

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

EZEKIEL 24-26

In Baseball, when a batter is slow to get out of the way of a pitch - and gets hit, so he can get on base...

Or when a catcher blocks the plate to make an out, knowing he'll get bowled over by the baserunner...

Or when a fielder bangs into the fence to catch a fly ball... we'll say, *"He's taking one for the team!"*

We admire a player who is willing to risk injury and who will endure a little pain for the good of the team.

And here in Ezekiel 24, this is what the prophet does for God's people... **He takes one for the team!**

He exposes himself to severe, tremendous, personal loss in order to teach the Jews in exile a lesson.

Chapter 24, **"Again, in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, write down the name of the day, this very day - the king of Babylon started his siege against Jerusalem this very day..."**

Realize Ezekiel lived long before television, and satellites, and internet. In his day, news traveled by messenger... Ezekiel was sitting in Babylon, some 900 miles away from the events transpiring in Jerusalem. News would not arrive by messenger for three weeks.

Yet here Ezekiel is being supernaturally shown by God's Spirit, events that are happening in Jerusalem.

Recall Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, was going for the knock-out punch. After two prior invasions he had the holy city on the ropes. *Three strikes and you're out!* He's launching a third and final invasion.

Chapter 24 begins with a date! It was a red-letter date in the history of Jerusalem. Ezekiel gives us the exact date that Nebuchadnezzar began his final siege.

On our calendar, the siege began on January 15, 588 BC. The Babylonian army breached the walls and entered the city, 18 months later, on July 18, 586 BC.

This news was conclusive proof that the false prophets were wrong. They'd been telling the people, all was okay, God would deliver Jerusalem. But in the end it was the warnings of inevitable judgment trumpeted by Jeremiah and Ezekiel that proved true.

Verse 3, **“And utter a parable to the rebellious house...”** Again, God assigns Ezekiel another parable. He's a divine actor - performing multiple spiritual skits.

“And say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: “Put on a pot, set it on, and also pour water into it. Gather pieces of meat in it, every good piece, the thigh and the shoulder. Fill it with choice cuts; take the choice of the flock. Also pile fuel bones under it, make it boil well, and let the cuts simmer in it.” Here, Ezekiel is literally cooking up a sermon. I've eaten stew that stirred up my stomach. Here's a stew designed to stir up hearts.

“Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Woe to the bloody city (that is, Jerusalem), to the pot whose scum is in it, and whose scum is not gone from it! Bring it out piece by piece, on which

no lot has fallen.” When Ezekiel cooked meats in his pot, the oils, and fat, and blood rose to the surface. This residue was the **“scum.”**

And **“scum”** is a symbol for sin. Ezekiel is illustrating the fact that rebellious Jerusalem is brewing with sin.

“For her blood is in her midst; she set it on top of a rock; she did not pour it on the ground, to cover it with dust. That it may raise up fury and take vengeance, I have set her blood on top of a rock, that it may not be covered.” Here a lesson on Hebrew custom is helpful.

When Cain slew Able, God asked him in Genesis 4:10, **“What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood cries out to Me from the ground.”** When innocent blood gets spilled, metaphorically speaking it cries out to God for justice - for Him to take vengeance.

Leviticus 17:13 takes it one step further. When you hunt and kill an animal, you’re to pour it’s blood out on the ground, but then cover the blood with dust. This silences the metaphorical cry. The idea being that no vengeance is required. It was a legitimate killing.

Here the blood is still in the pot, vengeance has not been taken. But God will set it on top of a rock, where all can see that the judgment He is about to bring on Jerusalem is warranted. it’s just, it’s right, it’s fair...

Verse 9, **“Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Woe to the bloody city! I too will make the pyre great.”** A pyre was an ancient form of cremation. A combustible heap of wood and

other flammables were gathered, and the corpse was laid on top, then the heap was set on fire.

