned on you, You broke and made all their backs quiver."

Egypt is the 7th kingdom on God's Judgment Block in the Book of Ezekiel and got more attention from the Lord than any other nations. It went from chapter 29 to 32. That couldn't be good. Many centuries before Egypt was a slave master over Israel people. After Israel became two divided kingdom – Judah and Israel, it was a very undependable ally.

But the Jews were like their father Abraham and the other ancestors, whenever a crisis came, they were prone to look to Egypt for help. You may remember the pathetic moaning and groaning that idealized their miserable experience there and forgot all about the slavery and the toil:

Exodus 17:3 And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, "Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

Of course, to make the matter worse, king Solomon had married an Egyptian princess and did a lot of business trades with them.

The Lord compared Pharaoh to a great monster that dwelt in the Nile water. This mere man thought that he was a god and made the Nile River. Obviously he'd been smoking something bad and his brain was fried. But the Lord declared that he would be buried like an unwanted dead animal instead of being buried like other Pharaohs in their pyramids which they prepared all of their lives for their next life. It is a very humiliating way for a Pharaoh to go.

In v6-7, the Lord condemned Egypt for their unreliability like a weak reed that couldn't be trusted. The Jews should never have turned to Egypt for help, because the Egyptians had a reputation for making promises and not keeping them.

When we studied the Book of Exodus, I taught you guys that there is a typology for Israel's wilderness journey: Moses was a type of Jesus who is leading the new believers out of Egypt that is a type of the world without Christ. Unfortunately, many immature believers long for their 'good old days' before Christ.

D. APPLICATIONS

- 1) The moment when we don't take the Word of God seriously and our sins lightly because of our pride, it is the beginning of our downfall.
- 2) Pride is not a stranger to anyone. It makes itself at home in anyone's heart from the beginning and wants to be the owner of it all the time.