

**Sunday August 22, 2021**

## **Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church**

### **Welcome & Prayer**

The Australian cricket captain of over a century ago, Warwick Armstrong was known as the big ship. He was big in stature, tall, and well built and big in personality as well. He was a big figure, hence the moniker big ship. But there have been plenty of other big ships, Donald Trump, Michael Hutchence, Dawn Fraser, Clive Palmer. Big personalities, strong characters, power in what they do yet eventually they all come crashing down to earth.

And in the days of Ezekiel Tyre was a big ship. They were a country rich in commerce and powerful in influence. And yet the Lord says to Ezekiel, I will shipwreck the big ship, I will bring Tyre to their knees and show everyone who is King, Boss, Lord of all.

King David wrote in Psalm 145 about the Lord *"I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name for ever and ever. <sup>2</sup> Every day I will praise you and extol your name for ever and ever. <sup>3</sup> Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. <sup>4</sup> One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. <sup>5</sup> They speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty— and I will meditate on your wonderful works. <sup>6</sup> They tell of the power of your awesome works & I will proclaim your great deeds. <sup>7</sup> They celebrate your abundant goodness and joyfully sing of your righteousness."*

Let us come worship the Lord this morning, let us pray...

Dear Lord and Father of mankind forgive our foolish ways. For we have forgotten who is the boss. We have neglected to worship the one who rules the world and instead we have exalted ourselves, we have put others before you & we have failed to worship in thought word and deed this last week. Please forgive us. And place within us your Holy Spirit so that we want to put you in the pre-eminent spot in our lives. We want to worship you, serve you, love you and follow you in all that we do and say. Draw us closer to you this day through word and song. Help us to be committed more and more to your ways and to your thoughts and to your will. And then send us out to people the people of God in your place and your time so that all may see that you are our King and that you are worthy of all praise for ever and ever. Amen.

### **Song – Behold our God** ["Behold Our God" lyric video - Sovereign Grace Music - YouTube](#)

1. Who has held the oceans in his hands?  
Who has numbered every grain of sand?  
Kings and nations tremble at his voice  
All creation rises to rejoice

2. Who has given counsel to the Lord?  
Who can question any of his words?  
Who can teach, the one who knows all things?  
Who can fathom all his wondrous deeds?  
Chorus

Chorus: *Behold our God, seated on his throne  
Come, let us adore him  
Behold our king, nothing can compare  
Come, let us adore him*

3. Who has felt the nails upon his hands?  
Bearing all the guilt of sinful man  
God eternal, humbled to the grave  
Jesus, Saviour, risen now to reign  
Chorus

You will reign forever (let Your glory fill the Earth) x8  
Chorus

## Bible Reading – Ezekiel 27:1-24 (NIV)

*"The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup> "Son of man, take up a lament concerning Tyre. <sup>3</sup> Say to Tyre, situated at the gateway to the sea, merchant of peoples on many coasts, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "You say, Tyre, 'I am perfect in beauty.'" <sup>4</sup> Your domain was on the high seas; your builders brought your beauty to perfection. <sup>5</sup> They made all your timbers of juniper from Senir; they took a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you. <sup>6</sup> Of oaks from Bashan they made your oars; of cypress wood from the coasts of Cyprus they made your deck, adorned with ivory. <sup>7</sup> Fine embroidered linen from Egypt was your sail and served as your banner; your awnings were of blue and purple from the coasts of Elishah. <sup>8</sup> Men of Sidon and Arvad were your oarsmen; your skilled men, Tyre, were aboard as your sailors. <sup>9</sup> Veteran craftsmen of Byblos were on board as shipwrights to caulk your seams. All the ships of the sea and their sailors came alongside to trade for your wares. <sup>10</sup> "Men of Persia, Lydia and Put served as soldiers in your army. They hung their shields and helmets on your walls, bringing you splendour. <sup>11</sup> Men of Arvad and Helek guarded your walls on every side; men of Gammad were in your towers. They hung their shields around your walls; they brought your beauty to perfection.*