This is what God was going to do Ezekiel's pot of stew, He was stoking the fire hotter and hotter. And this was all symbolic of God's judgment on Jerusalem.

God was hosting a barbecue for the people of the city - the only problem is that they were the brisket!

He continues in verse 10, "Heap on the wood, kindle the fire; cook the meat well, mix in the spices, and let the cuts be burned up. Then set the pot empty on the coals, that it may become hot and its bronze may burn, that its filthiness may be melted in it, that its scum may be consumed. She has grown weary with lies, and her great scum has not gone from her. Let her scum be in the fire! In your filthiness is lewdness." Lest you think God's judgment is harsh, *remember her "lewdness!"*

Jerusalem forsook God for idols, then ignored His Law and participated in the sexual perversity of her pagan neighbors. The Jews definitely acted *scummy*.

"Because I have cleansed you, and you were not cleansed, you will not be cleansed of your filthiness anymore, till I have caused My fury to rest upon you."

God tried to cleanse Jerusalem, but like a child that fights and refuses to take a bath, the city didn't want to be cleansed. The Jews fought God. Now it's past time for His cleansing. It's time to unleash God's fury.

The Hebrew word "*fury*" means "*heat*." God is patient and long-suffering, but there comes a time when His anger over

man's rebellion reaches a boiling point, and it has to be poured out. Jerusalem's time had come...

"I, the Lord, have spoken it; it shall come to pass, and I will do it; I will not hold back, nor will I spare, nor will I relent; according to your ways and according to your deeds they will judge you," says the Lord God."

Verse 15, "Also the word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, behold, I take away from you the desire of your eyes with one stroke..." Here is where the prophet Ezekiel truly takes one for the team!

Previously, we referred to Ezekiel as "the stuntman of the Bible." He was always acting out living parables.

And God had assigned to Ezekiel some strange antics... *he lied on his side for 430 days... took toy soldiers and played with them in the streets... limited his diet to wartime rations... shaved his head and beard...* but this is by far the toughest of his tasks!

God refers to "*the desire of your eyes*" - that's Mrs. Ezekiel, his wife! And God says He's going to take her away "*with one stroke.*" The implication is that Ezekiel's otherwise healthy wife is going to suddenly die.

God is about to watch his wife, Judah, die. And as a sign to Jerusalem, Ezekiel's wife dies the very day the siege begins. Two deaths occur on the same day!

What a sermon illustration! Ezekiel is to put God's purposes before his spouse. *Would we do the same?*

What if God purposed for your spouse to die?

This is where being a prophet of God is not exactly profitable. It's downright painful. It's easy to serve God when doing so benefits us, but what if we're called on to make a sacrifice. Would we be willing to put our allegiance to God ahead of our family affections? What a tough situation for Ezekiel and his wife to endure.

In Luke 9 Jesus speaks of a man who approaches Him and asks to be His disciple. He says, "Lord, I will follow you, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house." But Jesus said to him, 'no one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." To be a disciple of Jesus loyalty to God has to supersede family sentimentality.

It reminds me of George Keller in Washington state.

An arsonist in the area had done millions of dollars in damage. When the police released a profile of the serial arsonist, George noticed it described his son. He reported his suspicions to the police, and worked with authorities to eventually convict his own son, Paul.

At the trial, George was choking back tears, when he told a reporter, "He's our son and we will love, support, and pray for him. We will not desert him. (But) you've got to do what's right, and sometimes, as Christians, what's right isn't necessarily comfortable." Most of the time Christian discipleship and family devotion run hand in hand, but there're moments when we have to choose. Ezekiel loved his wife, but he loved God more.

And as if this couldn't get any harder, it does... "Yet you shall neither mourn nor weep, nor shall your tears run down. Sigh in silence, make no mourning for the dead; bind your turban on your head, and put your sandals on your feet; do not cover your lips, and do not eat man's bread of sorrow." So I spoke to the people in the morning, and at evening my wife died; and the next morning I did as I was commanded." Ezekiel's wife dies unexpectedly, but he's told not to mourn publicly.

