

Ezekiel 28:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

Analysis

Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers.

The phrase "deaths of the uncircumcised" (mōtê 'ārêlîm, מוֹתֵי עֲרֵלִים) intensifies the judgment. To die uncircumcised meant to die outside covenant relationship with God, without hope, cut off from divine blessing—the ultimate ignominy for anyone who knew of Israel's covenant. The uncircumcised were regarded as unclean, profane, excluded from God's presence (Isaiah 52:1; see also 1 Samuel 17:26, 36 where David scorns "this uncircumcised Philistine").

"By the hand of strangers" (zārîm, זָרִים) adds further humiliation—not defeated by peers but by foreigners. For Tyre, the supreme merchant city that dealt with all nations, to be destroyed by "strangers" meant those very trading partners would become executioners. Ezekiel uses zārîm repeatedly for Babylon (28:7; 30:12; 31:12), "the terrible of the nations" (28:7).

"For I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD." The prophetic formula 'ănî dibbartî (אֲנִי דִבַּרְתִּי, "I have spoken") plus the divine title 'Ădōnāy YHWH (אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה, "Lord GOD") provides absolute certainty. When Yahweh speaks, execution is certain. This isn't threat but decree. History confirmed it—Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for 13 years, and Alexander finally destroyed it completely.

Historical Context

Circumcision was the covenant sign for Abraham's descendants (Genesis 17:9-14), marking separation unto God. Philistines, Phoenicians (including Tyrians), and other peoples remained uncircumcised, symbolizing their outsider status. To die "the deaths of the uncircumcised" meant dying under God's curse, without covenant protection. For the Tyrian king who claimed divine status, this represented total humiliation—dying not as a god, not even as a covenant member, but as a cursed outsider slain by foreign invaders.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. What does dying "uncircumcised" (outside covenant relationship) symbolize about eternal judgment for those who reject Christ?
2. How does Paul's language about being "circumcised in Christ" (Colossians 2:11-12) transform the hope that the uncircumcised lack?

Interlinear Text

מוֹת י'	עֲרֵל ים	תָּמ וּת	בְּיָד	זָר ים	כִּי
the deaths	of the uncircumcised	Thou shalt die	by the hand	of strangers	H3588
H4194	H6189	H4191	H3027	H2114	
אֲנִי	דִּבַּרְתִּי	נָא מ	אֲדַבֵּר י	יְהוָה:	
H589	for I have spoken	it saith	the Lord	GOD	
	H1696	H5002	H136	H3069	

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 31:18 (References God): To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

Ezekiel 32:19 (Parallel theme): Whom dost thou pass in beauty? go down, and be thou laid with the uncircumcised.

Ezekiel 32:21 (Parallel theme): The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him: they are gone down, they lie uncircumcised, slain by the sword.

1 Samuel 17:26 (References God): And David spake to the men that stood by him, saying, What shall be done to the man that killeth this Philistine, and taketh away the reproach from Israel? for who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?

1 Samuel 17:36 (References God): Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

Philippians 3:3 (References God): For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.