

Opening

God's lordship in the years between Malachi and John the Baptist steers empires and prepares the world for Jesus.

Ezekiel 26-28; Joshua 19:29; Jeremiah 25; 29; Daniel 2; 7; 8; 10-12; Gal 4:4

Introduction: Why the Prophets Still Matter

Many believe the prophetic books of our Bible are codebooks for predicting the events of the twenty-first century. But what these books are really for is to keep us from losing sight of God's lordship over the past, present, and future.

And if we want to see an example of this, let's look at Daniel in the Old Testament. He illustrates to us trust in God's providence by:

- maintaining faith and obedience in exile,
- refused to compromise his beliefs for political gain,
- prayed for deliverance even when faced with death.

But mainly he demonstrates his COURAGE and TRUST by choosing to honor God above all; even when forced into a lion's den for his devotion. His unwavering commitment shows that God's plans can be greater than human circumstances.

God rules over beasts and kings (Daniel 7 & 9). Daniel knew that, and God blessed him by providing wisdom, understanding, protection, and granting him favor and influence with kings.

The prophets teach us to be concerned, in prayer, and active for the kingdom; to be anchored in God's sovereignty rather than cultural panic.

Main Point

Today we stand with Daniel, Isaiah, and Ezekiel at the edge of the sea, looking at Tyre, the proud island city that thought itself untouchable. God said it would become "a bare rock... a place for spreading nets," and history shows how He used anyone, even pagan rulers, to advance His purposes.¹

Tyre in Scripture: Pride, Profit, and a Prophetic Warning

Tyre sits on the biblical map as a fortified northern boundary on the coast (Josh 19:29). Its harbors and commerce made it a maritime giant. Ezekiel sketches Tyre's greatness and its fall in Ezekiel 27 and Ezekiel 26. And he declares that its walls will be torn down and its stones, timber, and debris cast into the sea, leaving a bare rock where fishing nets are spread.

¹ Ezek. 26:12-14 NASB, 1995 (La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation).

The Book of Ezekiel, chapter 28, verse 3, God exposes the king's arrogance:

“The word of the Lord came to me:

“Son of man, say to the ruler of Tyre, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says:

In the pride of your heart, you say, I am a god; I sit on the throne of a god 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—you are indeed wiser than Daniel; no secret is hidden from you; by your wisdom and your understanding you have made wealth for yourself, and have gathered gold and silver into your treasuries; by your great wisdom in your trade you have increased your wealth, and your heart has become proud in your wealth.

Therefore, this is what the Sovereign Lord says:

‘Because you think you are wise, as wise as a god, I am going to bring foreigners against you, the most ruthless of nations; They will draw their swords against your beauty and wisdom and pierce your shining splendor. They will bring you down to the pit, and you will die a violent death in the heart of the seas. Will you then say, “I am a god,” in the presence of those who kill you? You will be but a mortal, not a god, in the hands of those who slay you. You will die the death of the uncircumcised at the hands of foreigners.

I have spoken, declares the Sovereign Lord.”

Behind the poetry of these words stands the moral charge: Tyre celebrated Jerusalem's fall and trafficked its people, selling them into slavery. God will not let abusive power stand indefinitely.... Judgment begins, but it will unfold in stages, through many nations (Ezek 26:3).²

Nebuchadnezzar's Long Siege,

History records that Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for thirteen years from 586 to 573 BC. The Babylonian campaign devastated the mainland, but the offshore island citadel endured, leaving Ezekiel's oracle to continue unfolding across time.³ Their siege yielded no significant spoils or compensation for their efforts. This event, described in the Book of Ezekiel, is famous for its outcome, which led the Babylonians to the riches of Egypt instead.

Think about this: Sometimes God's justice is not immediate, but it is inevitable. Delay is not denial.⁴

² Josh. 19:29; Ezek. 26:12-14, 27; Ezek. 28:2-3.

³ Flavius Josephus, Against Apion 1.156-159, Loeb Classical Library; for the thirteen-year siege of Tyre.

⁴ Ezek. 29:17-20

Alexander's Seven-Month Siege (332 BCE), Engineering as Instrument

Two centuries later, Alexander the Great approached Tyre. He was refused entry, so he turned the rubble from the mainland into a causeway (mole), reaching out to the island. He deployed towering siege engines, coordinated allied fleets, breached the sea-walls, and took the city after a siege of roughly seven months. And he was not happy... 7 months for a person with OCD and ADD was forever... To this day, the causeway (isthmus) remains; what was once an island, almost a kilometer from the shore, now sits as a peninsula, a visual echo of Ezekiel's imagery about stones and timber cast into the sea and a rock left for nets.

