

The Visions of Ezekiel

Lesson 19

E. Vision Five – (26:1 – 28:26) 11th Year, 1st Day

Ezekiel's Thirty-eighth Assignment from the LORD

1. The Date

26:1 Now in the eleventh year, on the first of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

To begin this vision, we must address a translation problem found in the various English versions. We are using the New American Standard Version 1995 (NASV). The wording of this version matches that found in all the other major versions save for the New Living Translation, and the Berean Study Bible. Those two versions are as follows.

New Living Translation 26:1 On February 3, during the twelfth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, this message came to me from the LORD:

Berean Study Bible 26:1 In the eleventh month of the twelfth year, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me, saying,

Notice that the New Living Translation (NLT) includes three elements that are not included in any of the other versions. To state that the vision occurred on “**February 3**” indicated that the translators had made an assumption that cannot be supported. First, the passage was written during the days of the Babylonian Empire. Their calendar was a lunar based calendar of 354 days per year that did not align with our current Gregorian calendar of 365.2524 days per year in any way. The Israelites had used the same 354-day calendar since the days of Noah’s flood. It was based on the phases of the moon, the only accurate and extremely obvious time marker for all of humanity. For the Israelites, the months were numbered one through twelve; for the Babylonians, the months were named. When the Israelites returned to the Southern Kingdom area in 536 BC after the end of the exile, they took back their calendar with the Babylonian names for the months rather than using the old number system. The actual month is not stated in this passage as it was in the first three visions; therefore, we do not know the actual month on the Israelite or Babylonian calendars for this vision. The month of February was a Roman Empire creation put in place by Numa Pompilius in 713 BC, just nine years after the fall of the Northern Kingdom. However, the Roman Empire was still small and fledgling and would not have any impact on any Old Testament Scripture references until the birth of the LORD during the reign of King Herod. It is therefore impossible to match a Julian/Gregorian date with any date mentioned in the Scripture with any degree of accuracy. The original Roman calendar contained ten months with 304 days that matched the appearance of the new moon phases and did not include January or February. After December 29th of each year the empire would wait for the Spring Equinox and start its calendar with the month of March (Martius). Numa attempted to fix that problem by adding January and February which increased the year to 354 days, still a lunar calendar. Julius Caesar, in 45 BC added eleven days that he spread across the months which resulted in a 365-day calendar in an attempt to match the calendar to the seasons of the sun, a solar calendar. This calendar had its problems and by the time of Caesar Augustus, the seasons were off by 12 days. Leap years ceased from 8 BC until 12 AD and then the system was corrected to have a leap year every four years instead of three. This, too, was not accurate enough. By 1582 BC, the calendar was off again by eleven days and in October of that year, eleven days were removed from the calendar. The people went to bed

on Wednesday, October 4th and woke on Thursday, October 15th. Needless to say, that moved the accuracy of February 3rd on the calendar. So, we must ask the question. *“Which February 3rd are the translators referring to?”* Is it the February 3 of Numa’s calendar or that of Julius or Gregory? It is impossible to set a concrete day in the Scripture except to call it **“the first of the month.”**

Second, both versions state that it was the **“twelfth”** year. The original Hebrew translates into English as *“And it came to pass in one [and] ten the year on the first [day] of the month came the word of Yahweh to me saying.”* One year and ten years equal eleven years. Both translations assume that with the passing of eleven years, a new twelfth year had begun. This position cannot be supported. It is a classic example of reading into the text that which is not said.

Third, the NLT added the phrase, **“of King Jehoiachin’s captivity.”** This version has falsely added to the Scripture that which is not found in the original Hebrew.

Fourth, the Berean Study Bible (BSB) indicates that the vision occurred **“In the eleventh month of the twelfth year, on the first day of the month.”** Once again, the BSB has read into the Scripture that which is not in the Hebrew. If it was the **“eleventh month of the twelfth year,”** Jerusalem would have been defeated and destroyed for more than a year at the time of this vision, but it had not.