*<sup>12</sup> "Tarshish did business with you because of your great wealth of goods; they exchanged silver, iron, tin and lead for your merchandise. <sup>13</sup> "Greece, Tubal and Meshek did business with you; they traded human beings and articles of bronze for your wares. <sup>14</sup> "Men of Beth Togarmah exchanged chariot horses, cavalry horses & mules for your merchandise. <sup>15</sup> "The men of Rhodes traded with you, and many coastlands were your customers; they paid you with ivory tusks and ebony. <sup>16</sup> "Aram did business with you because of your many products; they exchanged turquoise, purple fabric, embroidered work, fine linen, coral and rubies for your merchandise. <sup>17</sup> "Judah and Israel traded with you; they exchanged wheat from Minnith and confections, honey, olive oil and balm for your wares. <sup>18</sup> "Damascus did business with you because of your many products and great wealth of goods. They offered wine from Helbon, wool from Zahar <sup>19</sup> and casks of wine from IZAL in exchange for your wares: wrought iron, cassia and calamus. <sup>20</sup> "Dedan traded in saddle blankets with you. <sup>21</sup> "Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your customers; they did business with you in lambs, rams and goats. <sup>22</sup> "The merchants of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; for your merchandise they exchanged the finest of all kinds of spices and precious stones, and gold. <sup>23</sup> "Harran, Kanneh and Eden and merchants of Sheba, Ashur & Kilmad traded with you. <sup>24</sup> In your marketplace they traded with you beautiful garments, blue fabric, embroidered work and multicoloured rugs with cords twisted and tightly knotted.*

## Announcements

**COVID Restrictions.** Late last week the whole of NSW went into lockdown. While in lockdown all the regular activities of the Church cannot run physically but we are hoping to run as many of them over ZOOM or Facebook or email. But its not the same! But it still helps us to connect with The Lord and with His people. So as far as it is possible for your circumstances keep attempting to be involved. And when things open up again we seek to do that in a COVID safe way.

**Keeping in Touch.** Have you thought about who you could keep in touch with each week? Stephen emailed everyone during the week asking them to buddy up with at least one person, to help and support them in these difficult days. Many thanks to those who have contacted Stephen and told them who they are planning to keep in touch with. Our aim (is it a bridge too far ) is that everyone in our church who keep in touch with at least one person. But to have that happen, guess what, we all need to be involved!

**Focus for August - Outreach.** There will be some people who will be under more stress than normal at this point in time, those people need Jesus. There will be some people who will be more worried, they also need Jesus. Some will have some more time because of the lockdown so they may be willing to participate in a Church service. And most of us will need more deliberate contact with people and we can be that people for many of our friends, neighbours or family. All in all, now is a great time to connect with people and to connect people with the Lord. Why not do that by inviting them physically (if we can meet) to

Church next Sunday or at least sending them a link to the interactive service or livestream? We are planning to send a video service to everyone next Friday afternoon which you can send on to others.

**Stay Salt by Rebecca Manley Pippet.** A discussion on this book on evangelism will be happening via ZOOM this afternoon from 2-3pm. If you haven't managed to read the book as yet please pick up a copy from Koorong or borrow it from the 20-30 people who have been reading it this month.

**Hunter Men's Convention.** Has been cancelled this year because of COVID. Simon Manchester has agreed to speak next year on the book of Ezekiel.

**Kamal Weerakoon** is planning to visit us as a Church on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 7-9pm. This is unlikely to happen within the current conditions but we will make a call on this next week.

**Work Day.** The Committee of management was planning a work day at the Charlestown Church on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> September. But for obvious reasons we have decided to postpone until later on in the year. We will let you know when we think it is safe to have these sorts of activities in the Church.

