

Ezekiel Chapter 27

Verses 1-36

Because Tyre's fate is assured; Ezekiel can make the second oracle a funeral dirge for her.

Under the imagery of a sinking ship, her destruction is dramatically envisioned.

The whole chapter is a lamentation over Tyre.

A lamentation, describing Tyre as a great trade ship destroyed on the high seas.

The proper names indicate the participants in commerce with Tyre.

Ezekiel 27:1-2 "The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying," "Now, thou son of man, take up a lamentation for Tyrus;"

We ended the last lesson with lamentations for Tyrus, now we see they are continuing here.

In this lesson, we will see the details of the destruction of Tyre, or Tyrus.

Ezekiel 27:3 "And say unto Tyrus, O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea, [which art] a merchant of the people for many isles, Thus saith the Lord GOD; O Tyrus, thou hast said, I [am] of perfect beauty."

This speaks of the city, before the destruction.

This city, actually, was on an island just off the coast.

It was supposed to have been the great city of that day for merchants of the sea.

It was very wealthy and very beautiful.

One of their problems, however, was their great pride.

They felt in their own hearts they were perfect, and had the most beautiful city.

Ezekiel 27:4 "Thy borders [are] in the midst of the seas, thy builders have perfected thy beauty."

They were an island of magnificence.

They built right up to the edge of the sea on every side.

Verses 5-9

“Fir trees from Senir”:

The area is the Amorite designation for Mt. Hermon, to the northeast from the northern tip of the Sea of Galilee.

Lesser known places were: Elishah (verse 7), believed to be in Cyprus; Arvad (verse 8), an island city off the Mediterranean coast north of Byblos; and Gebal (verse 9), a name also used for Byblos, north of today’s Aram, or Syria.

Ezekiel 27:5 "They have made all thy [ship] boards of fir trees of Senir: they have taken cedars from Lebanon to make masts for thee."

Their ships were made to last.

They were made of some of the most expensive wood around.

We remember from earlier lessons, that the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with fir and cedar lumber.

Ezekiel 27:6 "[Of] the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars; the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches [of] ivory, [brought] out of the isles of Chittim."

Ivory, generally, comes from Africa.

All this is reminding us of their great trading ability.

Even the ships were made from materials of many countries.

The ivory benches show the splendor with which they were furnished.

Ezekiel 27:7 "Fine linen with brodered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail; blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee."

They were so wealthy; they had bought the very best from other countries to build their ships.

The linen from Egypt shows their trade with them.

The sails on this ship were not just common canvas, but of beautiful linen.

The blue and purple had to do with the embroidered work on the sail.

Blue and purple were not native of Egypt, or Tyre.

They came from isles of Elishah.

The isle of Elishah took its name from the oldest son of Javan.

The isle was known for its sale of purple and scarlet fabric to Tyre.

Ezekiel 27:8 "The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners: thy wise [men], O Tyrus, [that] were in thee, were thy pilots."

The cities of Zidon and Arvad were, actually, suburbs of Tyre.

Tyre and Zidon are, many times, spoken of together.

Ezekiel 27:9 "The ancients of Gebal and the wise [men] thereof were in thee thy calkers: all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to occupy thy merchandise."

This Gebal is located about 25 miles out of Beirut.

The Greeks called this city Byblos, which means book, because they produced paper from papyrus reeds from Egypt.

These were very skilled people in masonry, as well.

They were stonecutters.

They were also famous for their boat building and caulking.

This city of craftsmen had caulked the ships for Tyre.

Verses 10-11

“Men of war”:

These places provided mercenary soldiers for the Phoenician army to defend Tyre.

Ezekiel 27:10 "They of Persia and of Lud and of Phut were in thine army, thy men of war: they hanged the shield and helmet in thee; they set forth thy comeliness."

This is just saying, they hired mercenaries to fight their battles for them.

They thought themselves above being soldiers.

Lud is spoken of as an African nation.

Their ancestry goes back to the son of Ham.

Phut was the Libyans.

They were, also, descended from Ham.

The mercenaries were from Persia, Lud, and Phut.