In conclusion, taking the Hebrew translation at face value, it would be better to avoid the NLT and BSB. So, then, in what month did this vision occur? We do not know. However, we can make an educated guess. The last siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar began the 9th day of the 4th month of the 11th year of Zedekiah’s reign. The city was destroyed on the 10th day of the 5th month of the 11th year of Zedekiah’s reign. Combined, it was a month-long siege and it occurred in the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar as King of Babylon (Jeremiah 52:6, 12).⁴⁶ At face value, this vision probably occurred on the first day of the first month of the eleventh year on the Israelite calendar. It would be Nisan 1 on the Babylonian calendar. That would mean that Jerusalem had roughly four months before the last siege began and five months until it ended. Another possibility is that the vision occurred on the first day of either the fourth month or the fifth month. In my opinion, because of verse 26:2 that we are about to study, this vision came to Ezekiel on the first day of the sixth month following the destruction of Jerusalem on the 10th day of the fifth month. In reality, it does not matter if it was the first, fourth, fifth or sixth month of the eleventh year because this vision had nothing to do with Jerusalem, it was about the Canaanite city of Tyre. The army of Nebuchadnezzar spent three years outside the city of Jerusalem before it was able to breach the walls to destroy it. During that three years, the city of Tyre sat safely to the north probably thinking it had avoided the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar. But it had not! This vision, given on the first day of the month, would describe the trouble that would come to Tyre after Jerusalem had met its fate.

2. The City of Tyre

26:2 "Son of man, because Tyre has said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has opened to me. I shall be filled, now that she is laid waste,'

The Hebrew word for **“Tyre”** means *a rock*. Tyre was the warehouse of the world, or at least for those countries around the Mediterranean Sea. Every coastal country relied on the merchants of Tyre who were second, behind the men of Sidon, to brave the task of navigating the waters of the sea. But Tyre was not in one location. Part of Tyre was a rocky fortress on the mainland. By the time of Ezekiel, it was called *Old Tyre*. The other part of the city was on a rocky island offshore about half a mile away. King Shalmaneser of the Assyrian Empire had tried to take the offshore half of the city in a five-year siege but with no success. Starting at the time of this vision, Nebuchadnezzar would try to take the city for thirteen years but without success (586-573 BC). The mainland portion of the city was taken by Shalmaneser and Nebuchadnezzar with ease. The rocky offshore city would not be taken until the days of Alexander the Great when he would enact a seven-month siege, about two hundred and fifty years later after

⁴⁶ Nebuchadnezzar became king in 606 BC upon his father’s death. However, in the custom of the day, his reign was recorded from the beginning of the next year, coronation day on the first day of the first month. On the Babylonian Calendar it was Nisan 1. Therefore, the official start of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign began in 605 BC. Year 605 – 19 years = 586 BC, the year of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple.

Nebuchadnezzar. The entirety of this vision would encompass the future of both parts of the city from Nebuchadnezzar's attack to Alexander's.

Through the study of the Old Testament, we have mentioned the trade routes many times. Both Tyre and Jerusalem sat on the lucrative route to Egypt. Tyre's route was primarily by sea; Jerusalem's route was primarily by caravan on land. Easton's Illustrated Dictionary states the following about Tyre.

Both Tyre and Sidon "were crowded with glass-shops, dyeing and weaving establishments; and among their cunning workmen not the least important class were those who were celebrated for the engraving of precious stones." (2 Ch 2:7, 14).⁴⁷

With the destruction of Jerusalem, Tyre saw the opportunity to double its market and benefit from the void left by the destruction of the Holy City.

3. The Destruction of Tyre

26:3 therefore thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. 26:4 'They will destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; and I will scrape her debris from her and make her a bare rock.

But Tyre's joy over the downfall of Jerusalem was short lived. Within a short period, Nebuchadnezzar was at Tyre's door as predicted in this passage. He was not there yet; the Ammonites, Moabites, Edomites and Philistines near Jerusalem had to be handled first, but Nebuchadnezzar would be on his way soon. As a reminder for this lesson, Nebuchadnezzar's army that destroyed Jerusalem and the other countries mentioned here were from Babylon, Assyria, Pekod, Shoa, Toa, Aram and all the conquered countries taken in Nebuchadnezzar's campaign. These same countries would join him to take down Tyre. The picture in this passage states that the army of Nebuchadnezzar would roll over the city of Tyre like a wave rolls across a beach, easily and completely. The power of the wave, or the army, would break down all the houses, businesses and other structures, washing them into the sea. The mainland city would be nothing but a bare rock when he was through.