**Two weeks until Father's Day.** There is still time to buy your Dad or favourite fatherly figure the gift real men want -- a jerry can of fuel that saves lives. Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF) has been flying food, medical aid, health workers, missionaries & God's Word into the most remote parts of the planet for more than 75 years. Buy your Dad a jerry can of fuel that keeps the MAF planes in the air & your man grounded. Talk to Sam Collyer ([0405 566 273](tel:0405566273) or [samcollyer@outlook.com](mailto:samcollyer@outlook.com)) for more information. MAF this week posted a video on the 2021 Jerry Can for Father's Day initiative, at <https://youtu.be/Hj2k-yU8EcQ>

**Accommodation Needed.** Stephen got a call from the Tamworth Presbyterian minister who has a lady from his Church coming down for a specialist appointment at John Hunter and needs some accommodation for Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August. If you can help out please contact Stephen

## Family Matters <https://youtu.be/BOEfKimNzTg>

Last Sunday for our youth led service, a number of the youth group were asked two questions

- Why do you think people reject Jesus?
- Why do you accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour?

As our focus for the month is outreach, we thought this would be a good encouragement to think long and hard about our friends and family and why they currently reject Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

## Song – O the Deep, deep love of Jesus

[Oh The Deep, Deep Love - Sovereign Grace - YouTube](#)

1. O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free,  
rolling as a mighty ocean  
in its fullness over me.  
Underneath me, all around me,  
is the current of thy love;  
leading onward, leading homeward,  
to thy glorious rest above.

- 3 O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
Far surpassing all the rest  
Is an ocean full of blessing,  
In the midst of every test.  
O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
Mighty Saviour, Precious friend  
You will bring us home to glory,  
Where your love will never end.

*Chorus*      *Oh the deep, deep love*  
                 *All I need and trust*  
                 *Is the deep, deep love of Jesus*

2. Oh the deep, deep love of Jesus  
Spread His praise from shore to shore  
How He came to pay our ransom  
Through the saving cross He bore  
How He watches o'er His loved ones  
Those He died to make His own

How for them He's interceding  
Pleading now before the throne

## Pastoral Prayer Points.

**Psalm 112:** "For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever. He is not afraid of bad news; his heart is firm, trusting in the Lord." We hear a lot of bad news. Fear levels are at an all time high. Many are being moved this way and that by the latest pandemic news or catastrophe. But God's people need not be moved or fear. Our position is eternally secure in Christ. The end is certain: we will live with God forever in the new heavens and new earth. This is the hope that doesn't disappoint. So when things are collapsing around us, let's pray and not panic. If we fear God we don't need to fear anything else!

**Pray for Afghanistan.** Lord we are grieved to witness the tragedy unfolding in this country. Have mercy on the people of Afghanistan. We pray for the Taliban, because our Lord Jesus commanded us to pray for those who persecute (Matthew 5:44). Have mercy on Taliban leaders and convert them. Restrain evil. Pray for justice to be done, and world leaders would have wisdom and compassion in how to assist.

**Pray for HSC students.** Continue to pray for Phoebe Baldwin, Maddy Hearn, Coel Mulready, Yvette Chesterfield, James Hakwa, Tom Wiley, Wyeth Scott, Peter Hyslop, Heath Brown. Pray for strength during these uncertain times. Pray for peace in the midst of all the stress. Pray this would be a time of when their trust in God deepens.

**Pray for Churches** – Pray that churches would be a beacon of hope during this time of national crisis. Pray for wisdom and unity in moving forward and dealing with issues such as the vaccine.

**Pray for Personal and Family** – Remember those who are in single person households and feel the loneliness more acutely. Pray those who are Christians would be sustained by the Lord, and those who are not would come to know Him.

