

No More Forever

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[0 : 0 0] Turn back to the chapter we had in Ezekiel, Ezekiel 28, looking at the verses we had very broadly from verses 1 down to verse 19.

Ezekiel 28, really focusing on verses 11 down to verse 19 where we see this lament over the king of Tyre. For the sake of that, a text we can take the second half of verse 12 and the first half of verse 13.

You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering and so on down to verse 19.

It's been so long it feels since we're last looking at the gardens, but just a quick summary of what we're doing. For those of us who have perhaps forgotten where we were, we've been doing a, I'll be honest, much slower than expected journey through the gardens of Scripture.

We've just about left Eden a few weeks ago. We then joined the travelling garden, we could say, looking at the tabernacle, travelling throughout the desert for all those years.

[1 : 1 3] We saw how the decoration and the placement and the instructions and the worship even of the tabernacle pointed us back towards Eden and pointed us forwards towards new heavens and the new earth.

Now, since we're all friends, being very honest, I had really planned us to be reaching Gethsemane and starting our look at that garden.

But the reality is, and as much as I wanted us to move past the evil and to arrive with our Saviour as we begin this time together, the garden here is also in Ezekiel 28.

And before we go on to look at Gethsemane, before we go on to look at the garden where our Saviour did the work for his people, where he suffered, where he prayed, and everything we'll see in the weeks to come.

Just for a short time tonight, and not short because of lack of content, but short because, quite honestly, there is evil in these verses, and it doesn't do as well sometimes to linger too much on evil.

[2 : 1 7] But as we look at these verses, we're not here to look at the evil, we're here to look at what God is showing us as he gives us the summary of what took place, what's being said here.

We're reading, as we saw, this lament against the king of Tyre, a human king, and before that, in the first section of verse 28, we saw the prince of Tyre.

The prince and the king of Tyre were real men. We have historical record, even outside of Scripture, we know these men existed. We know their reigns existed.

We know that they lived and they served and they ruled at this time, the same time as the prophet Ezekiel was prophesying. So historically, they're real people.

Of course they are. We have them here in Scripture. And they weren't evil people. They were a father and son. Some think they were uncle and nephew, but either way, they are family, and they were evil people.

[3 : 16] They ruled a kingdom of great power. Remember, this was the major powerhouse of the day. This was the grandest nation, the richest nation of this time.

We see here again and again, they were a trading nation. They had money. They had culture. They had armies. They had lavish lifestyles. And they were so very evil.

Again, we said this before. We think we have all the evil today. Some of the things you read of what took place in these days, we won't repeat in these places, but there were evil times where we did evil things in evil ways.

There's nothing new under the sun, and we don't know the half of it in our culture even yet. Evil people, evil places, evil times. But as we read these sections, as we read our section this evening from verse 11 down to verse 19, if you read carefully, you see that it's being addressed, of course, to the king of Tyre.

We see that in verse 12. But the second you start reading the actual announcement from the second half of verse 12 onwards, you see there's something strange going on here.

[4 : 26] We know there's parts of Scripture where God speaks in poetry, often through the prophets. The prophets' warnings were often given in poetic form.

And we, of course, think poetry might be something light. But no, the prophets often spoke in poetry, not to be fancy, but because it sticks in people's brains. When God speaks, he speaks clearly.

But when God speaks to the king of Tyre, we see here there's something strange going on. You are the signet of perfection. You are the pinnacle of perfection, literally, full of wisdom, so on.

You are in Eden, the garden of God. Thinking, was he? Strange. All these emeralds and sapphires covered you. Verse 14, you are anointed guardian cherub.

We think, this is not speaking about a man, is it? As God speaks and as God commands Ezekiel to remind this king as to his future, God is speaking to a human king.

[5 : 36] This human king was evil. But God, when he speaks to this human king, what is taking place? Well, it's obvious, isn't it? He is speaking to the king of this world, who is over the king of Tyre.

Satan is being addressed here. That's why I'm saying that tonight, we won't be too long, because we've looked so much in the garden at Satan. And it's not good for us, perhaps, to dwell on him too much, too often.

But just for a short time tonight, here we see Satan being addressed. Quite clearly, God is speaking to Satan. As Satan tries to work his power through the king of Tyre, through his evil ways, as Satan is aware, stands above him, and I won't say with respect, because we have no respect for Satan, but carefully worded, as Satan controls, like a puppet master, what this king of Tyre is doing, as Satan tries to shape the journey of the king of Tyre, the desires of the king of Tyre, God is speaking to Satan.