4. The Future of Tyre

26:5 'She will be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,' declares the Lord GOD, 'and she will become spoil for the nations.

Wiped clean, the mainland city, once covered with structures of all sorts would then be good for just a few things. One thing it would be useful for is mentioned in this verse – **“the spreading of nets.”** Fishing nets of that day were not made of the durable strands we use today; they had to be spread out to air dry each day so they would not rot from the moisture. The nets were also spread at the end of each day in order to see where repairs were needed to be made.

To say that Tyre would **“become spoil for the nations,”** meant that with the destruction of the mainland city, all the nations under Nebuchadnezzar would be able to loot the merchandise from the warehouses it possessed. Tyre sat at the perfect place on the Mediterranean Sea to be a warehouse city for the products of all the countries around the sea. Ships rarely sailed on the north shore from October to February because of the hazards of storms, general weather conditions and underwater rocks and debris. For those reason, ships from Tarshish on the coast of Spain could deliver their goods several times to Tyre and then return before the sailing season ended. The same was true from the south. Ships could travel several times from Egypt up the eastern coast of the Mediterranean to Tyre and then return before the end of the season. Tyre was about midway between the two. Items from the north and south coasts could be stored in Tyre. The ships would arrive with merchandise from the north to unload and return home

⁴⁷ Easton's Illustrated Bible Dictionary: And Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature.

with merchandise loaded in Tyre from the South. But, Nebuchadnezzar's siege would bring an end to that. His army would strip the warehouses of their goods as spoils.

5. The Daughters of Tyre

26:6 'Also her daughters who are on the mainland will be slain by the sword, and they will know that I am the LORD.'"

It would be easy to quickly associate Tyre's "daughters" with villages or towns that surrounded the section of the city settled on the mainland. We could name many, including Sidon, Byblos and Hasor. A longer list of cities will be seen in chapter 27. However, to call these daughters cities or villages around Tyre would cause our interpretation to depart from the way we have interpreted all the references to the sons and daughters of the other cities already mentioned in Ezekiel. In each of those cases, the sons and the daughters of the cities were their human inhabitants. With that as the case, we should not look at this reference differently but rather as actual women who lived in the portion of Tyre located on the mainland. Therefore, what was the purpose of this verse in this context?

In war, women were almost always saved as spoils for the attackers. In addition, it was considered by many nations bad form to kill women when attacking a village or city. Males were a different subject – they were killed on the spot. Yes, women, because of their God-given nature and instinctive love for their husbands and sons, exhibited great fear for the preservation of their families, their husbands and male offspring. Indeed, the women knew that their lives might be spared, but the life that followed the attack was not promised to be joyful in any way. It might be one of hard slavery, it might be one of tragic degradation, but it also might be one of pleasant days. No one ever knew what the future would be like after the attack and death of the loved ones. Yet, this passage promised death even to the women of Tyre's mainland village. They would not have a future after Nebuchadnezzar was through with the city. And, Nebuchadnezzar was the one who would have his army kill the women of the mainland city. The LORD would tell us that next.

6. Destroyer of Tyre

a) Nebuchadnezzar's Army

26:7 For thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will bring upon Tyre from the north Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses, chariots, cavalry and a great army.

In this verse the LORD named Nebuchadnezzar as the destroyer of Tyre. Furthermore, there is no need to wonder about the authority of the One Who would send him to Tyre for it would be the Lord GOD.

b) Nebuchadnezzar's Siege

26:8 "He will slay your daughters on the mainland with the sword; and he will make siege walls against you, cast up a ramp against you and raise up a large shield against you. 26:9 "The blow of his battering rams he will direct against your walls, and with his axes he will break down your towers. 26:10 "Because of the multitude of his horses, the dust raised by them will cover you; your walls will shake at the noise of cavalry and wagons and chariots when he enters your gates as men enter a city that is breached. 26:11 "With the hoofs of his horses he will trample all your streets. He will slay your people with the sword; and your strong pillars will come down to the ground. 26:12 "Also they will make a spoil of your riches and a prey of your merchandise, break down your walls and destroy your pleasant houses, and throw your stones and your timbers and your debris into the water. 26:13 "So I will silence the sound of your songs, and the sound of your harps will be heard no more. 26:14 "I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place for the spreading of nets. You will be built no more, for I the LORD have spoken," declares the Lord GOD.

