

Part 3 – Divine Transgressions

Chapter 10 – Trouble in Paradise

¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” ² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. ⁸ And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰ And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.” ¹¹ He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?” ¹² The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.” ¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” **Genesis 3:1–13 (ESV)**

³ But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. **2 Corinthians 11:3 (ESV)**

⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. **Revelation 12:9 (ESV)**

¹ The word of the Lord came to me: ² “Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, Thus says the Lord God: “Because your heart is proud, and you have said, ‘I am a god, I sit in the seat of the gods, in the heart of the seas,’ yet you are but a man, and no god, though you make your heart like the heart of a god— ³ you are indeed wiser than Daniel; no secret is hidden from you; ⁴ by your wisdom and your understanding you have made wealth for yourself, and have gathered gold and silver into your treasuries; ⁵ by your great wisdom in your trade you have increased your wealth, and your heart has become proud in your wealth— ⁶ therefore thus says the Lord God: Because you make your heart like the heart of a god, ⁷ therefore, behold, I will bring foreigners upon you, the most ruthless of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of your

wisdom and defile your splendor. ⁸ They shall thrust you down into the pit, and you shall die the death of the slain in the heart of the seas. ⁹ Will you still say, 'I am a god,' in the presence of those who kill you, though you are but a man, and no god, in the hands of those who slay you? ¹⁰ You shall die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of foreigners; for I have spoken, declares the Lord God."

¹¹ Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me: ¹² "Son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord God: "You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. ¹⁴ 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. ¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you. ¹⁶ In 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. ¹⁷ Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I exposed you before kings, to feast their eyes on you. ¹⁸ By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade you profaned your sanctuaries; so I brought fire out from your midst; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. ¹⁹ All who know you among the peoples are appalled at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever." **Ezekiel 28:1–19 (ESV)**

Though the case for this reading cannot be made conclusively, its message would be to read Ezekiel 28:11–19 in light of Genesis 3 and its serpent. It produces a play on words that takes us directly back to the scene of the fall in Eden. Since we know that we are not dealing with a mere animal in Genesis 3, but rather a divine being that is cast as creaturely, the description that this figure in the garden was an "anointed guardian cherub" makes sense. A cherub was a *divine* throne guardian in the ancient Near Eastern worldview. Ancient Near Eastern art and engravings have many examples of such throne guardians as animals, including serpents. There is little coherence to viewing the guardian cherub in Ezekiel 28 as the human Adam.

Let's summarize where this leaves us. Ezekiel 28 browbeats the prince of Tyre using an ancient tale of divine arrogance in Eden, where a member of Yahweh's council thought himself on par with the Most High. This divine throne guardian was expelled from Eden to the "ground" or underworld.

These elements show up in another passage: Isaiah 14. We'll consider what Isaiah says next and then take a fresh look at what went on in Eden.²⁹

²⁹ Heiser, M. S. (2015). The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible (First Edition, pp. 81–82). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

³ When the Lord has given you rest from your pain and turmoil and the hard service with which you were made to serve, ⁴ you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon: “How the oppressor has ceased, the insolent fury ceased! ⁵ The Lord has broken the staff of the wicked, the scepter of rulers, ⁶ that struck the peoples in wrath with unceasing blows, that ruled the nations in anger with unrelenting persecution. ⁷ The whole earth is at rest and quiet; they break forth into singing. ⁸ The cypresses rejoice at you, the cedars of Lebanon, saying, ‘Since you were laid low, no woodcutter comes up against us.’ ⁹ Sheol beneath is stirred up to meet you when you come; it rouses the shades to greet you, all who were leaders of the earth; it raises from their thrones all who were kings of the nations. ¹⁰ All of them will answer and say to you: ‘You too have become as weak as we! You have become like us!’ ¹¹ Your pomp is brought down to Sheol, the sound of your harps; maggots are laid as a bed beneath you, and worms are your covers. ¹² “How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low! ¹³ You said in your heart, ‘I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north; ¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’ ¹⁵ But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit. ¹⁶ Those who see you will stare at you and ponder over you: ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms, ¹⁷ who made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, who did not let his prisoners go home?’ ¹⁸ All the kings of the nations lie in glory, each in his own tomb; ¹⁹ but you are cast out, away from your grave, like a loathed branch, clothed with the slain, those pierced by the sword, who go down to the stones of the pit, like a dead body trampled underfoot. ²⁰ You will not be joined with them in burial, because you have destroyed your land, you have slain your people. “May the offspring of evildoers nevermore be named! ²¹ Prepare slaughter for his sons because of the guilt of their fathers, lest they rise and possess the earth, and fill the face of the world with cities.” **Isaiah 14:3–21 (ESV)**