He can "*sigh in silence*" - cry and mourn, but not in front of people. Public rituals that were shows of bereavement were forbidden. God tells him not to uncover his head, or take off his sandals, or eat the food associated with funerals. The modern equivalent of this is not to have a wake, or a memorial service - go about your normal business as if nothing happened.

This is tough, and it resembles what God has asked of us. We're ambassadors of Christ. That means our job is to represent God and His feelings, not our own.

And at times this involves suppressing our feelings.

With some people I'd like to lash out at them, and give them a piece of my mind. But God is patient and loving towards them. I need to shut-up... At other times I'd like to celebrate, but if God isn't pleased over what's happening, it's wrong for me to party with the culprits...

Often as God's representatives we have to swallow our emotions, and exhibit how God feels, not how we feel. As Ezekiel said, "*I did as I was commanded.*"

Remember Ezekiel was a contemporary of Jeremiah, and Jeremiah was known as “the weeping prophet.”

When Jeremiah was told of the destruction of the city he cried and wept. But God tells Ezekiel not to cry.

Jerusalem is receiving her just reward. God doesn't want anyone to assume His judgment isn't righteous.

Amazing, it took the approach of both prophets to reveal the heart of God. The Lord was just and right in all his judgments, as Ezekiel showed. But as Jeremiah exhibited He was also broken-hearted over their sin.

Verse 19, “And the people said to me, “Will you not tell us what these things signify to us, that you behave so?” Then I answered them, “The word of the Lord came to me, saying, ‘Speak to the house of Israel, “Thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, I will profane My sanctuary, your arrogant boast, the desire of your eyes, the delight of your soul; and your sons and daughters whom you left behind shall fall by the sword.’” To the nation the Temple had been “*the desire of their eyes.*”

The Jews loved God's Temple more than they loved God. They thought having the temple made them immune to His judgment. But like Ezekiel's wife - *their wife, their love, the Temple* - is going to be destroyed.

“And you shall do as I have done; you shall not cover your lips nor eat man's bread of sorrow. Your turbans shall be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; you shall neither mourn nor weep, but you shall pine away in your iniquities and mourn with one another.”

When Jerusalem dies and the Temple is destroyed there'll be no public mourning by the Jews. They won't have the opportunity. They'll be taken into bondage.

Verse 24, "Thus Ezekiel is a sign to you; according to all that he has done you shall do; and when this comes, you shall know that I am the Lord God."

God says to His people, "*Ezekiel is a sign to you...*"

This was the theme of Ezekiel's life and ministry. He was constantly acting out skits that were God's signs.

'And you, son of man - will it not be in the day when I take from them their stronghold, their joy and their glory, the desire of their eyes, and that on which they set their minds, their sons and their daughters: that on that day one who escapes will come to you to let you hear it with your ears? On that day your mouth will be opened to him who has escaped; you shall speak and no longer be mute. Thus you will be a sign to them, and they shall know that I am the Lord.'

God tells Ezekiel, that on the day Jerusalem falls, he'll "*speak and no longer be mute.*" The implication is that he had been silent until then. He was not to speak beginning this day - the first day of the siege - January 15, 588 BC. He remained mute until news arrived in Babylon that the siege had ended. It was over on July 18, 586, but according to Ezekiel 33:21 the prophet didn't get the message until five months later.

That means Ezekiel was mute for 23 months.

Again this was a sign to God's people. Once the siege started God had nothing left to say to the Jews. God *and* Ezekiel were silent... And this too is the job of an ambassador

for Christ. We speak when God speaks, but we remain silent when God is silent. *And sometimes our silence speaks louder than our words!*

When God does open Ezekiel's mouth it marks a transition in his ministry. Judgment is over, and Ezekiel will begin to focus on Judah's glorious restoration.

But Judah isn't the only nation God will judge. In Chapters 25-32 God calls on Ezekiel to utter judgments against the nations surrounding Judah.