## Bible Reading – Ezekiel 27:25-36 (NIV)

<sup>25</sup> "The ships of Tarshish serve as carriers for your wares. You are filled with heavy cargo as you sail the sea. <sup>26</sup> Your oarsmen take you out to the high seas. But the east wind will break you to pieces far out at sea. <sup>27</sup> Your wealth, merchandise and wares, your mariners, sailors and shipwrights, your merchants and all your soldiers, and everyone else on board will sink into the heart of the sea on the day of your shipwreck. <sup>28</sup> The shorelands will quake when your sailors cry out. <sup>29</sup> All who handle the oars will abandon their ships; the mariners and all the sailors will stand on the shore. <sup>30</sup> They will raise their voice and cry bitterly over you; they will sprinkle dust on their heads and roll in ashes. <sup>31</sup> They will shave their heads because of you and will put on sackcloth. They will weep over you with anguish of soul and with bitter mourning. <sup>32</sup> As they wail and mourn over you, they will take up a lament concerning you: "Who was ever silenced like Tyre, surrounded by the sea?" <sup>33</sup> When your merchandise went out on the seas, you satisfied many nations; with your great wealth and your wares you enriched the kings of the earth. <sup>34</sup> Now you are shattered by the sea in the depths of the waters; your wares and all your company have gone down with you. <sup>35</sup> All who live in the coastlands are appalled at you; their kings shudder with horror and their faces are distorted with fear. <sup>36</sup> The merchants among the nations scoff at you; you have come to a horrible end and will be no more."

## Sermon – The Shipping News (Stephen T)

<https://youtu.be/5lYzmXwifB4>

The story of the Titanic is a well known one. The largest and most opulent ship ever made, filled to the brim with the rich and famous from both sides of the Atlantic made its maiden voyage to New York via France on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1912. It lasted only 5 days at sea before it hit an iceberg, sinking to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. But because it only had lifeboats for about a third of the ships capacity and those lifeboats remained half-filled, a total of 1500 of the estimated 2,224 passengers and crew died that fateful day.

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It was an absolute tragedy and a massive blow to the pride of Great Britain, the most powerful nation in the world at the time. But it showed the world that pride comes before a fall. And it was a metaphor that

showed that even if Great Britain claimed and sung “Rule Britannia, Britannia rules the waves. Britons never, never, never shall be slaves.” That even this great empire, where at one time the sun never set upon, can still be brought down to its knees and humbled.

Just like Nazi Germany, Communist Russia, the Holy Roman Empire, the Romans and Greeks who were also brought down as well. And just like Tyre in the time of Ezekiel, this great nation, this prosperous nation, this commercial hub too will be brought down to earth or in this case sent to the bottom of the deep blue sea.

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And that is where the prophet Ezekiel now turns to. He has seen the glory of God and received his calling to declare God’s word. And he has told his nation that God’s judgement has come upon them because of their sinfulness and it will continue to come on them. And we see that fulfilled in Ezekiel 24 where Jerusalem is completely smashed. But that is not the end. For it is like God now flicks the switch and says to the nations, don’t think you will get off scot-free. I will not just judge my people, I will also judge all the nations with the very same standard.

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And so in chapter 25 to 32 we see 7 countries bear the brunt of the word of God. Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, Sidon and Egypt all come under God gaze. Seven is often used in prophecies symbolizing completeness or fullness. So God is saying here that Israel is not the only nation to be judged, actually all the nations will come under the judgement of God.

You know when a teacher is before a class that are mucking up badly, they can pick on one kid, who might seem to be the worst and make an example of them. Or they can say to the whole class, you are all under detention. Well here the Lord is not just picking on one kid, Israel, he is saying to the whole class, you are all in big, big trouble.

