

Zechariah 9:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire.

Analysis

Behold, the Lord will cast her out, and he will smite her power in the sea; and she shall be devoured with fire—the emphatic "Behold" (hinneh, הִנֵּה) demands attention to the shocking reversal. "The Lord" (Adonai, אֲדֹנֵי) emphasizes divine sovereignty—no human agency accomplishes this, but God Himself acts. The verb "will cast her out" (yorishennah, יְוַיְשַׁנָּה) means to dispossess or disinherit, suggesting Tyre will be expelled from her territorial possessions and commercial empire.

"And he will smite her power in the sea" (ve-hikkah va-yam cheylah, וְהִקְהֵה בְּעַמְּדָה) contains brilliant irony. Tyre's cheyl (כְּלָל, strength/wealth/power) lay precisely in her maritime position—the sea provided her defense and commercial advantage. God will strike her strength in the very element that made her powerful. The sea that protected becomes the arena of judgment. This recalls Pharaoh's army drowned in the Red Sea (Exodus 14:27-28)—God masters the waters that humans trust for security.

"And she shall be devoured with fire" (ve-hi ba-esh te'akhel, וְהִיא בָּאֵשׁ תִּאֲכֵל) predicts total destruction. Fire consumes what remains after military conquest—the final humiliation. Alexander's forces burned the city after the brutal siege, fulfilling this prophecy with precise accuracy. The progression—dispossession, military defeat, and fiery consumption—leaves nothing of Tyre's former glory. God demolishes what humans consider impregnable, teaching that all earthly powers exist at His sufferance and fall at His word.

Historical Context

The specific prediction of Tyre's "power in the sea" being smitten found exact fulfillment when Alexander built his unprecedented causeway in 332 BC. The siege required innovative engineering: constructing a 200-foot-wide mole (earthwork) across half a mile of water, using stone from demolished mainland Tyre. Tyrian ships attacked the construction, but Alexander brought up a fleet to protect his engineers. When the causeway reached the island, siege towers and battering rams breached the walls after seven months.

Alexander's fury at Tyrian resistance led to massacre and enslavement. Fire consumed much of the city. The causeway permanently altered geography—silt buildup eventually made it a permanent land bridge, transforming island Tyre into a peninsula (visible in modern satellite imagery). This fulfilled Ezekiel 26:4's prophecy that Tyre's stones, timber, and dust would be "laid in the midst of the water." Though Tyre was later rebuilt, it never regained its former prominence. Jesus walked through this region (Mark 7:24-31), and Paul visited Christians there (Acts 21:3-6)—the gospel conquered spiritually what Alexander conquered militarily.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does God's striking Tyre's power "in the sea"—her source of strength—demonstrate His ability to use our very securities against us in judgment?
2. What does the complete destruction of seemingly invincible Tyre teach about trusting in geographic, military, or economic advantages?
3. How should the historical precision of this prophecy's fulfillment 200+ years later strengthen our confidence in other prophetic Scripture, including end-times prophecy?

Interlinear Text

חִילְלָה	בְּיַם	בְּיַם	בְּיַם	בְּיַם
הַבָּה	וַיַּרְשֵׁךְ	וַיַּרְשֵׁךְ	וַיַּרְשֵׁךְ	וַיַּרְשֵׁךְ
אָדָנִי	בְּנָה	בְּנָה	בְּנָה	בְּנָה
H2009	Behold the Lord	will cast her out	and he will smite	in the sea
H136	H3423	H5221	H3220	H2428
בְּאֵשׁ	תִּאָכַל			
וְהַיָּא				
H1931	with fire	and she shall be devoured		
H784	H398			

Additional Cross-References

Ezekiel 28:18 (Parallel theme): Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

Ezekiel 26:17 (Parallel theme): And they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited of seafaring men, the renowned city, which wast strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, which cause their terror to be on all that haunt it!

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