Ezekiel 27:11 "The men of Arvad with thine army [were] upon thy walls round about, and the Gammadim were in thy towers: they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about; they have made thy beauty perfect."

Arvad was a city of the Arvadites, who were descendent of Canaan.

Arvad was a suburb of Tyre.

They were about two miles apart.

It appears that Tyre had hired the soldiers of Arvad to defend her.

Gammadim is probably speaking of the brave native troops.

They were few in number, because Tyre had hired outsiders to protect them (see note on verses 5-9).

“Gammadim”:

People from a place often identified as northern Aram, or Syria.

Ezekiel 27:12 "Tarshish [was] thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all [kind of] riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs."

“Tarshish”:

This verse begins the description of the commercial glory of Tyre.

Most likely this place refers to Tarshishah in southern Spain, a Phoenician colony famous for silver (Jer. 10:9).

Tarshish was one of the main countries Tyre traded with.

This was, probably, located on the coast of Spain, and was sending the metals mentioned here to the other countries.

We remember, from the beginning of this letter, that Tyre did not really produce anything to sell.

All of the things they sold to a country, they had purchased from another country.

Tyre's wealth came from buying and selling, not from producing.

Tyre bought silver, iron, tin, and lead from Tarshish, and sold it to other countries.

Ezekiel 27:13 "Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they [were] thy merchants: they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy market."

“Javan, Tubal, and Meshech”:

Javan was Lonia, a large area in Greece.

The other two, in Asia Minor, may be the Tibarenoi and Moschoi mentioned by the writer Herodotus, or slave-trading cities called Tabal and Mushku by the Assyrians.

These seemed to deal primarily in slaves.

These are primarily Greek.

Tubal and Meshech are, sometimes, thought of as a Scythian tribe.

They sometimes were representative of eastern Asia Minor.

The "persons of men" mean slaves.

Brass was common to this area.

Ezekiel 27:14 "They of the house of Togarmah traded in thy fairs with horses and horsemen and mules."

“Togarmah”, is identified with Armenai in northeast Asia Minor, which is modern Turkey.

Togarmah was a son of Gomer, and this place was named for him.

It appears, their specialty was horses.

They are spoken of later as followers of Gog.

Ezekiel 27:15 "The men of Dedan [were] thy merchants; many isles [were] the merchandise of thine hand: they brought thee [for] a present horns of ivory and ebony."

“Dedan”:

Probably Rhodes.

Dedan here is probably speaking of coastal people on the Persian Gulf.

They were caravan merchants.

They had traded for the horns of ivory and ebony, and brought it to trade to Tyre.

Ezekiel 27:16 "Syria [was] thy merchant by reason of the multitude of the wares of thy making: they occupied in thy fairs with emeralds, purple, and brodered work, and fine linen, and coral, and agate."

Syria is thought to be Aram, or Mesopotamia.

It really does not matter for this study.

What matters are the materials they traded in with Tyre.

We see in all of this, that Tyre sold and bought everything from the basest substance to precious jewels.

The linen here, is not the same as the fine linen earlier in the lesson.

This linen starts with cotton, and the other mentioned linen began with flax.

Ezekiel 27:17 "Judah, and the land of Israel, they [were] thy merchants: they traded in thy market wheat of Minnith, and Pannag, and honey, and oil, and balm."

“Minnith”:

An Ammonite town (Judges 11:33).

Before the destruction of Judah and Israel, they had been merchants for the products Tyre had to sell, and they in turn had sold their excess honey, balm, and oil to Tyre for other countries.

Minnith was an Ammonite village.

This is the only mention in the Bible of Pannag.

We can assume that Israel was in charge of their trade, as well as their own.

Ezekiel 27:18 "Damascus [was] thy merchant in the multitude of the wares of thy making, for the multitude of all riches; in the wine of Helbon, and white wool."

The chief export of Damascus was the wine of Helbon.

Damascus was supposed to be the oldest city in the east.

They had fertile land, and grew grapes.

This is just another of the list of items that Tyre traded for other items they needed.

Tyre took the profit in between.

“Helbon”:

Today it is called Halbun, 13 miles north of Damascus.