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And we don’t have time to look at all the nations this morning so I am going to zero in on just one, Tyre and specifically on Ezekiel 27 for here we will get a taste of what God wants to say to the whole world. We will see that the same standards God measures Tyre up against are the ones that Australia will one day also be judged. So In chapter 27 Ezekiel compares the nation of Tyre with a merchant ship and firstly describes

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### 1. Building the Ship (27:1-11)

*“The word of the LORD came to me: <sup>2</sup>“Son of man, take up a lament concerning Tyre. <sup>3</sup>Say to Tyre, situated at the gateway to the sea, merchant of peoples on many coasts, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: ““You say, Tyre, ‘I am perfect in beauty.” <sup>4</sup>Your domain was on the high seas; your builders brought your beauty to perfection. <sup>5</sup>They made all your timbers of juniper from Senir; they took a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you.”*

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The ship of state which is the country of Tyre is a beautiful ship. It contains the best of the best. Sensational wood from Senir and Lebanon and Bashan and Cyprus. Super sails made from the finest materials from Egypt and Elishah. A skilled crew containing oarsman from Sidon, shipwrights from Gebal, and sailors from their own country Tyre. And strong soldiers, mercenaries from Persia, Lydia, Put, Arvad, Helech and Gammad.

This is a sailing dream team. A veritable United Nations composing the best of the best. And the word that perfectly describes this ship, this nation of Tyre is beauty. It is a beautiful thing to behold. And because it is so good, so splendid, so stunning, Tyre is proud of who they are and what they have achieved. Look again at verse 3, *“Say to Tyre, situated at the gateway to the sea, merchant of peoples on many coasts, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord says: ““You say, Tyre, ‘I am perfect in beauty.”*

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Pride. Self-dependence. Thinking just about me. It is the most basic of all sins. A sin that was found in Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and a sin that is often found on our lips as well. You might not stand in front of the mirror in the morning and say “I am perfect in beauty” but when we think life depends upon us, our skills, our money, our homes. When we reflect on all that we have done to get us to where we are now. When we hum those well-known bars from the Frank Sinatra song, “I did it my way” and we fail to see in all our blessings God’s hand behind them, then we too are struggling with our pride.

In the first half of my life, I had a way of looking at myself that went a bit like this. I am not the best looking, I am not the smartest. I am not the most talented but I will make up for all of those things by working harder than anyone else. And so, I believed that any success I had was due to my work ethic. But I was proud, for I failed to see that God was the one who enabled me to work hard. And I only learnt that lesson, that really hard lesson when I was struck down with chronic fatigue and realised that even my hard work was a gift from God.

What are you proud of? Your family? Your house? Your job? Your security? Your money? Your sporting prowess? Your faith? Anything you have is not just the result of your labours but due to God’s grace. And God could take it all away at any time. But Tyre didn’t see that. They only saw how they had assembled their shipping dream team. They had put together such a smart way of making money. You see they had not just built this ship but they were

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## 2. Profiting from the Ship (27:12-24)

<sup>12</sup> *“Tarshish did business with you because of your great wealth of goods; they exchanged silver, iron, tin and lead for your merchandise. <sup>13</sup> “Greece, Tubal and Meshek did business with you; they traded human beings and articles of bronze for your wares. <sup>14</sup> “Men of Beth Togarmah exchanged chariot horses, cavalry horses & mules for your merchandise.”*

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You see Tyre had worked out how to get a license to print money for they became the merchants and middlemen of all trade in Mediterranean region. They placed themselves in the very centre of the commercial crossroads and so made money out of every nation in the known world. Starting from Tarshish in Spain on the west of the Mediterranean around the countries of the west, the north, the east, the south and back to Tarshish again in the west.

So they bought silver, iron, tin and lead from Spain and sold then to the Greece. There they picked up slaves and bronze wear and went onto Rhodes. Where they bought ivory tusks and ebony and so on and so on. Each time making a nice profit on the side. Supplying the rich with the things that they wanted. Becoming indispensable themselves & very, very rich.

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I was watching a documentary a couple of weeks ago on the building of Liverpool Cathedral on the west coast of England. Liverpool became rich in the 1800’s by doing what Tyre had done in the time of Ezekiel. They took the manufactured goods from mills of Britain & took them & sold them in Africa. They then picked up slaves from Africa & sold them in America & then picked up the raw materials England needed from America & brought them back to Britain. No wonder England ruled the waves, they controlled the important trade routes.

