

Ezekiel 28:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee.

Analysis

Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? God's rhetorical question drips with devastating irony. The Hebrew interrogative *he'āmōr tō'mar* (הָאָמַר תֹּמַר) uses emphatic repetition: "Will you really say, will you actually say...?" When facing the executioner's sword, will the king maintain his blasphemous claim to deity? The answer is obvious—confronted with mortality, pretensions to divinity collapse.

"But thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee." The contrast is stark: *'ādām* (אָדָם, "man"—mortal, frail humanity) versus *'ēlōhîm* (אֱלֹהִים, "God"—the divine being). The phrase "in the hand of" indicates complete subjugation. The one who claimed to sit enthroned as a god (v. 2) would die utterly powerless in his killer's grasp, exposed as merely human.

This verse anticipates the ultimate judgment of all who deify themselves—from Pharaoh to Nebuchadnezzar to the coming Antichrist who will "exalt himself above all that is called God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4). Death is God's final refutation of human pretensions to deity. Every tyrant's corpse testifies that he was *'ādām*, not *'ēlōhîm*. Only Jesus could claim "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30) and prove it through resurrection.

Historical Context

Ancient Near Eastern royal ideology often claimed divine or semi-divine status for kings. Egyptian Pharaohs were considered gods incarnate; Mesopotamian rulers claimed divine appointment and sometimes divine nature. The king of Tyre's claim "I am a god" (v. 2) fit this cultural pattern. However, Yahweh, the true God, brooks no rivals. The prophecy was vindicated when Tyre's kings fell to Babylonian and later Greek conquest, dying ignominiously like any mortal.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does death function as God's ultimate apologetic against human pride and self-deification?
2. In what subtle ways do we claim autonomy or self-sufficiency that functionally denies God's lordship over our lives?

Interlinear Text

תֹּאמֶר	תֹּאמֶר	תֹּאמֶר	אֶלָּה יְמִ	אָנִי	לְפָנֶיךָ	בְּרִית בְּ
Wilt thou yet	Wilt thou yet	thee I am God	H589	before	him that slayeth	
H559	H559	H430		H6440	H2026	
וְאַתָּה הַ	אַתָּה מִ	לֹא	לֹא	בְּ יָד		
H859	but thou shalt be a man	H120	H3808	and no God	H410	H3027
מִמְלֶלֶיךְ:						
of him that slayeth						
H2490						

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 28:2 (References God): Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God:

Isaiah 31:3 (References God): Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

Psalms 82:7 (Parallel theme): But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.