EZEKIEL 28

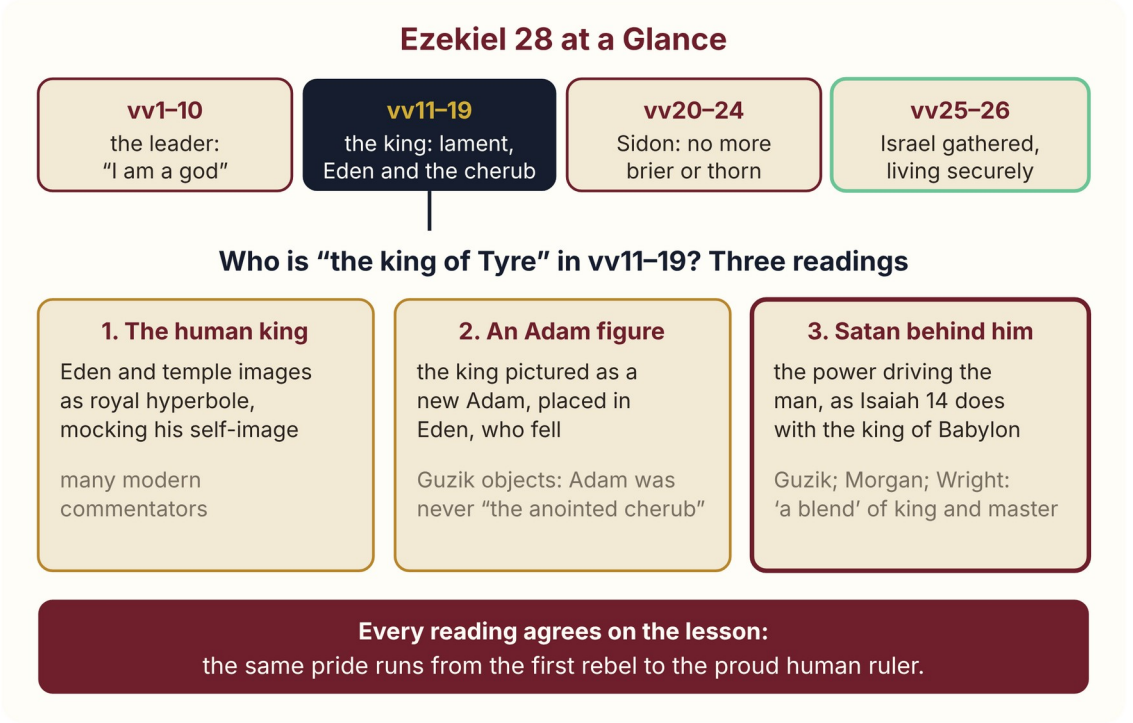
The Fall of the Proud King

“Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you.”
EZEKIEL 28:17

Where Ezekiel has brought us

1. Chapter 28 closes Ezekiel's long oracle against Tyre (chapters 26–28), dated in the eleventh year, about 587/586 BC — the year Jerusalem fell.

2. Chapter 28 has no new date.



“I Am a God”: The Prince's Boast

Wealth lifted the merchant prince's heart until he sat in the seat of gods — but he was a man.

EZEKIEL 28:2

“Son of man, say to the leader of Tyre, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Because your heart is lifted up And you have said, ‘I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods In the heart of the seas’; Yet you are a man and not God, Although you make your heart like the heart of God—

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that Feinberg identifies the leader as Ithobaal II (Josephus calls him Ithobalus). Taylor, in Guzik, says Tyre saw itself as ‘all-powerful, superhuman and virtually eternal.’

WHAT IT MEANS

Ancient kings often claimed divine status, and Tyre thought of itself as untouchable — an island fortress “In the heart of the seas” (v2).

god (אֵל)
EL · “GOD”

“I am a god, I sit in the seat of gods” (v2). El means god, mighty one.

A God Who Bleeds

Strangers come, the sword falls, and the "god" dies the death of the uncircumcised.

EZEKIEL 28:6

Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, 'Because you have made your heart Like the heart of God,

DAVID GUZIK

The strangers are the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar, the most ruthless of the nations (compare 30:11).

WHAT IT MEANS

"Because you have made your heart Like the heart of God" (v6), God sends men with swords. The point of verses 8–10 is exposure.

uncircumcised (עָרֵל)
AREL · "UNCIRCUMCISED"

"You will die the death of the uncircumcised By the hand of strangers" (v10). Arel means uncircumcised — outside the covenant.