Those Daniel, Isaiah, and Ezekiel were not playing with metaphors; God was making history.⁵

Daniel's Frame: Beasts, Metals, and the March of Empires

Let's look at Ezekiel's oracles against Tyre alongside Daniel's visions of empires: In Daniel Chapter 2, he interprets Nebuchadnezzar's dream, describing the giant statue composed of different metals—gold, silver, bronze, and iron mixed with clay, which represents successive kingdoms. And in Daniel 7 (the beasts) he has visions that trace the sequence of the successive kingdoms: Babylon → Medo-Persia → Greece → Rome → the kingdom of God. Daniel 8 names the middle sequence in animal form: ram = Medo-Persia; goat = Greece. The “conspicuous horn” (first king) rises swiftly, then breaks, and the kingdom divides, an apt portrait of Alexander and the Diadochi that followed. Daniel 10-12 returns to the same flow with more granular detail, reminding us that the turmoil of nations is not outside God's governance.

Alexander wept... There were no more empires to defeat.

In Genesis 1-2 and Psalm 8, humans are set to rule as God's image, over the beasts. When kingdoms make themselves gods, they become beastly; God brings them low. Daniel insists: God provides, God corrects and God saves.⁹

Providence & Preparation: Koine and the LXX

Through Alexander, Hellenism spread as the common tongue; Koine Greek, the common language (*lingua franca*) of the eastern Mediterranean from the 4th century BC onward. As Greek became the street language, Jewish scholars began translating Scripture into Greek at the

⁵ Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander*, trans. E. Iliff Robson, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1929), bk. 2; see also Jona Lendering, “The Siege of Tyre (332 BCE),” *Livius.org*, accessed September 13, 2025. Jona Lendering, “Tyre, Alexander's Mole (photos),” *Livius.org*, accessed September 13, 2025

Library of Alexandria, the Septuagint (LXX).⁶ So, when, as Paul says, the “fullness of the time” came (Gal 4:4), the message of Jesus could move swiftly along existing roads and in a shared language. God readied the roads; Alexander supplied a tongue those roads could carry.⁷

Conclusion: From Sea Walls to Swinging Doors

God turned an island's pride into a place for drying nets and turned a conqueror's genius into a stage for the gospel.

That same God, our Lord, is shaping a church whose distinctiveness (“holiness”) shows up as Christlike, persuasive presence—not as controlling power. In other words, we demonstrate our values through the weight of love, truth, and integrity rather than through domination.

Next week, we'll leave the seacoast for the Shephelah, the gateway between hill and coast, where battles and blessings pass along the valleys.

Practice:

- Where has God placed you between worlds (work/home, generations, church/community)?
- Which “valley/road” (relationship, team, classroom, neighborhood) do you quietly stabilize?
- This week's non-dominating influence: one conversation, one act of service, one healthy boundary.

Prayer:

“Lord, place us where you need us. Make us steady, not stubborn; open, not overrun.”

⁶ The Septuagint is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) translated between 280 and 250 BCE. It is called the translation of the seventy because tradition states that the Septuagint was translated by seventy and is often abbreviated as LXX (the Roman numeral for seventy) in honor of this tradition. <https://www.septuagint.bible/>

⁷ “Koine (Greek language),” Encyclopaedia Britannica, accessed September 13, 2025.. “Septuagint,” Encyclopaedia Britannica; and “Biblical Literature, Early Versions,” Encyclopaedia Britannica, accessed September 13, 2025.

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Bulletin Insert , Week Two (One Page)

Week Two , Tyre, Alexander, and God's Silent Setup

Big Idea: God's lordship steers empires. Alexander took Tyre; God prepared the world for Jesus.

Texts: Ezekiel 26-28; Joshua 19:29; Jeremiah 25; 29; Daniel 2; 7; 8; 10-12 (NASB)

Tyre sat offshore like a fortress, proud and prosperous. Ezekiel foretold its downfall: walls torn down, stones and timbers thrown into the sea, left like a bare rock for fishermen's nets (Ezek 26). Nebuchadnezzar besieged Tyre for years, yet gained little (Ezek 29:17-20). In 332 BCE, Alexander built a causeway from mainland rubble and took the city. God was not silent; he was preparing the stage. Through the rise of Greece came Koine Greek and, with the Septuagint, Scripture in the street language, so that when the time was full (Gal 4:4), the gospel could run along roads and sea-lanes.

- Where do you stand between communities (work/home, generations, church/neighborhood)?
- What bridge (not battering ram) could you build this week?

Prayer: Lord, make us steady at the hinge, open, not overrun.