

Ezekiel 26:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus saith the Lord GOD to Tyrus; Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee?

Analysis

Thus saith the Lord GOD to Tyrus; Shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee?—The rhetorical question expects affirmative answer: Yes, the coastlands will tremble. The Hebrew iyim (יִם, "isles") refers to Mediterranean coastal regions and islands dependent on Tyre's trade network. Ra'ash (רָאשׁ, "shake") denotes violent trembling from terror, not just economic disruption but existential fear—if mighty Tyre can fall, no city is secure.

"When the wounded cry, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee"—the Hebrew ne'ekah chalal (נְאָקָה חָלָל, "groaning of the wounded") and herog (הָרֹג, "slaughter") depict graphic urban warfare. Island Tyre was considered impregnable; its fall would be catastrophic. This prophecy found initial fulfillment in Nebuchadnezzar's 13-year siege (585-572 BC) and complete fulfillment when Alexander the Great utterly destroyed the island city in 332 BC. The "isles" shaking refers to the cascading collapse of Phoenician commercial colonies from Cyprus to Carthage to Spain—the ancient world's first global economic crisis.

Historical Context

Tyre's commercial empire was the ancient world's most extensive, establishing colonies throughout the Mediterranean (Carthage, founded 814 BC, was Tyre's greatest colony). When Tyre fell, the entire Phoenician trading network collapsed.

Coastal cities that depended on Tyrian merchant ships, banking, and purple dye production faced economic devastation. The 'islands' include Cyprus, Sicily, Sardinia, Malta, and coastal regions of North Africa and Spain. Alexander's 332 BC siege—building a causeway to the island and destroying the city so thoroughly that its stones were literally thrown into the sea (fulfilling 26:12)—sent shockwaves throughout the Hellenistic world. Ancient Tyre never recovered; modern Tyre is a small Lebanese town.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Tyre's 'impossible' fall remind us that no human power or economic system is ultimately secure apart from God?
2. What modern economic or political powers do we treat as 'too big to fail' that God's sovereignty could humble in a moment?

Interlinear Text

מִפְלָתָה נִזְמָן וְלֹא אָמַר כִּי אֱלֹהִים הָאֵלֶּן

H3541 Thus saith H559 the Lord H136 GOD H3069 to Tyrus H6865

H3808

at the sound

H6963

of thy fall

H4658

וְאַבְנֵן כְּאַבְנֵן כָּל לְכָל גָּרָגָר בְּתִזְבֵּחַ נִזְמָן וְאַרְעָשָׁה

cry when the wounded is made when the slaughter in the midst shake

H602

H2491

H2026

H2027

H8432

H7493

בְּאַיִם:

Shall not the isles

H339

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 27:35 (Parallel theme): 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.

Jeremiah 49:21 (Parallel theme): The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the Red sea.

Ezekiel 31:16 (Creation): I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth.

Ezekiel 26:18 (Parallel theme): Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be troubled at thy departure.

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