Seven nations are mentioned - all Judah's fierce rivals: Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistine, Tyre, Sidon, and Egypt. And notice, the basis on how each of these nations is judged... it's by how they treated the Jews.

This is how Jesus said the nations would be judged in the last days. In Matthew 25:31, "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren (and who are Jesus' brothers, but the Jews), you did it to Me."

This also is in sync with Genesis 12:3 when God promised Abraham and his heirs... "I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you."

History has confirmed this prophecy. Bless the Jews and you'll be blessed... In the wreckage of nations you find people who harbored hatred in their hearts for the Jews. While prosperous nations have been good to the Jewish people... *The judgments begin in Chapter 25...*

"The word of the Lord came to me, saying, "Son of man, set your face against the Ammonites, and prophesy against

them.” Ammon was the offspring of the incest between Lot and his youngest daughter.

The Ammonites grew jealous of their Jewish cousins

These were the people east of the Jordan River. Today the capitol of Jordan is “Amman” from “Ammon.”

Verse 3, “Say to the Ammonites, ‘Hear the word of the Lord God! Thus says the Lord God: “Because you said, ‘Aha!’ against My sanctuary when it was profaned, and against the land of Israel when it was desolate, and against the house of Judah when they went into captivity, indeed, therefore, I will deliver you as a possession to the men of the East, and they shall set their encampments among you and make their dwellings among you; they shall eat your fruit, and they shall drink your milk. And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels and Ammon a resting place for flocks.

Then you shall know that I am the Lord.” ’For thus says the Lord God: “Because you clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced in heart with all your disdain for the land of Israel, indeed, therefore, I will stretch out My hand against you, and give you as plunder to the nations; I will cut you off from the peoples, and I will cause you to perish from the countries; I will destroy you, and you shall know that I am the Lord.” Because Ammon took pleasure in God's judgment against Judah and in the destruction of the Temple - as Ezekiel put it, “*you clapped your hands, stamped their feet, and rejoiced heart*” - Babylon will turn on them as well. Ammon will also be destroyed.

Recall in Chapter 21 Ezekiel saw Nebuchadnezzar at a fork in the road trying to decide whether he should march to

Jerusalem or Rabbah of the Ammonites. He chose Jerusalem, but Rabbah and Ammon are next.

“Thus says the Lord God: “Because Moab and Seir say, ‘Look! The house of Judah is like all the nations...’

Moab was also a cousin of Judah. Moab was the offspring of Lot's incest with his oldest daughter. The Moabite nation settled northeast of the Dead Sea.

And they too were jealous of their Jewish cousins.

Notice they say Judah is just a common nation, like other nations. They denied the Hebrew nation's unique place in God's plans. *And don't you make this mistake!*

God doesn't expect us to give Israel our unequivocal support on every policy decision or political maneuver.

It would be wrong for us to excuse away Israel's crimes or ignore her injustices... But God does want us to recognize that the Jewish people are dear to His heart, and their nation holds a special place in God's plans for His future kingdom. *He's chosen the Jews.*

Verse 9, “Therefore, behold, I will clear the territory of Moab of cities, of the cities on its frontier, the glory of the country, Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and Kirjathaim. To the men of the East I will give it as a possession, together with the Ammonites, that the Ammonites may not be remembered among the nations.” Moab accused Judah of being like all other nations. God will treat the Moabites exactly that way.

Together with the Ammonites, Moab won't be remembered! They'll disappear as a people... *And how many Moabites or Ammonites do you know today?*

“And I will execute judgments upon Moab, and they shall know that I am the Lord.” Moab too will be judged.

“Thus says the Lord God: “Because of what Edom did against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and has greatly offended by avenging itself on them...”

The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob. They occupied the territory southeast of the Dead Sea, which includes the rock city of Petra.