The city and its women may have thought they would be safe within the stone walls of Tyre, but that would not be the case. Nebuchadnezzar's men would surround the city, build a ramp to the gate, break it down with a ram and rush through on horses to kill the people and destroy the city from within and then cast it all into the sea. The sound of the city would cease, the music would end, the foundation would be bare. No house would stand, no market would exist, no barns would shelter, no temple would protect. All would be cast into the sea. The land would be good but for one thing, drying the sailor's nets each evening.

(1) The Warning to Tyre

26:15 **Thus says the Lord GOD to Tyre, "Shall not the coastlands shake at the sound of your fall when the wounded groan, when the slaughter occurs in your midst?**

Surely the LORD was not speaking of the actual breaking of the waters against the sands of the shore in this passage. Rather, the LORD was speaking of the people of the towns surrounding the full Mediterranean Sea coast that relied on Tyre's industry as a storehouse to the nations. The products would be taken as spoils by the victors of Nebuchadnezzar's army. As such, the "**coastlands shake**" in their boots at the news of Tyre's destruction. How do we know this? Reading on, we will find that this interpretation must be the intent of this passage.

(2) The Rulers of the Sea

26:16 **"Then all the princes of the sea will go down from their thrones, remove their robes and strip off their embroidered garments. They will clothe themselves with trembling; they will sit on the ground, tremble every moment and be appalled at you.**

In all the villages with sea ports that relied on the financial mechanism built by Tyre as the trading hub of the region, products were gone, costs of goods were gone, profits were gone from the standpoint of sellers of goods. Goods and products that were needed also stopped coming from Tyre such as spices, fruits, vegetables, meats, incense, furniture, rugs, and shelter material. What would the cities do? How would their needs be met? The shoulder to bear the burden for each city was the prince (or king) of each city and for that the princes entered into great grief, heartache and despair.

(3) The Lamentation for the City

26:17 **"They will take up a lamentation over you and say to you, 'How you have perished, O inhabited one, From the seas, O renowned city, Which was mighty on the sea, She and her inhabitants, Who imposed her terror On all her inhabitants! 26:18 'Now the coastlands will tremble On the day of your fall; Yes, the coastlands which are by the sea Will be terrified at your passing."**

To boil this lamentation for the city of Tyre down to a few simple words, the rulers of the cities around and near the Mediterranean Sea basically cried out, "*O Tyre, how has this happened to you and Who did it? How could you die?*"

(4) The Destruction of the City

26:19 **For thus says the Lord GOD, "When I make you a desolate city, like the cities which are not inhabited, when I bring up the deep over you and the great waters cover you, 26:20 then I will bring you down with those who go down to the pit, to the people of old, and I will make you dwell in the lower parts of the earth, like the ancient waste places, with those who go down to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited; but I will set glory in the land of the living. 26:21 "I will bring terrors on you and you will be no more; though you will be sought, you will never be found again," declares the Lord GOD.**

If we were to dissect this passage too much, to look in detail at each word or phrase, we might well miss the power and intent of the whole sentence. At the time of the delivery of this vision, Tyre was still a vibrant city, but not for long. Like a swell of a great wave from the sea, Nebuchadnezzar would soon

flow over the city from the east and push its buildings and dead inhabitants into the water. In death, Tyre's people would find themselves in the “**pit**” just as all those who had died in the world before they had. The Hebrew word for “**pit**” is *bor* and it means *the grave*. Down to the grave they would go with all those who had long since died.

I like what the Bible Knowledge Commentary says about this passage.

Ezekiel then changed the imagery slightly. Instead of descending into the ocean depths, Tyre would **go down to the pit** (*bôr*) a figurative way of expressing death. "Pit" is synonymous with "sheol" or "the grave" ([Prov. 1:12](#); [Isa. 14:15, 19](#); [38:18](#)). In Old Testament times death was a fearful event. Though the saints had some idea of resurrection (cf. [Heb. 11:17-19](#)), most viewed the grave as a place of no return. Ezekiel expressed this thought about Tyre: she would enter the place of the departed dead and never be able to **return to the land of the living**. People would long for her, but she would **never again be found**.⁴⁸

Hidden in the passage we find “**but I will set glory in the land of the living.**” The words seem so out of context and stray from the terror and disaster addressed to Tyre. What does it mean? The answer is simple. Those who died in Tyre would be dead with no hope of earthly life again. The people living in the mainland part of Tyre when Nebuchadnezzar arrived would be annihilated. Not all people of the land would be annihilated. A land of the living would continue to exist. In that land of the living, the glory of the LORD would transform their lives. What a great hope for the Israelites hearing Ezekiel's message in this vision! But, what a great horror for those living on the mainland of Tyre.

