

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 (קינה, "lamentation") is a formal funeral dirge. Surrounding nations will sing a death song for Tyre. "**How art thou destroyed**" (eykh avadt, אַתָּה אָבֹדָת) echoes Lamentations' opening lament over Jerusalem—the same Hebrew formula expresses shocked grief over the unthinkable.

"Inhabited of seafaring men" (Hebrew noshevet miyamim, נושבת מִיָּם—"inhabited from the seas") describes Tyre's maritime population—sailors, merchants, naval forces. **"The renowned city"** (ha'ir hahullalah, הַעִיר הַהִלְלָה—"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

Psalm 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

וְנִשְׁאָה	אֶל	יְהִינָּה	לְכִינָה	אֶל	לְכִינָה	אֶל	לְכִינָה	אֶל	לְכִינָה
And they shall take up	H5375	H5921	a lamentation	H7015	H559	for thee and say	H0	H349	
אָבְדָת	אָבְדָת	יְשִׁבְתָּה	בַּיִם	בַּיִם	בַּיִם	בַּיִם	בַּיִם	בַּיִם	בַּיִם
to thee	H6	How art thou destroyed	H3427	she and her inhabitants	H2389	in the sea	H3220	city	H5892
הַיָּה	H1984	הַיָּה	H834	הַיָּה	H1961	סְדִיק	H2389	בַּיִם	H1931
הַיָּה	H1984	הַיָּה	H834	הַיָּה	H1961	הַיָּה	H2389	בַּיִם	H1931
וְנִשְׁבִּית	וְנִשְׁבִּית	אָשָׁר	אָשָׁר	אָשָׁר	אָשָׁר	אָשָׁר	אָשָׁר	אָשָׁר	אָשָׁר
she and her inhabitants	H3427	H3427	which cause	H5414	which cause	their terror	H2851	in the sea	H3220
וְנִשְׁבִּית	וְנִשְׁבִּית	וְנִשְׁבִּית	וְנִשְׁבִּית	וְנִשְׁבִּית	וְנִשְׁבִּית	וְנִשְׁבִּית	וְנִשְׁבִּית	city	H5892
she and her inhabitants	H3427	H3427	she and her inhabitants	H3427	she and her inhabitants	she and her inhabitants	H3427	city	H5892

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,