

# Ezekiel 26:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment, and be astonished at thee.

## Analysis

**Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay away their robes, and put off their broidered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling**—The "princes of the sea" (Hebrew nesiey hayam, נְשֵׁי־הַיָּם) are rulers of maritime city-states in Tyre's commercial network. Their descending from thrones signals abdication of authority and dignity. Laying aside royal robes and embroidered garments (Hebrew riqmah, רִקְמָה—expensive woven fabrics Tyre specialized in) symbolizes mourning and terror.

Most striking: "**they shall clothe themselves with trembling**" (Hebrew charadot yilbashu, חָרָדוֹת יַלְבְּשׁוּ). Trembling becomes their garment—terror so pervasive it defines them. "**They shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble at every moment**"—sitting on the ground (Hebrew al-ha'aretz yeshev, עַל־הָאָרֶץ יְשִׁבּוּ) is mourning posture (Job 2:13, Lamentations 2:10). The phrase "tremble at every moment" (Hebrew charad lirgaim, חָרָד לִרְגָּאִים) means constant, unrelenting terror. These merchant princes who once dominated global trade now sit paralyzed with fear. Economic collapse produces not just poverty but psychological devastation.

## Historical Context

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This describes the reaction of Phoenician colonies and trading partners when Tyre fell. Cities like Sidon, Byblos, Arvad, and distant colonies like Carthage and Tartessus (Spain) depended on Tyre's commercial network. When Alexander destroyed Tyre in 332 BC, the entire Phoenician civilization collapsed. The purple dye industry (made from murex shells, Tyre's monopoly) ceased. Banking networks failed. Maritime trade routes became unsafe. The 'princes' are city rulers who derived wealth and authority from Tyrian commerce—when the hub collapsed, the spokes disintegrated. This prophesied the end of Phoenician civilization as a world power.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does the image of powerful rulers 'clothing themselves with trembling' reveal the fragility of human authority built on material prosperity?
2. What securities (financial, political, social) do we trust in that could prove as unstable as Tyre's maritime empire?

## Interlinear Text

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נִשְׁאָן	כִּי	תִּשְׁאַל
Then all the princes	לְ	כִּסְאוֹתָם
of the sea	מִן	מִלְּעֵד
shall come down	H5921	from their thrones
	H3381	H3678
and lay away	H853	אֶת מַעַלְיָהֶם
	H5493	H4598
their robes	H853	בְּגִדִּים
	H4598	H899
garments	H899	רְקָמִתָּם
	H7553	H6584
and put off		וַיַּפְשַׁת
themselves with trembling	H2731	צְבָדָה וּתְהֻנָּה
		H3847
they shall clothe	H5921	עַל
		H776
upon the ground		בְּאֶרֶץ
		H3427
they shall sit		וְיִשְׁבּוּ
and shall tremble	H2729	לִרְגַּעַת יָמִין
		H7281
at every moment		וְשִׁמְמָה וְ
		H8074
and be astonished		עַלְיָהוּ:
		H5921

## Additional Cross-References

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**Ezekiel 32:10** (Parallel theme): Yea, I will make many people amazed at thee, and their kings shall be horribly afraid for thee, when I shall brandish my sword before them; and they shall tremble at every moment, every man for his own life, in the day of thy fall.

**Job 8:22** (Parallel theme): They that hate thee shall be clothed with shame; and the dwelling place of the wicked shall come to nought.

**Jonah 3:6** (Parallel theme): For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

**Hosea 11:10** (Parallel theme): They shall walk after the LORD: he shall roar like a lion: when he shall roar, then the children shall tremble from the west.

**Isaiah 3:26** (Parallel theme): And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground.

**Psalms 35:26** (Parallel theme): Let them be ashamed and brought to confusion together that rejoice at mine hurt: let them be clothed with shame and dishonour that magnify themselves against me.

**1 Peter 5:5** (Parallel theme): Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

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