The Anointed Cherub in Eden

A lament over the king reaches past any human ruler — Eden, a cherub, the holy mountain.

EZEKIEL 28:12

"Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik holds that this lament points past the human ruler: 'The power behind the prince of Tyre – the true king of Tyre – was Satan himself.'

WHAT IT MEANS

Suddenly the language goes far beyond any human king: "You were in Eden, the garden of God" (v13), covered in precious stones; "You were on the holy mountain of God" (v14), walking "in the midst of the stones of fire."

cherub (כְּרוּב)
KERUB · "CHERUB"

"You were the anointed cherub who covers" (v14). A kerub is a guardian angelic being near God's throne — like the cherubim Ezekiel saw in chapters 1 and 10.

Cast Down: Pride, Violence and Fire

Trade bred violence, beauty bred pride, and fire came from within until only ashes remained.

EZEKIEL 28:16

"By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned; Therefore I have cast you as profane From the mountain of God. And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the stones of fire.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik says plainly: 'Satan's sin was prompted by pride' — a heart lifted up because of its beauty (compare 1 Tim 3:6).

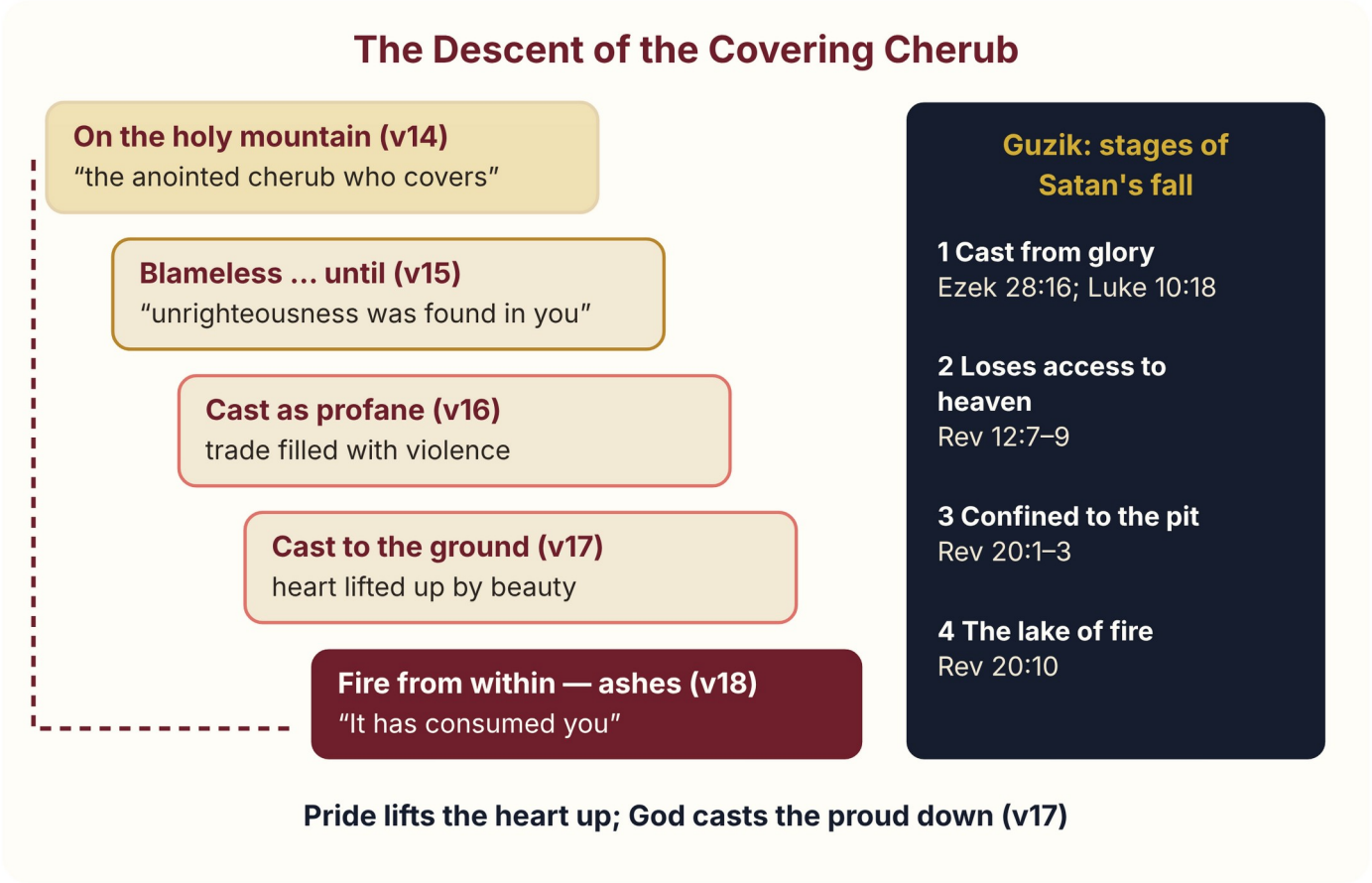
WHAT IT MEANS

"By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned" (v16). Success bred violence; beauty bred pride; "You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor" (v17).

lifted up (גָּבַהּ)
GABAH · "LIFTED UP"

"Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty" (v17). Gabah means to be high, haughty, proud.

From the Holy Mountain to Ashes



Ezekiel 28:14–18 traces a fall that goes down at every step, beside the stages Guzik sees in Satan's fall.

Sidon: No More Briers and Thorns

God judges Tyre's older neighbor and shows His holiness — and Israel's thorn is removed.

EZEKIEL 28:22

and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, And I will be glorified in your midst. Then they will know that I am the LORD when I execute judgments in her, And I will manifest My holiness in her.

WHAT IT MEANS

Sidon, Tyre's older neighbor, gets a short oracle: "Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, And I will be glorified in your midst" (v22).

brier (סַלּוֹן)
SALLON · "BRIER"

"There will be no more for the house of Israel a prickling brier or a painful thorn" (v24). Sallon means a thorn or prickle.

Israel Gathered and Living Securely

In the middle of judgment, God promises to gather His scattered people and plant them safely.

EZEKIEL 28:25

