

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 241 – The Burden Of Tyre (Isaiah 23:1-18)

1. Was the burden of Tyre going to be a partial judgment or total destruction?

“Laid waste” does not imply partial destruction, though we’ll see it was not everlasting destruction: *“The burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them” (Isaiah 23:1).*

- Tyre had past, good relations with Israel (**I Kings 5:1**).
- Jesus said that this nation would have repented had they seen the works Jesus did (**Matthew 11:20-24**).
- It was a coastal nation in both the Old (**Joshua 19:29**) and New Testament [1st century] times (**Matthew 15:21**).
- Tyre wronged God and would pay for it (**Joel 3:4-8**).
- Tarshish was also a trading coastal city (cf. **II Chronicles 20:36**), possibly an island (**Psalms 72:10** and **Isaiah 60:9**). A place known for silver and other fine metals (**Jeremiah 10:9** and **Ezekiel 27:12**).
- Assyria (**Isaiah 37:18**) and the Chaldeans (**Jeremiah 27:17**) left cities in waste. God had them do such to prove He is God (**Ezekiel 12:20**). **The Chaldeans are behind this.**

2. Did Tyre depend on the sea for their trading?

Yes: *“(2) Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished. (3) And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, is her revenue; and she is a mart of nations. (4) Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, even the strength of the sea, saying, I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, nor bring up virgins” (Isaiah 23:2-4).*

- “Be still” (**Psalms 46:10**, **Isaiah 41:1**, **Isaiah 47:5**, **Habakkuk 2:20**, and **Mark 4:39**).
- Zidon & sea merchants (**Ezekiel 27:8**), tied to Tyre (as noted in a point under question 1; cf. **Joel 3:4-8**).
- The point of verse 4 is that there will be no more production from trade, which God did to other nations, even Judah (**Zephaniah 1:6-11**).

3. What did Tyre have in common with Egypt?

Other nations were pained at the report of their destructions: *“As at the report concerning Egypt, so shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre” (Isaiah 23:5).*

- Like the song Moses and the children of Israel sang (**Exodus 15:1ff.**), when people heard what God did in Egypt fear was stricken in them (**Exodus 15:11-16**).
- Even in later judgments against Egypt, fear from within (**Isaiah 19:16** and **Ezekiel 30:13**) and without (**Isaiah 19:17**).
- God wanted His judgments to bring fear to others (**I Samuel 3:11** and **II Peter 2:6**).

4. What reputation had Tarshish enjoyed in the past?

It was known as a joyous city: *“(6) Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle. (7) Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days? her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn” (Isaiah 23:6-7).*

- When judgments like this occur, feet that were once joyous turn into feet that are sojourning away from that joyous city (cf. **Isaiah 20:2-4**).
- When people are in sin they often are “having fun” without considering what is to come (**Matthew 24:35-39**).

5. God asked who had taken this counsel against Tyre and then He answered the question. So what was God’s answer to that question?

“The Lord of hosts”: *“(8) Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth? (9) 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” (Isaiah 23:8-9).*

- The prince of Tyrus [Tyre] thought he was something, the crown of crowns (**Ezekiel 28:2-6**).
- God is the great humbler (**Isaiah 2:11, Isaiah 2:17, Isaiah 10:33, Matthew 23:12, and James 4:6-10**) who does what He purposes (**Isaiah 46:10-11**).

6. If passing through Tyre at the time God judged them, would you find strength?

No: *“(10) Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish: there is no more strength. (11) He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the LORD hath given a commandment against the merchant city, to destroy the strong holds thereof. (12) And he said, Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest” (Isaiah 23:10-12).*

- The weakening of the strong (**Job 12:21, Lamentations 1:6, and Haggai 2:22**).
- On the other hand, the godly become strong through weakness (**II Corinthians 12:10 and Hebrews 11:34**).
- Shaking of nations (**Haggai 2:7**).
- Wickedness doesn’t provide rest (**Isaiah 57:20**).

7. What land was Tyre told to behold?

The land of the Chaldeans: *“Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; and he brought it to ruin” (Isaiah 23:13).*

- The land of the Chaldeans, which was once under control of Assyria (**II Kings 17:24**), was the glory of kingdoms; but what happened to them (**Isaiah 13:19**).

8. Tyre was laid waste and forgotten, but was that going to be forever?

No, 70 years: *“And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot” (Isaiah 23:15).*

- This is telling in that this ties to the strength of the reign of terror from Babylon (**Jeremiah 25:9-11**; cf. **Jeremiah 27:6-7**).
- This is another prophesy to take note of in that God is showing them and us that the Babylonian Empire was under His will and He choose what was to happen before they took power (**Isaiah 48:14**).

9. What was Tyre going to be after the seventy years of their destruction?

A spiritual harlot that God was going to use to benefit His people: *“(15) And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot. (16) Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered. (17) And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. (18) And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing” (Isaiah 23:15-18).*

- After the 70 years Judah would be returned home (**Jeremiah 29:1-10**).
- Talk about a humbling... After the 70 years, Tyre [that proud; glorious city] would be like a whore whose labor would not benefit them, but the people of the Lord (**Proverbs 13:22**, **Proverbs 28:8**, and **Ecclesiastes 2:26**).