That’s what the businessmen of Tyre had done. It didn’t matter if it was slaves or ivory, saddle blankets or lambs, spices or precious stones, Tyre filled its ships and lined their pockets. And helped make rich those who did business with them as well. A win-win situation for all those who played the game, the game of international trade.

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Which means that Tyre was not just filled with pride but also would do anything for a profit. And so when Jerusalem falls Tyre rejoices. Chapter 26:2 quotes the merchants of Tyre saying of Jerusalem, *'Aha! The gate to the nations is broken, and its doors have swung open to me; now that she lies in ruins I will prosper.'* Jerusalem was the centre of many overland trade routes, so now Tyre believes it can get a piece of the action on land as well as on the sea.

How greedy. How willing to kick a man when they are down. But that is what money does. You can never have enough. That is why the love of money, not money itself but the love of money is the root of all evil. I remember getting my first job and going to my first 6 monthly review and being asked if I was happy with my wage and I said, I am getting more than I will ever need, yes I am happy, thank you. Two years later I was on 30% more and I was asked if I was happy and I was pointing out to my boss where my peers were getting more than me.

You see when the Lord judges the world, he will look to see what we will do to chase down a profit. Whether we love money more than God Himself. Whether we are proud, loving ourselves more than God. The people of Tyre may not have a Bible in front of them but there is a simple standard of judgement. Do you love your creator more than anything he created? Do you put God first, always, above money, above family, above yourself? So, Ezekiel continues his lament over the building of the ship, the profiting from the ship &

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### 3. The Sinking of the Ship (27:25-36)

<sup>25</sup> *"The ships of Tarshish serve as carriers for your wares. You are filled with heavy cargo as you sail the sea. Your oarsmen take you out to the high seas. But the east wind will break you to pieces far out at sea."*

Pride comes before a fall. And the ship crossing the ocean must be wary of a shipwreck. And so, in the very place that Tyre reigned supreme, **on the oceans**, was the very place that God brought her to her knees. As the ordinary process of making money goes on as it has gone on for year after year, God sends an east wind, a hurricane and destroys the ship of Tyre.

<sup>27</sup> *"Your wealth, merchandise and wares, your mariners, sailors and shipwrights, your merchants and all your soldiers, and everyone else on board will sink into the heart of the sea on the day of your shipwreck."*

Just like the downing of the twin towers changed everything. Just as the arrival of the COVID disease changes everything. Just like death or disease or tragedy can strike anyone at any time. So the Lord makes sure the people of Tyre lose everything. But notice what they put first in their list of losses? "Your wealth!" That speaks volumes doesn't it? Before their merchandise, before their people, even before themselves, they lose their wealth.

It took 25 verses to describe what Tyre had built for itself. And just a couple of words for them to lose their beauty, their security, their profits and their livelihoods. And like a ripple in a pond or a tsunami building up steam, the aftershocks affect the whole world.

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<sup>28</sup> *"The shorelands will quake when your sailors cry out. All who handle the oars will abandon their ships; the mariners and all the sailors will stand on the shore. They will raise their voice and cry bitterly over you; they will sprinkle dust on their heads and roll in ashes. They will shave their heads because of you and will put on sackcloth. They will weep over you with anguish of soul and with bitter mourning."*

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With the ship of Tyre now having gone down, the rich from all the other nations are going down with them. So they are shocked, dismayed, grieved. Not just for Tyre but for themselves. You see if Tyre can be

shipwrecked, if Tyre can fall from its lofty height, no one else is safe, are they? <sup>32</sup> *“As they wail and mourn over you, they will take up a lament concerning you: ‘Who was ever silenced like Tyre, surrounded by the sea?’”* If Tyre is vulnerable, then everyone is vulnerable. And that is exactly Ezekiel’s point.