And we'll see in a second, God describes Satan, but then God reminds Satan what he once had, what he once was. But he also reminds him of where he's going, what his future is.

It's only fair that we have to say that there's not just one explanation of these verses, that there's several explanations, and usually we just mention them, we have to mention them again, because there are good reformed believers, good brothers around the world, and sisters around the world, and the brothers and sisters throughout history, have had various opinions, on how we interpret these verses.

[7 : 16] Some will say that verses 11 to 19, or verses 12 to 19, that they aren't speaking about Satan, but actually they speak about Adam in the garden. Now personally, I don't see too much weight there, but there are those who argue that, and who defend that, and who do quite a good job of defending it, but some parts don't quite make any sense to me, if I'm being honest.

But some will say this is speaking to Adam in the garden. Others will say that the prophet is using just high language, and big language, and descriptive terms, and this is only ever about the king himself, the king of Tyre.

It is God addressing a human. You think, well that doesn't make sense, and I agree with you, it doesn't, but some will say that. It's only fair we give the other views of our brothers, who've gone before us. But personally, and I am persuaded from the text, that this is about the king, of course, but really it's God speaking through the king, and God is speaking really about the king over the king.

This is addressed to Satan himself. You are the signet of perfection. As we look at these verses, just two or three very, very simple headings.

Just very, very simple. First of all, we can see how Satan had beauty once. He had beauty once. Verses 12, second half of verse 12, down to verse 14, roughly.

[8 : 49] He had beauty. Verses 12 and verse 13. As you read these verses, you see and imagine the beauty of this angel. Every precious stone was your covering, and the list of stones, crafted in gold were your settings, and your engravings.

Made for him. On the day you were created, they were prepared, prepared for you. This angel, this angel at the start, who was created, he was made to be beautiful.

We covered, I think, our first week together, in a study, the garden itself, God didn't just make a practical garden, he made a beautiful garden, didn't he? Every beautiful tree was in the garden.

God is a God of beauty, a God of design, a God of colour, and of wonder, and the same, when God created the heavenly host, he made them beautiful.

And very often, when we see in scripture, diamonds and emeralds, when we see these jewels, and these precious stones being used, quite often we have to understand it, as this is the best, we can humanly understand.

[10 : 04] We see that also in Revelation. It might be literal, but often it's just used to say, and to give us a picture, of what beauty it was like. We can't begin to imagine, the heavenly beauty, of God's creation.

But as far as we're concerned, it was like, sardis and diamond, and beryl, and onyx and jasper. What is it about these lists, of precious stones? Every one is a different colour. Just imagine, the arrayed, rainbow of colour, that adorned, once adorned, this beautiful angel.

He, was made, beautiful. On the day he was created, the beauty was given to him, prepared for him, placed upon him, he was made to be glorious. And it goes against, doesn't it, our very fibre, to think of Satan, as beautiful.

To think of him at all, anything other, than the enemy of the gospel, and the enemy of our souls, and the enemy of our saviour. But he was, once, beautiful. We see that, he wasn't just, as it were, one of the rest of the angels.

He's described here, as singularly different. There is something about him, he's given position, we'll see that in a second, but he's given position, that's different, and he's been made, or he's been adorned, somehow different.

[11 : 27] No one else, do we see in scripture, of anyone else, any other creature, being given this level, of beauty, this level, of glory, being afforded to him.

But he was, there he was, the day he was created, covered in precious stones, glowing in glory, a beautiful creature, made to worship God, made to honour God, made by God, to serve him, and to love him, to be in God's presence.

We'll see that more in a second. Why? Why is God, giving us, this description, of the one, who hates us?

Why does God, take up these verses, to tell us, the beauty of Satan, which makes us, perhaps so uncomfortable, because just like Eden, as we saw, the beauty of Eden, and the perfection, and the wonder, of man before the fall, of man and woman, before the fall, we have to know, what we once were, to fully appreciate, where we are now.

