

INVERTED PARALLELISM OF EZEKIEL 28:11–19 (E)

A Condition before Expulsion (*inclusio*, 12b–13):

- Perfection/proportion
- Wisdom/beauty (perfect)
- In Eden, garden of God
- Covering is prepared
- Fiery precious stones
- Origin: "On the day you were created"

Inclusio

Emphasis on
Creation,
Perfection,
Innocence, and
Ministry in Heaven

B "The anointed cherub who covers" (14)

C "I establish you" (14)

D "On the holy (*qodesh*) mountain of God" (14)

E "In the midst of the stones of fire" (14)

F "Perfect [blameless] in your ways from the day you were created" (15a)

Point
of
Turning

F' "Till iniquity was found in you, . . . and you sinned (*chata*)" (15b, 16)

E' "From the midst of the stones of fire" (16)

D' "From the mountain of God, a "profane thing (*halal*)" (16)

C' "I will destroy you" (16)

B' "O covering cherub" (16)

A' Condition after Expulsion (*inclusio*, 17–19):

- Pride (heart lifted up)
- Beauty/wisdom (corrupted)
- Defiled [*halal* 'profaned'] sanctuaries
- Exposed as gazing stock
- Fire devours into ashes
- Destiny: "No more forever"

Inclusio

Emphasis on
Sins, Defilement,
Cast Out
of Heaven to Earth,
and Destruction

• from Richard M. Davidson, "The Chiastic Literary Structure of the Book of Ezekiel," pp. 71–93.
Reformatted, expanded, and annotated by Robert C. Lewis.

IMPORTANCE: This passage is foundational for the Angelic Conflict and Spiritual Warfare, just as the story of Adam and Eve is foundational for understanding sin, salvation, and life as it is today. **Note:** (1) All created things in this passage existed in heaven before the earth was created—seals, measurements, a garden, anointing oil, clothing, gems, gold, bezels, sockets, jobs, mountains, stones, fire, and holy places. (2) Heaven and everything in it was made before the creation of angels just as the earth and Garden of Eden were created before Adam and Eve. (3) A triune Spirit (Jn 4:24) has no need for a material universe; but creatures do. (4) A divine lawsuit is the center of Ezekiel: a Preamble ("Thus says the LORD God" 12), Historical Prologue summarizing all God has done for Satan (12b–15a), Indictments (15b–16b, 17a,b, 18a), Verdict and Sentence (16c,d, 17c, 18b, 19b), and Witnesses of the legal proceedings (17d, 18c, 19a). (5) This is the trial alluded to by Jesus: "the ruler of this world has been judged" (Jn 16:11). (6) A second, final trial follows at the end of the millennial Kingdom (1 Cor 6:3).

PARALLELISM NOTES: (1) Ezekiel 28:11–19 takes place in the original Garden of Eden in heaven, not in the recreated Garden of Eden on earth (Gen 2–3). Perhaps "the throne of God and of the Lamb" is in a third Garden of Eden (Rev 22:1–5) since no temple exists on the new earth (21:22). It appears that, in order to separate the holy from the profane, the tabernacle, three temples on earth, and the heavenly temple exist only while angels and men are free to sin. (2) 28:11–19 cannot refer to the human 'ruler of Tyre' (*nagid tsor* in 28:2) because this 'king of Tyre' (*melek tsor* in 28:12) was (1) in the Garden of Eden (28:13), (2) a cherub (28:14a), (3) on the holy mountain of God (28:14b), and (4) sinless from the day of his creation (28:15). "The best explanation is that Ezekiel was describing Satan who was the true 'king' of Tyre, the one motivating the human 'ruler' of Tyre" (Charles H. Dyer, *Bible Knowledge Commentary*). Placing this dirge at the center of the parallelism supports the view that the king of Tyre is Satan. Is the fall of a human king significant enough to be the center? Is not the original fall of Satan more important and worthy of emphasis? (3) 28:11–19 is the center of the inverted parallelism of the Book of Ezekiel. And this center, what Ezekiel considered most important, is also arranged in inverted parallelism (displayed above). Davidson makes this astute assessment: "Bertolucci rightly points out that 'The sin or rebellion of the Cherub is the climax of the passage' (1985: 230). Flowing from this climax is the divine judgment upon the fallen cherub: expulsion from the holy mountain of God, exposure, destruction by fire, and eternal annihilation (Ezk 28:16–19). By placing the judgment of the fallen cherub at the very apex of the whole book, Ezekiel appears to emphasize that the ultimate responsibility for earthly affairs is in the cosmic realm, and the angelic mentor(s) of earthly rebels will also ultimately be judged (p. 89)." I would like to add this surprising comparison: the center of the inverted parallelism of both Ezekiel and the Book of Revelation is the fall of Satan (Ezk 28:11–17; Rev 12:7–10)! Ezekiel describes his original or first fall from heaven to earth ("I threw you down to the earth" 28:17, HCSB) and Revelation his second and final fall from heaven to earth ("he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him" 12:9–12, NASB). Ezekiel emphasizes the beginning and John the end of Satan's career. (4) This lament song is chronological: it moves from Satan's creation, innocence, and sin in heaven (12b–16a) to his expulsion to earth (16b–19a), from his beauty, wisdom, and exquisite clothing before angels (12–13) to a figurative pile of ugly, worthless ashes before men (18b–19a). (5) Satan is humiliated before everyone (Ezk 28:17d, 18d, 19a) when bound in chains (Rev 20:1–2), made a public spectacle of in a triumphal procession (Col 2:15; cf. Eph 6:12), and cast into the abyss (Rev 20:3) at the beginning of the Kingdom. (6) Satan's ultimate destiny is, literally, 'and you will be no more present in heaven or on earth forever' (Ezk 28:19 RCL; cf. 27:36; Psa 37:10; Lam 5:7; and see DCH 1c). This is a reference to his spiritual death and eternal separation from God (cf. Mt 25:41; Rev 20:10, 14).