“Therefore thus says the Lord God: “I will also stretch out My hand against Edom, cut off man and beast from it, and make it desolate from Teman; Dedan shall fall by the sword.” This is an amazing prophecy, given that Edom and its capitol of Petra, were a very prosperous and well fortified nation. Yet God made her desolate!

“I will lay My vengeance on Edom by the hand of My people Israel, that they may do in Edom according to My anger and according to My fury; and they shall know My vengeance,” says the Lord God.”

Ezekiel says Israel itself will bring God's judgment on Edom. You can read of this in the writings of Josephus, the Jewish historian - and in the Apocryphal book 1 Maccabees 5:3. Judah conquered Edom in 126 BC.

The Jews were led by a priest from the family of the Maccabees. His name was John Hyrcanus. For a short time

Israel was a strong, independent nation who ruled Edom.
Ezekiel foresaw it 450 years before the fact!

Verse 15, “Thus says the Lord God: “Because the Philistines dealt vengefully and took vengeance with a spiteful heart, to destroy because of the old hatred, therefore thus says the Lord God: “I will stretch out My hand against the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites and destroy the remnant of the seacoast.”

The Philistines were a people who lived southwest of Judah, in the coastal plain by the Mediterranean shore.

They harbored a “*old hatred*” against the Hebrews.

The Philistines figured prominently in the OT. They were Israel’s archenemies for 200 years - during the time of Samson, and Samuel, and Saul, and David.

It’s interesting, because the Philistines are called “*Cherethites*” in verse 16, some believe they migrated from the island of Crete in the northern Mediterranean.

According to Ezekiel, they still occupied Israel’s southern coast. And because they had a “*spiteful heart*” toward the Jews, God promises to judge them.

Verse 17, “I will execute great vengeance on them with furious rebukes; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I lay My vengeance upon them.” Notice how judgment on all the Gentile nations was designed to prove that Yahweh, the God of Israel, was truly God.

It reminds me of what Paul said of the Gentiles in Romans 1, “Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as

God... They suppressed the truth... They did not like to retain God in their knowledge.”

God proved Himself to the Gentiles over thousands of years, in countless ways, but they didn't *“retain God in their knowledge.”* *“They suppressed the truth.”*

And the Philistines were the quintessential example. They'd seen God work up-close and personal, from Samson to David, yet refused to worship Him. In Ezekiel's day, God brought judgment on the Philistines.

And in the last days God will pour out His wrath on the whole Gentile world... *“although they knew God... they did not like to retain God in their knowledge.”*

Jesus will return and remind them that He is God.

He'll judge this wicked world. Note here the plagues of the Great Tribulation are called, *“furious rebukes.”*

God will execute His vengeance, and all the world will know that Jesus is Lord and God. In that day, everyone will believe, but for many it'll be too late.

Chapter 26, *“And it came to pass in the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came to me, saying...”* This would be April 23, 587 BC - less than a year before Jerusalem's fall.

“Son of man, because Tyre has said against Jerusalem, ‘Aha! She is broken who was the gateway of the peoples; now she is turned over to me; I shall be filled; she is laid waste.’” The next several chapters are Ezekiel's prophecies against the ancient city of Tyre.

Tyre was the port of the Phoenicians. It was about 20 miles north of what is today Haifa, Israel. It's ruins are on the coast near the Lebanese - Israeli border.

The Phoenicians were the famous sailors of the ancient world. They were known for their expertise in naval enterprises. They were *the ancient mariners*.

These seafaring people, sailed and colonized cities all over the Mediterranean world. There is evidence the Phoenicians sailed even as far as the British Isles.

I once read a Biblical Archaeology Review article about an inscription found in Bat Creek, Tennessee. Some scholars believe it resembles an early Hebrew script. Others consider it proof that Phoenician or Hebrew voyagers even made it to the New World.

During the reigns of David, Solomon, and Phoenician King Hiram, Israel and Tyre were strong allies.

The Temple was constructed with Lebanese cedar trees - the logs were floated down the coast from Tyre.