A beautiful ship gives you no protection in the midst of a massive storm. Wealth doesn’t save you on the day of judgement. Pride in oneself will drain away when you and I face the Almighty on that last day. For life can change in an instant. It can pivot without a moment’s notice. One day everything is hunky dory, the next day our world falls apart. And there is only one safe refuge. And that is with the Lord. Not in self. Not in money. Not in anything but the Lord. Titanic, the unsinkable ship will one day end up at the bottom of the ocean.

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In 1897, Queen Victoria one of Britain’s greatest and longest serving monarchs reached her Diamond Jubilee and the nation rejoiced like there was no tomorrow. But Rudyard Kipling published his poem “Recessional” as a quiet warning that his great nation had become too intoxicated by its vast empire. He wrote

Far-call’d our navies melt away – on dune and headland sinks the fire  
Lo all our pomp of yesterday is one with Nineveh and Tyre!  
Judge of the nations, spare us yet, Lest we forget, lest we forget!

Where is Britain today? Like the Titanic it has lost its pre-eminence. Where will America be tomorrow? Where will China be next century? Where will our wealth be? Our security be? Nations cannot rely on their trade. Individuals cannot rely upon their wealth. You and I can’t rely upon ourselves. One day we will appear before the judgement seat of God. And have to give an account of what we have done with what we were given. We will have the video tape of our lives run before us and all our motives and our priorities will be laid bare.

Which means you and I are in deep, deep trouble. Which means the nations of the present and the past are in deep, deep trouble. For not only will God condemn their pride and the way they gained their profits but he will also judge all on how they used their power. For now Ezekiel turns his attention to who is

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#### 4. Captaining the Ship (28:1-19)

1 *“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. But you are a mere mortal and not a god, though you think you are as wise as a god. By your wisdom and understanding you have gained wealth for yourself and amassed gold and silver in your treasuries. By your great skill in trading you have increased your wealth, and because of your wealth your heart has grown proud.’”*

A country can be metaphorically portrayed as a ship but a country really is a collection of people. And the king of Tyre, the captain of the ship, is destined for the same fate as the rest of them. He might not believe in God. He might think that he is a god. He might have much power in his hands, wealth and political alliances but he is going down as well.

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I heard the story of a guy who was shipwrecked and so the last thing that he did was stuff all his pockets with gold bullion before he jumped overboard. And of course, he sank straight to the bottom of the ocean. And a university lecture telling that story asked his class “did he have the gold or did the gold have him”?

And so those drugged by the beverage of power find they are so consumed by power, by money, by status that when the crisis comes nothing will save them. And that is a warning to this nation and its leaders. But



in our modern world it is also a warning to the heads of multinational companies. It is a warning to those who have been successful in all that they have done whether in business, politics, sport, even religion.

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Power is intoxicating. Money can cause us to sell our souls. Politics can persuade you to park your morals. But the Tyres of this world will fall, In Revelation 17 & 18 we see another great city who like Tyre is grown fat and wealthy on the back of others, Babylon. Yet Babylon too will fall. It will be judged. The throne of the Almighty comes before everyone and judges the living and the dead. London will be judged. New York. Shanghai. Newcastle. And you & me.

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Look what happens to the king of Tyre, *"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 splendour. They will bring you down to the pit, and you will die a violent death in the heart of the seas."* So is that it? No hope. No chance of change. Signed, sealed and delivered? No with the Lord there is always a way out. And that way is

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### 5. Worship (28:24-26)

<sup>24</sup> *"No longer will the people of Israel have malicious neighbours who are painful briers and sharp thorns. Then they will know that I am the Sovereign LORD."* That's the end game. That's why Israel is being judged, that is why the nations are being judged. He wants the whole world to know Him. To know his justice. And to know his mercy. To know that he is sovereign and to know that He is their saviour. To know that on their own they are without a chance. But if they were to put their chance in Jesus there is real hope for the future.

