

Ezekiel 26:17

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee,
How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring men,
the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she and her
inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it!

Analysis

And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea—The Hebrew qinah (קִינָה, "lamentation") is a formal funeral dirge. Surrounding nations will sing a death song for Tyre. **"How art thou destroyed"** (eykh avadt, אַיִךְ אַבַּדְתָּ) echoes Lamentations' opening lament over Jerusalem—the same Hebrew formula expresses shocked grief over the unthinkable.

"Inhabited of seafaring men" (Hebrew noshevet miyamim, נוֹשְׁבֵת מִיָּמִים—"inhabited from the seas") describes Tyre's maritime population—sailors, merchants, naval forces. **"The renowned city"** (ha'ir hahullalah, הָעִיר הַהֻלְלָלָה—"the praised city") indicates international fame. Most devastating: **"which wast strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it"**—Tyre dominated through naval power and commercial control, inspiring fear in competitors. Now the feared becomes the pitied, the strong becomes rubble. This reversal demonstrates God's sovereignty over human pride and power.

Historical Context

Tyre's reputation was legendary. Founded on an island 600 yards offshore, it was nearly impregnable. Its navy controlled Mediterranean shipping lanes. Its merchants were 'princes' (Isaiah 23:8). Its purple dye dressed royalty worldwide. Its craftsmen built Solomon's temple. When Nebuchadnezzar besieged it for 13 years, Tyre survived by naval supply—though economically devastated. Alexander's 332 BC conquest was total: he built a half-mile causeway using rubble from mainland Tyre, breached the walls, and slaughtered 8,000 Tyrians, selling 30,000 into slavery. The 'renowned city' became a cautionary tale. Tyre never regained prominence—today's Tyre is a minor Lebanese town on the ancient causeway (now a permanent peninsula), fulfilling Ezekiel 26:14.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does Tyre's transformation from 'renowned' to 'destroyed' warn against building identity and security on worldly reputation?
2. What areas of our lives are we building on sand—things that seem strong but lack eternal foundation?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשָּׂא ו	עַל יָרֵךְ	קִינָה	וְאָמְרוּ	אֵל יֵרֵךְ לְךָ	
And they shall take up	H5921	a lamentation	for thee and say	H0	H349
H5375		H7015	H559		
אֶבֶדְתָּ	יֹשְׁבֵיָהּ:	בַּיָּם	הָעִיר		
to thee How art thou destroyed	she and her inhabitants	in the sea	city		
H6	H3427	H3220	H5892		
הַהֵלָלָה	אֲשֶׁר	הָיְתָה	חֲזָקָה	בַּיָּם	הָיָא
the renowned	H834	H1961	which wast strong	in the sea	H1931
H1984		H2389	H3220		
יֹשְׁבֵיָהּ:	אֲשֶׁר	נָתַן ו	חֲתִיתָם	לְכָל	
she and her inhabitants	H834	which cause	their terror	H3605	
H3427		H5414	H2851		
יֹשְׁבֵיָהּ:					
she and her inhabitants					
H3427					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 14:12 (Parallel theme): How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

Ezekiel 19:1 (Parallel theme): Moreover take thou up a lamentation for the princes of Israel,