Ultimately though, the two nations became economic rivals. They're relationship soured. With Judah under siege to the Babylonians, the merchants of Tyre looked at it as a business opportunity to expand their markets.

In verse 2 they say, "*I shall be filled.*" But God says, "*She is laid to waste.*" And just before Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, 586 BC - Nebuchadnezzar and his armies began to lay siege to the nearby city of Tyre.

Verse 3, “Therefore thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against you, as the sea causes its waves to come up.’” God had *tired* of Tyre! And He had many nations in the offing, prepare to come up against her.

Remember, the principle we’ve mentioned in regards to Bible prophecy. God employs over and over. It’s the principle of dual-fulfillment. **Often biblical prophecy has two fulfillments - an immediate and a long-term.**

Notice here, verse 3 doesn’t say “Babylon,” but “*many nations.*” There is a portion of this prophecy that was fulfilled during the Babylonian siege of 587.

But there’s another part of this prophecy that was fulfilled much later, by the famous Alexander the Great.

In fact, God’s prophecies concerning Tyre are some of the most provocative and fascinating in the Bible. And because they’ve already been fulfilled they provide us evidence for the Bible’s amazing historical accuracy.

Verse 4, “And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock.

It shall be a place for spreading nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,’ says the Lord God; ‘it shall become plunder for the nations. Also her daughter villages which are in the fields shall be slain by the sword. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.’

“For thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, I will bring against Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of

kings, with horses, with chariots, and with horsemen, and an army with many people.

He will slay with the sword your daughter villages in the fields; he will heap up a siege mound against you, build a wall against you, and raise a defense against you. He will direct his battering rams against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. Because of the abundance of his horses, their dust will cover you; your walls will shake at the noise of the horsemen, the wagons, and the chariots, when he enters your gates, as men enter a city that has been breached. With the hooves of his horses he will trample all your streets; he will slay your people by the sword, and your strong pillars will fall to the ground.”

General Nebuchadnezzar and his Babylonian army laid siege to the city of Tyre for fourteen long years.

Imagine your city at war - surrounded by an army of bloodthirsty cutthroats. Not for 14 weeks or 14 months. The siege on Tyre lasted 14 years! From 587-573 BC.

The Phoenicians were able to hold off the Babylonians because of their nautical capabilities. They could receive food and water supplies by sea.

Historians tell us that during the last month before the city of Tyre fell, the Phoenicians had loaded up their wealth onto their ships and had moved it to an island just off shore - about a half mile off the coast.

Nebuchadnezzar flattened mainland Tyre, but it was a hollow victory. He conquered an abandoned city. Tyre stayed as Nebuchadnezzar left it, for next 241 years.

But in 332 AD another young general - who at the time was just 19 years-old - launched an attack on Tyre. This was the Greek warrior, Alexander the Great.

In the beginning of this siege, Alexander lacked a navy, so he collected rubble and debris from the city Nebuchadnezzar had leveled, and built a causeway 200 feet wide - extending from the shore to the island.

Notice how Ezekiel foretells of Alexander's actions. Verse 4, *"I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock."* That was fulfilled, literally.

Alexander took seven months to finish his causeway.

In the meantime he defeated a few neighboring cities, the coastal towns - and confiscated their navies.

Nebuchadnezzar defeated the coastal city of Tyre, but Alexander conquered the island city of Tyre.

Verse 12, *"They will plunder your riches and pillage your merchandise; they will break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses; they will lay your stones, your timber, and your soil in the midst of the water."*

Nebuchadnezzar conquered Tyre, but he took no spoils or plunder. As far as an economic success was concerned his 14 years besieging the city was a waste.

Alexander on the other hand did plunder a prosperous city. The last half of verse 12 describes his battle strategy. He took debris from the mainland city and built a bridge to the island city. Despite constant attacks from the island, Alexander's men prevailed.