EXEGETICAL NOTES:

- *lamentation* (12a): the center of the inverted parallelism of the Book of Ezekiel is a prophetic funeral song or dirge that reveals Satan's sins, fall, and eventual spiritual death. Funeral songs may be sung *after* death (for Jonathan, 2 Sam 1:17–27) or sung prophetically as a warning *before* death (for Pharaoh, Ezk 32:1–8; for Egypt, 32:11–16).
- *king of Tyre* (12a): a reference to Satan. Ezekiel describes this king "in terms that could not apply to a mere man" (Charles H. Dyer, *Bible Knowledge Commentary*). See point 2 under Parallelism Notes.
- *seal of perfection* (12b): *lit.* 'you were the one sealing up a measurement' (RCL; cf. BDB). Perhaps he was the royal "seal keeper" (HALOT; cf. Hag 2:3). One of his jobs was to certify building and other specifications (cf. 2 Chr 24:13; Ezk 43:10).
- *wisdom and beauty* (12c): *lit.* 'full of wisdom and complete in beauty'—a very smart, beautiful creature.
- *in Eden, the garden of God* (13a): the original Garden of Eden in heaven, of which the earthly Garden of Eden is a copy.
- *covering* (13b): his clothing was studded with "every precious stone." These nine gems in heaven all predate the earth.
- *settings and sockets, was on you* (13d): jeweler's terms for gold bezels and sockets in which gems are set (Gesenius).
- *day you were created* (13e): Satan's gem studded clothes were made on the same day God created him.
- *anointed cherub who covers* (14a): God's plan for Satan's life was to shade/screen the bright, unapproachable glory of God.
- *holy mountain of God* (14c): God's throne was on a mountain in the heavenly Garden of Eden. Satan was highly privileged to serve God there. Holy (set apart for God's exclusive use) implies other mountains exist in heaven. Is heaven a planet?
- *stones of fire* (14d): perhaps impressive fire-pits or incense altars before God's throne (cf. Rev 8:3–5). Satan walked 'in the midst of them.' If incense altars, voluntary gift offerings may have originated in heaven soon after angels were created.
- *blameless* (15a): Satan's behavior was perfect or without fault (*tamim*) for an undisclosed period of time after his creation.
- *until injustice* (15b): the day his sin (violation of God's right to rule) was evident to all angels in heaven (cf. Isa 14:13–14).
- *abundance of your trade* (16a): his many sins of recruiting other angels to rebel and follow him (16, 18; cf. 28:5; Rev 12:4).
- *violence* (16a): recruiting led to the first occurrence of violence among angels (*lit.* 'they filled your midst with violence' RCL).
- *you sinned* (16b): pride, recruiting, rebellion, and violating God's sovereignty added up to many sins ("your iniquities" 18).
- *lit.* 'I profaned you from the mountain of God' (16c): rejected, loses his job of covering, and evicted (cf. Isa 47:6; Ezk 24:21).
- *destroyed* (16d): eviction mentioned again for emphasis. *Lit.* 'I caused you to vanish from the midst of the stones of fire' (cf. piel of 'abbed in Prov 29:3 and Jer 51:55). Satan disappears from his former places of service (cf. 'your holy places' in 18).
- *your heart was lifted up* (17a): his beauty caused his sin of pride. The five "I wills" reveal his thoughts (Isa 14:12–15).
- *you stifled your wisdom* (17b): piel of *shachat* is to 'stifle, repress' (DCH 6) wisdom or compassion (Am 1:11) and so 'make [them] ineffective' (cf. Prov 23:8 and HALOT). Wisdom may be applied, stifled, repressed, ignored, and made ineffective.
- *I cast you to the earth* (17c): 'erez is often translated "ground" (NASB) but "earth" is best here (HCSB). Cf. 18; Rev 12:9.
- *profaned your sanctuaries* (18a): reason ousted from the 'holy places' he formerly accessed (holy mountain, stones of fire).
- *fire has consumed you and turned you to ashes on the earth* (18c–d): as fire consumes a city, so God will 'cause fire to go out from' Satan; that is, his thoughts and words will go out, burn up, and totally destroy his reputation for wisdom among men.
- *eyes of all = gazing stock* (19a): Webster: "a person gazed at by many especially with curiosity or contempt" (cf. 17d, 18d).
- *you are terrors* (19b): *ballahot* refers to terrifying or dreadful events (BDB, DCH). Compare Ezk 26:21; 27:36. 'Terrors' is metonymy in which the effect (intensive plural means 'extreme terrors') is put for God's future actions that cause this effect—a reference to Satan's fear of approaching imprisonment in the Abyss (Rev 20:1–3, 7) and the Lake of Fire (20:10, 14).
- *no more forever* (19c): Satan will be separated from God forever in the Lake of Fire (Mt 25:41; Rev 20:10, 14). See point 6 of PARALLELISM NOTES. Satan wanted to leave God; Adam and Eve did not—they just wanted more knowledge (Gen 3:5–6).