You see like the king of Tyre, Jesus, also claimed to be the king of the world. Like the King of Tyre Jesus also died in humiliation. Like the king of Tyre Jesus also came under the judgement of God. Except the King of Tyre gets what he deserves. And Jesus gets what you and I deserve. Actually, he gets what all the nations deserve as well.

You see we are all in the same boat. We all deserve God's judgement. We all are too proud. Too much lovers of money and power. We all walk away from God's rule and pretend we are gods and do what we want to do rather than what God wants us to do. And Jesus takes that pride onto himself, and that love of profit and power and says I will go to the bottom of the deep blue sea, actually I will go to hell so that you might reach the other side safely.

Slide 22

<sup>25</sup> *"This is what the Sovereign LORD says: When I gather the people of Israel from the nations where they have been scattered, I will be proved holy through them in the sight of the nations. Then they will live in their own land, which I gave to my servant Jacob. They will live there in safety and will build houses and plant vineyards; they will live in safety when I inflict punishment on all their neighbours who maligned them. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God."*

There is only one safe harbour when the storm comes. And that is Jesus. And so let us not be trying to stuff our ships with more wealth and power, let us bow down and worship the Sovereign God, the Just judge God, the Saviour God. Friends let us worship God.

Don't wait for another Titanic to go down. For another plane to fly into the Twin towers. For another outbreak of COVID. Hear what Ezekiel is saying today. See the picture that he is painting of a big ship going down. And learn the lessons before it is too late.

Slide 23

As commentator Ian Duguid has said, *"Like those who travelled first class on the Titanic with all its unparalleled grandeur, those who place their trust in this world are travelling on a comfortable one-way trip to nowhere."*

Slide 24

Or as John Newton put it in one of his greatest hymns  
*"Fading is the wordlings pleasure, all his boasted pomp and show.  
 Solid joys and lasting treasure, none but Zion's children know."*

## Song – Will your anchor hold?

[YouTube](#)

[Will your anchor hold in the storms of life -](#)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Will your anchor hold in the storms of life,<br/>When the clouds unfold their wings of strife?<br/>When the strong tides lift, and the cables strain,<br/>Will your anchor drift or firm remain?</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Will your anchor hold in the straits of fear<br/>When the breakers roar and the reef is near<br/>While the surges rave and the wild winds blow<br/>Shall the angry waves then your bark o'flow</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

*Chorus*

*We have an anchor that keeps the soul  
 Steadfast and sure while the billows roll,  
 Fastened to the Rock which cannot move,  
 Grounded firm and deep in the Savior's love.*

3. Will your anchor hold in the floods of death  
When the waters cold chill your latest breath?  
On the rising tide you can never fail  
While your anchor holds within the veil

## Or I have a shelter in the storm

[I Have A Shelter - Sovereign Grace - YouTube](#)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I have a shelter in the storm<br/>When troubles pour upon me<br/>Though fears are rising like a flood<br/>My soul can rest securely<br/>O Jesus, I will hide in You<br/>My place of peace and solace<br/>No trial is deeper than Your love<br/>That comforts all my sorrows</li> <li>2. I have a shelter in the storm<br/>When all my sins accuse me<br/>Though justice charges me with guilt<br/>Your grace will not refuse me<br/>O Jesus, I will hide in You<br/>Who bore my condemnation<br/>I find my refuge in Your wounds<br/>For there I find salvation</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. I have a shelter in the storm<br/>When constant winds would break me<br/>For in my weakness I have learned<br/>Your strength will not forsake me<br/>O Jesus I will hide in You<br/>The one who bears my burdens<br/>With faithful hands that cannot fail<br/>You bring me home to heaven</li> </ol> |
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## Benediction

<sup>26</sup> *They will live there in safety and will build houses and plant vineyards; they will live in safety when I inflict punishment on all their neighbours who maligned them. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God."*  
 (Ezekiel 28:26)

## Morning Tea

There is no physical morning tea allowed at the moment but why not give someone a call instead? Who might your ring now? Maybe the person you are hoping to keep in touch with?