The spoils of Tyre helped Alexander finance future conquests, and enabled him to rule the world. His victory over Tyre catapulted him to his place in history.

Verse 13, “I will put an end to the sound of your songs, and the sound of your harps shall be heard no more. I will make you like the top of a rock; you shall be a place for spreading nets, and you shall never be rebuilt, for I the Lord have spoken,” says the Lord God.”

This is perhaps the most amazing part of Ezekiel’s prophecy - that Tyre would never be rebuilt. A city that was once so prosperous would never be re-inhabited.

Especially when you consider that the ancient site sits over a freshwater spring that pumps 10 million gallons of drinking water into the ocean daily. That’s a large enough water supply to support a modern city.

Despite Tyre’s 2700 year history and all her natural resources, the city was never rebuilt. It’s mind-blowing.

There is a modern city called Tyre. It’s a fishing village built a few miles down the coast from the ruins of the old city. And still to this day, fishermen there spread and dry their nets on the rocks of the old city.

This was predicted by Ezekiel in verse 14.

And all this was foretold by Ezekiel in 587 BC - exactly 255 years before Alexander was even born.

In his book, "[Science Speaks](#),” author Peter Stoner calculates the odds of all these prophecies concerning Tyre, coming true by mere chance, by freak accident...

Understand the odds of you dying in a fire are 1 in 40,000 - of being hit by a baseball at a major league game is 1 in 300,000 - of being struck by lightning is 1 in 2 million - of winning state lottery it's 1 in 4 million...

According to Stoner's book, the odds of Ezekiel's prophecy coming true by accident is 1 in 75 million.

And that's a big number...

Obviously, a prophetic fulfillment of such detail would require an intelligence outside of time - someone who knows the end from the beginning... And that's what all Bible prophecy is about! It's proof that the author of the Bible is that intelligence. Ezekiel 26 is tremendous evidence for the Bible's reliability and trustworthiness.

Verse 15, "Thus says the Lord God to Tyre: 'Will the coastlands not shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded cry, when slaughter is made in the midst of you?'" Tyre was one of the most prominent cities of its day. It's tentacles of influence reached around the globe. What a shock it was for the nations - to hear that Tyre had fallen. Her demise sent a powerful message.

"Then all the princes of the sea will come down from their thrones, lay aside their robes, and take off their embroidered garments; they will clothe themselves with trembling; they will sit on the ground, tremble every moment, and be astonished at you.

And they will take up a lamentation for you, and say to you: "How you have perished, O one inhabited by seafaring men, O renowned city, who was strong at sea, she and her inhabitants, who caused their terror to be on all her

inhabitants! Now the coastlands tremble on the day of your fall; yes, the coastlands by the sea are troubled at your departure.” “For thus says the Lord God: ‘When I make you a desolate city, like cities that are not inhabited, when I bring the deep upon you, and great waters cover you, then I will bring you down with those who descend into the Pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lowest part of the earth, in places desolate from antiquity, with those who go down to the Pit, so that you may never be inhabited; and I shall establish glory in the land of the living.’”

The Hebrew word translated “*Pit*” is “*Sheol*.” It was the Hebrew word for “*hell*.” The fall of Tyre will populate the halls of hell, and bring glory to God on Earth.

Verse 21, “I will make you a terror, and you shall be no more; though you are sought for, you will never be found again,’ says the Lord God.” For decades, modern archeologists looked for the ruins of a coastal city - but because they couldn't find such a site, they concluded that Tyre must've just been a mythical city.

That is, until archeologist, Flinders Petry, noticed lumber in the causeway leading from the mainland to the island. Petry realized that what he was looking at was man-made. The rubble of the coastal city everyone had been seeking, but couldn't find - was right before his eyes under the surface of the water.

As God had said in verse 19, “*When I bring the deep upon you, and great waters cover you.*” And the prophecies concerning Tyre get even more amazing in the chapters that come next... Ezekiel 27 and 28.