

Ezekiel 28:12

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

Analysis

Shifting from the prince to 'the king of Tyre,' God says: 'Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.' The Hebrew 'chotem toknit' (חֹתֶם תִּכְנִית, 'sealest up the sum') suggests the final measure or perfect model. The description 'full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty' seems excessive for any human king, leading many interpreters to see dual reference—the earthly king of Tyre as the immediate referent, but with language transcending human rulers to describe Satan himself. Like Isaiah 14:12-15 (the fall of the 'star of the morning'), this passage appears to use an earthly tyrant as a type pointing to the archetypal rebel—Satan. Verses 13-15 describe this being in Eden, walking among fiery stones as a guardian cherub, created perfect but falling through pride. Whether primarily about Satan or using hyperbolic language for Tyre's king, the passage reveals that human pride reflects and recapitulates satanic rebellion.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern royal ideology often used divine or semi-divine language for kings. Egyptian pharaohs claimed divinity, and Mesopotamian kings were described as gods' representatives. Tyre's commercial success and cultural sophistication made its rulers particularly proud. However, the language in Ezekiel 28:13-15 exceeds even exaggerated royal rhetoric, describing prelapsarian perfection in Eden and cherubic status. Church fathers (Origen, Gregory, Jerome) and many Reformed interpreters saw this as referencing Satan's fall, while others

view it as prophetic hyperbole exposing Tyre's arrogance. Either way, the passage reveals that creaturely pride—whether angelic or human—always ends in judgment and fall.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that human pride mirrors satanic rebellion help you identify and resist pride's temptations?
2. What does this passage teach about the inevitable outcome of exalting self above God?

Interlinear Text

בֶּן	אָדָם	שָׁא	קִינָה	עַל	מֶלֶךְ	צוּר	אָמַר
Son	of man	take up	a lamentation	H5921	upon the king	of Tyrus	and say
H1121	H120	H5375	H7015		H4428	H6865	H559
וְ	כֹה	אָמַר	אֲדֹנָי	יְהוָה	אֶתָּה	חֹתֶם	תִּכְנֶן יֵת
H0	H3541	and say	the Lord	GOD	H859	Thou sealest up	the sum
		H559	H136	H3069		H2856	H8508
מָלֵא	חֲכָמָה	וְכָל	יָפִי:				
full	of wisdom	and perfect	in beauty				
H4392	H2451	H3632	H3308				

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 19:1 (Parallel theme): Moreover take thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel,

Ezekiel 26:17 (Parallel theme): And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it!

Colossians 2:3 (Parallel theme): In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Colossians 1:9 (Parallel theme): For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;

2 Corinthians 1:22 (Parallel theme): Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.