

Ezekiel 27:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Dedan was thy merchant in precious clothes for chariots.

Analysis

Dedan was thy merchant in precious clothes for chariots (בְּגֵדֵי-חֹפֶשׁ לְרֶכֶבָה, bigdei-chofesh lerikbah)—Dedan (modern Al-Ula, Saudi Arabia) was an Arabian trading tribe descended from Abraham through Keturah (Genesis 25:3). The phrase "precious clothes for chariots" likely refers to saddle blankets or riding cloths for horses and chariots, luxury items for military and aristocratic use. The Hebrew chofesh suggests freedom or nobility, indicating high-status textiles.

Dedan appears twice in Ezekiel's oracles—here as Tyre's trading partner, and in 25:13 receiving judgment. This demonstrates God's sovereignty over all nations, whether engaged in commerce or conquest. The specificity of these trading relationships shows divine omniscience—God knows every transaction, every partnership, every source of human pride.

Historical Context

Dedan was a major Arabian caravan city controlling the incense route from South Arabia to the Mediterranean. Dedanite inscriptions from the 6th-5th centuries BC confirm their role in the luxury textile trade. The mention of chariot cloths reflects the military aristocracy of the ancient Near East, where horses and chariots were symbols of power and wealth (though Israel was warned against trusting in them—Psalm 20:7).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does God's detailed knowledge of Tyre's trading partners challenge any notion that secular commerce exists outside His sovereign awareness?
2. In what areas of your life do you compartmentalize "business" from "spiritual" matters, forgetting God sees and judges all?

Interlinear Text

דִּדָּן	רֶכֶּלֶתְךָ	בְּבִגְדֵי	חַ פָּשׁ	לְרֶכֶבָּהּ:
Dedan	was thy merchant	clothes	in precious	for chariots
H1719	H7402	H899	H2667	H7396

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 25:3 (Parallel theme): And Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim.