

Amos 1:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof.

Analysis

But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof—The judgment formula repeats identically to Gaza (1:7), showing God's impartial justice. Tyre's sin was similar to Gaza's: "they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant" (1:9). The Hebrew *berit achim* (בְּרִית אֲחִים, "covenant of brothers") likely refers to treaties between Tyre and Israel, established by David and strengthened by Solomon's alliance with Hiram king of Tyre (2 Samuel 5:11; 1 Kings 5:1-12, 9:11-14).

Tyre's violation was twofold: participating in the slave trade ("delivered up the whole captivity to Edom") and betraying covenant friendship with Israel. The phrase "remembered not" (לֹא זָכְרוּ, *lo zakru*) indicates willful forgetting—Tyre chose profit over loyalty, commercial gain over covenant faithfulness. This transforms economic exploitation into covenant treachery. By selling Israelites to Edom (Israel's hostile relative), Tyre betrayed the "brotherly covenant" that should have protected Israel.

The mention of fire devouring "palaces" (*armonot*) again targets the seats of power where these decisions were made. Tyre was famous for its wealth, purple dye trade, and seafaring commerce. Ezekiel 26-28 provides extensive oracles against Tyre, describing its pride, wealth, and ultimate fall. The historical fulfillment came through Babylonian siege (585-572 BC) and Alexander the Great's conquest (332 BC), which devastated the island city. God's judgment may be delayed, but it is certain.

Historical Context

Tyre was a major Phoenician city-state on the Mediterranean coast, divided between a mainland city and an island fortress considered virtually impregnable. Its maritime trade empire stretched across the Mediterranean, bringing immense wealth. The alliance between Tyre and Israel began with David and flourished under Solomon, who employed Tyrian craftsmen and materials for the temple (1 Kings 5-7).

By Amos's time, Tyre had apparently abandoned this friendly relationship, participating in the lucrative slave trade at Israel's expense. The "brotherly covenant" Tyre forgot was not merely political but had religious overtones—Hiram aided in building Yahweh's temple, suggesting recognition of Israel's unique status. Tyre's betrayal thus had spiritual dimensions beyond mere treaty violation.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does Tyre's sin of choosing profit over covenant loyalty mirror modern temptations to compromise relationships and principles for financial gain?
2. What does God's judgment on Tyre for "forgetting" covenant obligations teach about the seriousness of our commitments and promises?

Interlinear Text

אֲרָמֹנוֹתֶיהָ:	וְאָכְלָהּ	צָר	בָּח וּמַת	אֵשׁ	וְשָׁלַח חֲתִי
the palaces	which shall devour	of Tyrus	on the wall	a fire	But I will send
H759	H398	H6865	H2346	H784	H7971

Additional Cross-References

Zechariah 9:4 (Parallel theme): Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.

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