

Ezekiel 27:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The suburbs shall shake at the sound of the cry of thy pilots.

Analysis

Maritime Imagery of Collapse: The Hebrew word for "suburbs" (migrash) can also mean "common lands" or "pasture lands" surrounding a city, here representing Tyre's dependent territories, satellite settlements, and trading partners along the Mediterranean coast. The "shake" (ra'ash) is a trembling or quaking, suggesting earthquake-like devastation spreading from the center outward in concentric waves of destruction.

The Cry of the Pilots: The "cry" (za'aqah) is a shriek of distress, a desperate wail of those realizing impending doom and unable to prevent it. The "pilots" (hobel) were the skilled navigators who guided Tyre's merchant fleet across the Mediterranean, representing the city's maritime expertise and commercial success that made it wealthy. Their cry symbolizes the collapse of Tyre's entire economic system and naval dominance. This verse forms part of an extended dirge (Ezekiel 27) that personifies Tyre as a magnificent ship that ultimately wrecks catastrophically. The imagery emphasizes how completely Tyre's trading empire would collapse, affecting not just the island city but its entire network of dependencies, trading posts, and commercial partners throughout the ancient world.

Historical Context

Tyre was the preeminent Phoenician maritime city-state, dominating Mediterranean trade from approximately 1200-573 BC. Located on an island fortress off the Lebanese coast, Tyre seemed invulnerable, surviving the Assyrian

siege (701 BC) and holding out against Nebuchadnezzar for 13 years (585-573 BC). Ezekiel prophesied against Tyre during their exile period, likely because Tyre rejoiced at Jerusalem's fall, seeing it as eliminating commercial competition (Ezekiel 26:2). Tyre's trading network extended throughout the Mediterranean and beyond, making its fall economically catastrophic for the entire region. The prophecy was fulfilled progressively: Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the mainland city, and Alexander the Great completed the destruction in 332 BC by building a causeway to the island and razing it completely.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the maritime imagery in this verse enhance the impact of Tyre's prophesied destruction?
2. What does the reaction of Tyre's dependent territories reveal about the interconnectedness of ancient economies?
3. Why did God judge Tyre so severely for their pride and rejoicing over Jerusalem's fall?
4. How does this prophecy demonstrate the principle that earthly power and wealth are ultimately temporary?
5. What lessons can modern commercial enterprises learn from Tyre's downfall?

Interlinear Text

לִקְוֹל	וַיִּבְכּוּ	חִבְלֵי יָם	יִרְעָשׁוּ	מִגְרָשׁוֹת:
at the sound	of the cry	of thy pilots	shall shake	The suburbs
H6963	H2201	H2259	H7493	H4054

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 26:10 (Parallel theme): By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wheels, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach.

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