

## October 12

**Scriptures:** Read Ezekiel 25, 26 & 27

**Key Verse:** “Son of man, set your face...and prophesy against them.” (Ezekiel 25:2)

### Overview

Chapter 25 begins another division of Ezekiel’s prophecies which are directed against the heathen nations and enemy neighbours of Judah (chs. 25-32). In other prophecies as well, we find judgments against the nations following the judgment against the people of God (cf. Isa. 13-33; Jer. 46-51). Although the wrath of God fell upon His own people first, the others were not to be excluded from judgment. Like Judah, the cup of their iniquity was full, so they too were to be punished by God. Here we find that these nations are judged because of their actions and attitudes toward God’s people, as well as their pride. In their judgment, they were to learn that the God of Israel is the Sovereign God of the whole world.

Chapter 25 contains prophecies against Ammon, Moab, Edom (Seir), and Philistia. The Ammonites inhabiting the transjordan had been persistent enemies of Israel throughout their history. They are specifically rebuked for rejoicing over Jerusalem’s fall and for taunting and mocking the people of Judah. It appears they were not only jealous of Israel but held the worship of God in contempt (25:3; cf. Ps. 83:1-8). They tried to capitalize on Judah’s fall by capturing the weak remnant in the land (cf. Jer. 41:10). The Moabites and Edomites are accused of demeaning the children of Israel, saying they were like all the other nations, having nothing unique about them; this, in effect, was a denial that they were the people God had chosen, to whom He had manifested Himself. The Edomites are specifically condemned for their vengeance and hostility toward God’s people, for they had helped Nebuchadnezzar crush Israel (35:5). Finally, it is prophesied that the Lord’s vengeance would come against the hateful Philistines (southern coast of Canaan) to pay them back for their many years of violence against God’s people.

In the same year that Jerusalem fell, the Lord gave Ezekiel an extended prophecy concerning Tyre, predicting its overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar and its permanent desolation, which at the time of this prophecy must have seemed impossible (chapters 26 to 28). Tyre was an independent city state — a very strong and wealthy Phoenecian seaport and commercial center on Israel’s northwest coast. The city was world famous in the shipping industry and her ships were her pride and joy. Their downfall was materialism, and pride, as we see in chapter 28.

Tyre had business relationships with Judah and Israel since the time of King David (27:17, which no doubt contributed to Judah’s deterioration and encouraged her own materialism). This prosperous city had sought to form a coalition with Zedekiah against the threat of the Babylonians (Jer. 27:3), yet the people of Tyre rejoiced at Jerusalem’s fall. The reason for such rejoicing was that now the caravans from Tyre could pass through Judah and Jerusalem without paying a toll along the major trade route, thus increasing their material prosperity (26:3). They showed no compassion and exhibited much greed, selfishness, and apathy; this had to be punished. When God purposes something, it will surely come to pass. Tyre’s earthly wisdom, power, wealth, and idols could not save her. The Lord, however, does not take pleasure in bringing destruction. His sorrow at bringing about Tyre’s ruin is indicated in His asking Ezekiel to “take up a lamentation for Tyre” (27:2). After Alexander the Great

completely destroyed Tyre, it never again grew to become a large city. For centuries it remained a small fishing village, and upon the rocky old site of the once-fabulous city, simple fishermen spread their nets, in fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy (26:4-5, 14, 21; 27:36).

Like those of Tyre, all those who make money their god will "descend into the Pit" (26:20), and once the Lord has completely purged the earth of all the materialistic and hedonistic people, He will "establish glory in the land of the living" (26:20b).

### **Prayer**

Lord, help us not to let anything stand in the way of our treasured relationship with You — not money, possessions, desires, nor anything that will hinder our Christian walk.