

Isaiah 23:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days? her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn.

Analysis

Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days? (בָּזָאת לֹאָת לְכָם עַלְיָה) —The rhetorical question drips with irony. Tyre, the 'joyous' (alliyyah) city known for celebrations, music, and festive commerce, now lies in ruins. Her qedem (antiquity) stretches back centuries—Josephus claims Tyre was founded c. 1200 BC, making it over 500 years old in Isaiah's day. Ancient pedigree provided no immunity from judgment.

Her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn—The very 'feet' that once danced in joy now trudge into exile. The Hebrew guwr (sojourn/dwell as alien) describes the immigrant or refugee status. Those who hosted foreign merchants in their marketplace now become foreigners themselves, sojourners without homeland. This reversal echoes Israel's own experience: the people called to be a light to nations faced exile when they forgot their God. Tyre's fall demonstrates that cultural achievement, economic power, and historical longevity mean nothing without covenant faithfulness to the Creator.

Historical Context

Tyre claimed legendary origins with Heracles/Melqart as patron deity. The city's temples, palaces, and commercial infrastructure represented centuries of accumulated wealth and culture. Its fall to Nebuchadnezzar and later Alexander destroyed not just a city but an entire civilization, scattering its people across the Mediterranean as refugees and slaves.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. What institutions or traditions claim immunity from judgment based on age, tradition, or cultural achievement?
2. How does God view human history and cultural legacy differently than we do?
3. What does it mean that those who were hosts become sojourners—how does pride lead to humiliation?

Interlinear Text

לֹא	עַלְיָה	מִימִינֵי	בָּזֶה	אֶת	קָדוֹם	תָּהָרֶת
H2063	H0	Is this your joyous	days	is of ancient	city whose	antiquity
		H5947	H3117	H6924		H6927
שָׁלַח	מַרְחֵךְ	וְלֹא	כִּגְלִיל	יָמָן	לִגְוָרָה:	
shall carry	her own feet	her afar off	to sojourn			
H2986	H7272	H7350	H1481			

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 22:2 (Parallel theme): Thou that art full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city: thy slain men are not slain with the sword, nor dead in battle.