Same with Satan, to help us understand, to help us understand, just how far, he has fallen, just how, disastrous, his situation is, just how, horrifying, his rebellion was, we have to understand, first and foremost, he was once beautiful, given all the privilege, and glory of heaven, given the access, to God, and we see that here, in verse 14, you were anointed, or you were an anointed, you were an anointed, guardian cherub, I placed you, you were on the holy mountain, of God, in the midst of the stones, of fire you walked, you were blameless, in your ways, Satan had, glorious power, but he also, glorious beauty, but he also had, we see here, real place, he had, real power, guardian cherub, guardian cherub, not just as a, we respect, a normal angel, not just one of God's, ministering servants, he has given, and was given, we should say, a place of glory, what do the cherub do, in glory, what do the cherub, seen in glory, close to the throne, around the throne, protection angels, guardian angels, they guard, the throne of God, they guard, as it were, the glory of God, we read in Isaiah, what does he see, around the throne, the guardian cherub, what is sent to the garden, to protect the garden, from man, guardian cherub, the cherub, we could say, a high order of angels, created, to as it were, hide, and protect, and be around, and be in the presence, of God's glory, he was made, he was made, as one of them, being made, as a standard angel, as a normal angel, would be glorious enough, but no, he was made a cherub, guardian angel, made close, to the place of God, and we see some mystery here, mystery that we could go into, but the commentators try to, but it goes to a mess, very quickly, but just, just imagine the beauty,

[14 : 58] I read again verse 14, and just, just picture the beauty, and the wonder, and the power, you were an anointed, guardian cherub, I placed you, this is the Lord God speaking, I placed you, you were on the holy mountain of God, in the midst of the stones of fire, you walked, what that means, various understandings, but the day of stones of fire, and it's not, we think of Satan, and fire, and perhaps, in our way now, but at this context, it's purity, it's the fire we have found in heaven, it's a place of purity, and of glory, I think of the coals of fire, and the vision of Isaiah, as the altar, as the smoke fills the temple, Satan, at this point, before he fell, a guardian cherub, close to the presence of God, close to the throne of God, living in, in this pure place, walking amongst the stones of fire, but in his power, he also had, a place, not just a place, in God's presence, but we see, what we read in verse 13, you were in Eden, the garden of God, you were in Eden, the garden of God, now, again we're touching here, in mystery, and this is why I would, keep this for a prayer meeting, and rather perhaps, a Lord's Day service, because, it's parts of this text, which leaves us, with far more, questions than answers, and sometimes, that's okay, so we're dealing here, in things that are beyond, certainly my understanding, and beyond,

I'm willing to argue, all of our understandings, but what is clear here, is that Satan had access, to the heavens, and he also had access, to creation, in his state, before the fall, we touched on this before, that the timeline, of the garden of Eden, is unknown to us, we don't know, as aware, how long Adam, and Eve had, in their pre-fall state, and this verse, is often used, as one of the many verses, which are used, to at least, allude to the fact, that perhaps, Adam and Eve, had a good amount, of time in the garden, before they fell, scripture does not tell us, does not tell us, some argue it does, but to my understanding, scripture does not tell us, but regardless, of that fact, Satan had place, he had power, he was in glory, he spent time, in creation, he had full access, to all that God, had made, and here we find him, all this beauty, all this power, all this glory, all for what, takes us very briefly, to our second point, verses 15 to verse 16, where we saw beauty once, but now we see, he is blameless, no more, verses 15 and 16, blameless, no more, you are blameless, in your ways, from the day you were created, till unrighteousness, was found in you, the abundance of your trade, you were filled with violence, in your midst, and you sinned, so I cast you, as a profane thing, from the mountain of God, and I destroyed you,

O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire, verse 17, as you read before in Isaiah 14, your heart was proud, because of your beauty, you corrupted your wisdom, for the sake of your splendor, I cast you, to the ground, you were blameless, in your ways, from the day you were created, till unrighteousness, was found, in you, we see here, interestingly, in verse 16, that first of all, trade is mentioned, we see, later on, we'll see beauty, and his pride, but first of all, God mentions trade, you think, strange, the abundance, of verse 16, of your trade, you were filled with violence, in your midst, and you sinned, why is God talking about trade, in heaven, what's trade, did Satan engage in, there's various ideas, but here quite simply, the Lord is just making use, of a king of Tyre, as we said, Tyre was the trading city, it was known, not just in scripture, in secular, non-biblical sources, it was known historically, as a centre of trade, unbelievable, amounts of wealth, even by today's standards, passed, through this city, and the city, and the king of Tyre, because of his wealth, he wanted more, he wanted more, and the wealthier, this king grew, we know from history, the more depraved, he became, the more depraved, he became, the wealthier, he grew, the more ruthless, he became, the wealthier, he grew, the more his trade increased, the more depraved, he became, and the cycle carried on, cycle carried on, we'll say it again, and I'll say it again, the king of Tyre, and the city of, the area of Tyre, really, it was a debauched, evil place, and their wealth, was such, it made them evil, the greed made them evil, and God is drawing on this, to show really, that behind the scenes, behind the scenes, this king who wanted more, and who wanted more, who lived a life, an abundance of trade, who was never satisfied, what he had, it simply points towards, as we read in Isaiah 14, it simply points towards, the one who was over him, who said to himself,