Ezekiel 27:19 "Dan also and Javan going to and fro occupied in thy fairs: bright iron, cassia, and calamus, were in thy market."

Each land had something to sell Tyre, and bought other things from Tyre.

Javan and Dan sold Iron, Cassia (a type of cinnamon), and a perfume, calamus (cane).

Ezekiel 27:20 "Dedan [was] thy merchant in precious clothes for chariots."

These clothes are probably speaking of rugs used for saddle blankets.

27:21 "Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they occupied with thee in lambs, and rams, and goats: in these [were they] thy merchants."

“Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar”:

Arabia was a large country, divided into three parts, Arabia Deserts, or the desert; Arabia Petraea, or the rocky; and Arabia Felix, or the happy.

Kedar was in Arabia Petrea; its inhabitants were called Kedarenes.

Kedar was the second son of Ishmael.

The word "Kedar" means dusky as a tent or black skinned.

I do not believe this to be a Negro, but rather a dark skinned Arab.

Their skin was dark, because they lived in a desert area, and herded animals in the sun.

Their merchandise of lambs, rams, and goats shows that.

Ezekiel 27:22 "The merchants of Sheba and Raamah, they [were] thy merchants: they occupied in thy fairs with chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold."

Sheba and Raamah were cities in the Southwest extremity of Arabia.

This Sheba is probably the same as where the queen of Sheba came from.

Raamah was the father of the Cushite Sheba.

The essence, here, is the fact they traded in spices, precious stones, and gold.

Ezekiel 27:23 "Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, [and] Chilmad, [were] thy merchants."

Haran here, is the same as Charan in the New Testament.

It was a North Mesopotamian commercial city on the Belikh River.

It was located in Padan-aram.

It was on a busy caravan road leading to Nineveh, Ashur, Babylon, and Damascus.

Mesopotamia is modern day Iraq.

All of these names are just showing us in detail the vastness of the trade that Tyre did.

Canneh is the same as Calneh, which is a city built by Nimrod.

This Eden is different from the Garden of Eden in Genesis.

The merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad were the ones who carried the trade overland for Tyre.

Ezekiel 27:24 "These [were] thy merchants in all sorts [of things], in blue clothes, and broidered work, and in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise."

These were items carried on the backs of camels, and were traded for Tyre.

These people are noted for rugs and fine woven items.

This just tells us, over again, of the vast kinds of things Tyre traded with various countries.

Their trade was widespread.

Their destruction will hurt all of these people that we have been reading about, who traded with them.

Ezekiel 27:25 "The ships of Tarshish did sing of thee in thy market: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the midst of the seas."

“Ships of Tarshish” are large cargo-carrying sea ships that sailed across the Mediterranean.

All of the merchants who dealt with Tyre had profited in some way.

They all sang her praises, because she helped them in their trade.

Her ships were glorious; carrying everything from spices, to animals, to jewels.

They were praised by all their trading partners.

Ezekiel 27:26 "Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters: the east wind hath broken thee in the midst of the seas."

This east wind could be speaking of the dangerous Euroclydon of the Mediterranean sea.

This wind has destroyed many a ship.

They were powered by sails, and by many rowers.

They had good trips and bad trips, as all seamen will tell you.

However, this scripture pictures Tyre's fall aptly as a shipwreck on the seas.

The sea, the place of her glory, will be her grave.

"The east wind" is a picture of Babylon in its power from the East.

Ezekiel 27:27 "Thy riches, and thy fairs, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the occupiers of thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that [are] in thee, and in all thy company which [is] in the midst of thee, shall fall into the midst of the seas in the day of thy ruin."

When Tyrus falls, they all fall.

They were depending heavily on Tyrus.

This destruction of Tyre reminds us of the following Scriptures which are yet future, which will happen to commercial Babylon.

Revelation 18:17-19:

"For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,"

"And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What [city is] like unto this great city!"

"And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate."

But this is not the same.

The events in Revelation happen in one hour or a very short period of time.

For Tyre, the destruction came in 7 months by the hand of Alexander.

