



made in the Bible. It is not until the Middle Ages that commentators begin to interpret Isaiah as a reference to Satan, applying the name Lucifer to him, rather than to the king of Babylon.

Ezekiel 28 is a similar text. Many of the references refer directly to the kinship between Israel and Tyre, particularly as it relates to the temple. Tyre was “full

of wisdom and perfect in beauty” (28:12) as the supplier and craftsman that fashioned the temple. The precious stones (28:13) were those found on the priests’ breastplate (Exodus 39:10-13), an image which Ezekiel, as a priest would clearly associate with the temple. Tyre was the “**anointed* cherub that covers**” (28:14a) in the sense that Hiram, the craftsman which king Hiram sent appears to have constructed the large extended cherubim that covered the ark in the center of the temple (2 Chronicles 2-4). She was “**upon the holy mountain**” (28:14b) as a neighboring ally assisting Israel in the construction of the very house of God. Yet, because so much had changed from the time of Hiram to the time of Ithobal, God declares “**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**” (Ezekiel 28:17). The “covenant of brother-hood” was gone. These are sad words, to the king of Tyre—but they refer to the king of Tyre and not to Satan.

* Gesenius translates this “extended cherub.”



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ISSUE

11.45

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

November 8
2009



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Curtis Carwile

Is Ezekiel 28:14 Referring to Satan?

by Kyle Pope

Ezekiel chapter twenty-eight begins with the prophet being instructed to speak to the “prince of Tyre” (vs 2). In the middle of the chapter the prophet is told to “**take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre**” (vs. 12). What follows, in this lamentation is wording that has led some commentators to conclude that this is speaking of Satan. The lamentation says to the king of Tyre, “**you were in Eden, the garden of God**” (vs. 13), “**you were the anointed cherub**” (vs. 14) and “**You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you**” (vs. 15). In my judgement there is nothing in the text that indicates that this is referring to Satan, but rather it is using references to Eden and heaven to illustrate the change in the relationship which Tyre enjoyed with the Israelites and God, as a result of the sins of the current king of Tyre.

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Centuries before the time of Ezekiel, the Davidic monarchy had established a special relationship with the kingdom of Tyre and its head, Hiram. When David took the throne, Hiram sent cedars to David, from which his palace was built (2 Samuel 5:11; 1 Chronicles 14:1). There was a friendship and affection which these two kings shared for one another. After David's death,



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Scripture says that **“Hiram had always loved David”** (1 Kings 5:1). Upon learning of Solomon's rise to the throne, Hiram declares to Solomon:

“...Because the LORD loves His people, He has made you king over them” Hiram also said: “Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who made heaven and earth, for He has given King David a wise son, endowed with prudence and understanding, who will build a temple for the LORD and a royal house for himself!” (2 Chronicles 2:11, 12, NKJV).

Hiram is very instrumental in the construction of the temple, to which he refers. Solomon made a treaty with Hiram (1 Kings 5:12), Hiram supplied Solomon with many of the supplies necessary for the building of the temple (1 Kings 5:8-10) as well as a master craftsman named Hiram (or Hiram) who was half Israelite (2 Chronicles 2:13-16) who made many of the articles in the temple. Solomon gave Hiram wheat, pressed oil (1 Kings 5:11) and twenty cities in Galilee (1 Kings 9:11). Even after the building of the temple, ships from Hiram brought gold, silver, and ivory to Solomon every three years (2 Chronicles 9:21). This bond of friendship and cooperation was remembered long after Solomon. In the time of Amos, when Tyre had not given assistance to Israel in conflict with Edom, Tyre is rebuked because it **“did not remember the covenant of brotherhood”** (Amos 1:9).

As time went on, Tyre further betrayed this “covenant of brotherhood.” The Lord through Joel, rebuked Tyre for carrying off gold from the Israelites and selling some of them into slavery to the Greeks (Joel 3:4-6). By the time of Ezekiel, this covenant had been even further betrayed. Ezekiel was a priest who had been carried off with some of the early captives taken with Jehoiachin, king of Judah (Ezekiel 1:1-3). While Babylon exercised control over Judah, God had instructed the people through Jeremiah not to resist Babylon, but to submit to their yoke (Jeremiah 27-29). God gave a similar instruction to the king of Tyre (Jeremiah 27:3) a man history records was named Ithobal or Ethbaal III (Josephus' *Against Apion*, I.21). Unfortunately, Zedekiah, the king who reigned in place of Jehoiachin, did not follow this instruction, leading Nebuchadnezzar to besiege Jerusalem and eventually destroy the temple and kill him (2 Kings 25). During this time Ithobal, the king of Tyre, looked on the fall of Jerusalem with joy, saying of Jerusalem, **“Aha! She is broken who was the gateway of the peoples; now she is turned over to me; I shall be filled; she is laid waste”** (Ezekiel 26:2). In response to this arrogance, and failure to heed the Lord's instructions regarding Babylon, the Lord begins a three chapter rebuke of Tyre in Ezekiel 26-28, declaring, **“Behold, I will bring against Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings,**

with horses, with chariots, and with horsemen, and an army with many people” (Ezekiel 26:7). Josephus records that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for 13 years, after which its rule was reduced from a monarchy to simply judges (*Against Apion*, I.21).

Some conclude that chapter twenty-eight refers to Satan because of its similarity to Isaiah's proverb against the king of Babylon which refers to “Lucifer” (Isaiah 14). This text, like Ezekiel, starts off talking about the king of Babylon and then speaks of “Lucifer” (a name meaning “Day Star”) lifting himself up only to be brought down (Isaiah 14:12,13). While modern man associates the name *Lucifer* with Satan no such association is ever