I will ascend, above the throne, I will ascend, above the stars of heaven, I will take my place, on the hill of God, whatever the evil, the king of Tyre wanted, however greedy he was, however much he wanted, to be better, he was nothing, about Satan, for all the beauty, all the glory, all the power, all the joy, that this servant angel, this cherub angel, was given, for the privilege he was given, it wasn't enough, was it, it wasn't enough, he wanted more, he wanted more, he wanted more, and he found in himself, the desire, to be at the same level, as the God who made him, the God whose presence, he ministered in front of, every single minute, evil was found in him, unrighteousness was found in him, your heart, verse 17, was proud, because of your beauty, because of your beauty, he thought he could be more, than he was, because of your beauty, you corrupted your wisdom, for the sake of your splendor, for the sake of your splendor, we see, what does God do, we know what God did,

I cast you to the ground, I expose you before kings, to feast their eyes, on you, down to verse 19, and, this is where we, find that the thread, of our gospel redemption, going through, our sections here, we saw the first week, of the beauty of Eden, then we saw the sin, enter into Eden, and we saw the, we saw Satan, appear as that serpent, and we saw, Adam fall, and Eve fall, we saw the promise, of God, we're not, to keep his people, the promise of God, that yes, you've fallen, yes, sin has entered into the world, and yes, you will now die, but, but, the serpent's head, will what, be stood upon, by the foot, of the one, who was going to come, and despite the beauty, of Satan, once upon a time, despite his power, and glory, despite his fall, despite his now reign, and his attempts now, to destroy God's people, and to distract, and to distress us, let's hold on, to verse 19, as we leave behind, this horrific reality, as we see Satan's future, and next week, or next time,

[23 : 34] Lord willing, as we begin to look, at the garden of Gethsemane, as we see the reality, that God had a plan, but even when, all this fall, in heaven took place, whenever it took place, we cannot say, and we probably, should not say publicly, but all this fall, all this sin, all this evil, all this is taking place, the Lord God, has a plan, all who know you, among the peoples, are appalled at you, and here's Satan's end, you have come, to a dreadful end, it's implied here, you who are once, so beautiful, you who are once, so glorious, you who are once, had everything, you could have, ever desired, you who are once, so close to me, in heaven, have come, to a dreadful end, and shall be no more, forever, forever, shall be no more, forever, perhaps we forget, something, some, simple, biblical fact, the simple, biblical fact, that hell is created, for Satan, yes, we know that, the heart wrenching, but,

God glorifying, reality is, there'll be others, we'll join in, we know about ourselves, but first and foremost, it's created for Satan, and his angels, and regardless, of how evil he is now, regardless of the attacks, he gives now, regardless of how much, he pursues us, and attacks us, and seeks to attack us, and seeks to destroy us, despite the evil, we see, his people, and his demons, even doing the world, around us, you have come, to a dreadful end, and shall be no more, forever, he will be forever, he will be in hell, forever, but as far as we're concerned, as far as we're concerned, he'll be no more, forever, we won't think of him again, he won't bother us again, the Lord's help, next week, as we approach Gethsemane, we will see the reality, of where that hope lies, that in our saviour, who suffered for us, a saviour who endured, so much for us, we have the hope, the sure hope, that despite the power, of the evil one, we just touched on briefly tonight, that his power, doesn't last forever, his power comes to an end, and much like his fall, from glory, down to the earth, his fall at the end, will be much greater, turn to dust, turn to ashes, and shall be no more, forever,

Lord blesses, a few, thoughts to us, Murdo, if you'd like a word of prayer please, thank you,