

Ezekiel 27:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba,
Asshur, and Chilmad, were thy merchants.

Analysis

Haran, and Canneh, and Eden, the merchants of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad—This verse lists Mesopotamian trading centers: Haran (Abraham's family city, Genesis 11:31-32), Canneh (possibly Calneh, Genesis 10:10), and Eden (likely Bit-Adini, an Aramean kingdom). The repetition of Sheba emphasizes Arabia's commercial dominance. Asshur (Assyria) represents the great empire that had conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BC. The Hebrew structure lists these cities as *roklim* (רָכְלִים, merchants/traders), emphasizing their role as commercial intermediaries.

That Tyre traded with Israel's conqueror (Assyria) reveals the moral bankruptcy of commercial neutrality. Profit trumped loyalty or justice. The church faces the same temptation—partnering with worldly systems that oppose God's kingdom for the sake of influence or gain.

Historical Context

Haran (modern Harran, Turkey) sat at the crossroads of ancient trade routes between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean. Assyria (Asshur) was the dominant Near Eastern power until Babylon defeated it in 609 BC. This verse captures the commercial world just before Babylon's rise—within decades, Nebuchadnezzar would conquer all these trading partners, including Tyre. Ezekiel's prophecy came during this transitional period (593 BC).

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Tyre's willingness to trade with Israel's enemies challenge you to examine your own compromises with systems opposed to God's values?
2. What "Assyrias" in your life—sources of profit or security that require moral compromise—do you need to identify and reject?

Interlinear Text

כָּלָם	ד	אֶשְׁׁ וּרְ	שְׁבָא	רְכָלְתָּרָה:	תַּעַדְתָּ	וְכָנֵה	וְכָנֵה	סְכִינָה
Haran	and Canneh	and Eden	the merchants	of Sheba	Asshur	and Chilmad		
H2771	H3656	H5729	H7402	H7614	H804	H3638		

רְכָלְתָּרָה:
the merchants
H7402

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 19:12 (Parallel theme): Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Thelasar?

Isaiah 37:12 (Parallel theme): Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Telassar?

Genesis 10:22 (Parallel theme): The children of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.

Amos 1:5 (Parallel theme): I will break also the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven, and him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden: and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, saith the LORD.

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