Verses 28-35

Maintains the metaphor of Tyre as a ship, and turns particularly to men lamenting her ruin, for their livelihood has been tied to the commerce she represents (verses 30-32 describe common actions signifying mourning).

Ezekiel 27:28 "The suburbs shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots."

The pasture lands will quake at the shouting and threatening of those who pilot the ships (captains), and others of those affiliated with Tyre.

In other words, the point is that the lamentation will be very great.

Ezekiel 27:29 "And all that handle the oar, the mariners, [and] all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships, they shall stand upon the land;"

All of these people have lost their jobs.

There will be no need for the ships to go.

There is no one left to trade with.

Ezekiel 27:30 "And shall cause their voice to be heard against thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes:"

This is describing extreme mourning.

They are mourning, because their livelihood is gone.

Ezekiel 27:31 "And they shall make themselves utterly bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee with bitterness of heart [and] bitter wailing."

All of this outward show of mourning in the extreme will be to no avail.

This judgment is from God, and all the mourning will not be able to stop it.

Ezekiel 27:32 "And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, [saying], What [city is] like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?"

This lamentation is like a funeral dirge.

This is the correct thing to do.

As great as Tyre had been in earthly terms, it is now dead.

Ezekiel 27:33 "When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many people; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise."

The wealth of Tyre, actually made the people who traded with them a living.

The wealth of these kings came indirectly from Tyre.

As Tyre was not the manufacturer of anything, they were in today's reality, brokers or middlemen who buy and sell for a living.

Ezekiel 27:34 "In the time [when] thou shalt be broken by the seas in the depths of the waters thy merchandise and all thy company in the midst of thee shall fall."

This judgment of God was not just on the city, but on everything they had, including their ships of trade, and their merchandise.

And indirectly also, all of the people that they did business with.

Ezekiel 27:35 "All the inhabitants of the isles shall be astonished at thee, and their kings shall be sore afraid, they shall be troubled in [their] countenance."

All of the people near and far, will be astonished at the terrible calamity that came upon so great an earthly power.

The fall of this great Tyre, will put fear of God in the hearts of all of the people.

Ezekiel 27:36 "The merchants among the people shall hiss at thee; thou shalt be a terror, and never [shalt be] any more."

"Hiss" is defined as: to make such a sound as an expression of hatred, passion, or disapproval.

These merchants will now, hate the failure of Tyre.

The main reason is, because they were terribly affected by the fall of Tyre.

Ezekiel Chapter 27 Questions

1. Who did the LORD tell Ezekiel to take up a lamentation for?
2. Where was this city located?
3. What had they said, that showed their great self-pride?
4. They made their ship boards of ____ trees.
5. What were the masts made of?
6. What were their oars made of?
7. What were their benches made of?
8. _____, generally, comes from Africa.
9. What were their sails made of?
10. Who did Elishah take its name from?
11. What other name was Gebal known by, in the Greek?
12. Why did they call them by that name?
13. What were these people skilled in?
14. These people from Persia, Lud, and Phut were _____ in the army of Tyre.
15. Who were the brave native troops?
16. What was Tarshish?
17. Tyre's wealth came from _____ and _____.
18. Who were the slave traders?
19. Togarmah is later spoken of as followers of _____.
20. Syria in verse 16, is probably speaking of whom?
21. What is different about the linen in verse 16, and the linen earlier in the lesson?
22. What had Judah traded with Tyre?

23. What was the chief export of Damascus?
24. Damascus was thought to be the _____ city in the east.
25. What is Cassia?
26. What is Calamus?
27. The precious clothes for chariots were probably what?
28. Haran was on the caravan route to what cities?
29. All the merchants, who had traded with Tyre, had _____ in some way.
30. What is the east wind speaking of in verse 26?
31. When Tyrus falls, they all _____.
32. What is "suburbs" in verse 28 speaking of?
33. What happens to all of Tyre's seamen?
34. What is meant by them wallowing in the ashes?
35. All of the things in verse 31 are outward shows of _____.
36. What is "lamentation" in verse 32?
37. Who had been enriched by trading with Tyre?
38. What will this fall of Tyre do for all those who see it?