'Thus says the Lord GOD, "When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and will manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they will live in their land which I gave to My servant Jacob.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik holds that the return from exile was a partial fulfillment, with 'a greater and perfect fulfillment to come,' and he says the regathering 'reached a significant milestone in 1948.'

WHAT IT MEANS

"When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered" (v25), they will live in the land God gave "to My servant Jacob."

securely (בֶּטַח)
BETACH · "SECURELY"

"They will live in it securely" (v26). Betach means safety, confidence — not just walls around you but rest inside you.

What to carry from this chapter

1

A man and not God.

God answers the prince's “I am a god” with “Yet you are a man and not God” (v2).

2

Gifts are not the sin.

Block: the prophet castigates him ‘neither for his shrewdness nor for his amassed wealth.’

3

Daniel, not the prince.

Taylor calls Daniel ‘a classic example of a man whose head was not turned by his success.’

4

A god who bleeds.

“Will you still say, 'I am a god,' In the presence of your slayer?”

More to carry

5

The anointed cherub.

Kerub is a guardian being near God's throne; mimshach, anointed, is found only here.

6

Pride came first.

Guzik: ‘Satan's sin was prompted by pride’ — a heart lifted up by its beauty (v17).

7

Sin burns from within.

“I have brought fire from the midst of you” (v18).

8

No more thorns.

Sallon, brier, appears elsewhere only in 2:6 — the thorns Ezekiel once sat among are removed (v24).

Talk it through

1. The prince's heart was “lifted up because of your riches” (v5). What success in my life is most likely to lift my heart up?

2. “Will you still say, 'I am a god'” (v9)? Where have I played god over my family, my crew or my own life, and what humbled me?

3. Christians read verses 11–19 three ways. Which reading seems strongest to you, and what lesson do all three share?

4. “I have brought fire from the midst of you” (v18). What sin has burned in my life from the inside, without any outside enemy?

5. God promises His gathered people they will “live securely” and plant vineyards (v26). What would living securely in Christ look like for me this year?

CLOSING

The prince said "I am a god," and the covering cherub lifted up his heart — and both were cast down. God tears down the proud, but He gathers the humbled and plants them safely. Be like Daniel, not the prince: gifted, trusted, honored, and still on your knees.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides and reflection journal: see the Ezekiel study page.