

Isaiah 23:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.

Analysis

The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory—This verse crystallizes the theological center of Isaiah 23. The phrase *ga'on kol-tsevi* (pride of all beauty/glory) encompasses not only Tyre but all human glory. God's stated purpose (*ya'atsah*, purposed/counseled) involves *lechallel* (to profane, pollute, defile)—the same verb used for desecrating holy things. Human glory, however magnificent, is profaned in comparison to divine holiness.

To bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth (לְהַקֵּל כָּל-נִכְבְּדֵי-אֶרֶץ)—The verb *lehakel* means to make light, trivial, or contemptible. The nobles of earth (*nikbadey-arets*), those 'heavy' with honor, are made 'light'—worthless. This divine reversal inverts human value systems: what earth honors, heaven condemns; what humans esteem, God despises. Paul echoes this in 1 Corinthians 1:27-29: God chooses foolish things to shame the wise, weak things to shame the strong, 'so that no flesh should glory in His presence.' Tyre's judgment illustrates God's cosmic program to humble all pride before His throne.

Historical Context

The ancient Near East operated on honor-shame culture where social status determined worth. Phoenician merchants had achieved the ultimate goal: wealth bringing honor. God's judgment directly attacked this value system, demonstrating

that earthly honor systems are meaningless before divine holiness. The cross ultimately accomplished this: the King of Glory crucified as a criminal.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What forms of 'glory' and 'honor' does contemporary culture most prize—and how might God view them?
2. How does the gospel deliberately 'stain' worldly glory by exalting a crucified carpenter as Lord of all?
3. What does it mean practically to reject earthly honor systems in favor of God's upside-down kingdom values?

Interlinear Text

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|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------|-------|---------------------|
| יְהוָה ה | צָבָא וְת | יַעֲצֵה ה | לְחַלֵּל | גָּא וְ | כָּל | צָב י |
| The LORD | of hosts | hath purposed | it to stain | the pride | H3605 | of all glory |
| H3068 | H6635 | H3289 | H2490 | H1347 | | H6643 |
| לְהַקֵּן ל | כָּל | נִכְבְּדֵי | אֶרֶץ: | | | |
| and to bring into contempt | H3605 | all the honourable | of the earth | | | |
| H7043 | | H3513 | H776 | | | |

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 13:11 (Parallel theme): And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

James 4:6 (Parallel theme): But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Isaiah 2:11 (References Lord): The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day.

Daniel 4:37 (Parallel theme): Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase.

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