Ezekiel's Thirty-ninth Assignment from the LORD

7. The Lamentation for Tyre

27:1 Moreover, **the word of the LORD came to me** saying, **27:2** "And you, son of man, take up a lamentation over Tyre; **27:3** and say to Tyre, who dwells at the entrance to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands, **27:3** 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "O Tyre, you have said, 'I am perfect in beauty.'

With the beginning of chapter 27, the stage was set that Tyre had died and its body was buried in the “pit.” At the time of this vision, Tyre had no idea what was in her future. Nevertheless, in chapter 26 she died and in chapter 27 we have the funeral. In that day, a funeral dirge was pronounced over the dead and the death of Tyre was no exception to the rule. The lamentation was the funeral dirge and it was set in the poetry of a song to be sung on the way to the grave.

When speaking at funerals, my dear friend, Emory Gadd, always seems to bring up the carvings that we see on the headstones. He mentions the date of the birth and then the date of the death. But then he focuses everyone's attention to that mark that separated the two dates, the dash. “*We are here to talk about what happened in the life of this one that is represented by the dash*,” he would say. So, it is with this chapter. It focuses on the life of Tyre on the mainland between its establishment and its destruction by Nebuchadnezzar.

As we look at the words “**who dwells at the entrance to the sea,**” it is interesting to know that the word “**entrance**” is actually plural and should be translated as “**entrances**.” Tyre's mainland campus had two entrances to its harbor. Because of the destruction that would come at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar prophesied in this passage as well as the destruction at the hands of Alexander the Great some two hundred years later, the silt would fill in and around the debris thrown into the sea during the two campaigns and create a land mass which connects both portions of the city of Tyre today.

⁴⁸ The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

a) The Construction of Tyre

27:4 "Your borders are in the heart of the seas; Your builders have perfected your beauty. 27:5 "They have made all your planks of fir trees from Senir; 27:5 They have taken a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you. 27:6 "Of oaks from Bashan they have made your oars; 27:6 With ivory they have inlaid your deck of boxwood from the coastlands of Cyprus. 27:7 "Your sail was of fine embroidered linen from Egypt So that it became your distinguishing mark; 27:7 Your awning was blue and purple from the coastlands of Elishah.

Tyre, because of its useful place for the businesses of the world, and because of the sheer magnitude of money that passed through Tyre with a portion of every dollar going to the city, it was probably the finest opulent city in the world. Nothing but the best was used. **"Perfected in beauty."**

Tyre had been built and was a place long before the days of Solomon. Yet, during his reign, Solomon entered into a close relationship with Hiram, king of Tyre. Hiram provided Solomon the best of the best in merchandise, goods, construction materials and forced labor (slaves) to build his massive projects. Solomon took the *Nation of Israel* to the point of bankruptcy if that was possible in the world at that time. In order to pay the bills, he had to take portions of northern Israelite tribal land. During his reign, Jerusalem took the position as the market capital of the world, leaving Tyre in second place. From the days after Solomon and on down to the destruction of the city in 586 BC, Jerusalem and Tyre vied back and forth to be the market capital. With the arrival of Nebuchadnezzar outside the walls of Jerusalem in 589 BC, shutting down import and export of commerce, Tyre gratefully took the lead. But seeing Jerusalem's trouble, Tyre said, **"Aha!"** It was the wrong thing to say.

In this chapter, the LORD chose to name the countries which interacted with Tyre to make it the great city that it had become. Even though this list seems to be long, it is no match for the more than 700 countries which once entered into agreements with Solomon and gave one of its royal daughters to be a wife in order to confirm the covenant agreement. Nonetheless, the list of countries in relationships with Tyre represented almost the entire known world at that time. A survey of the countries and what they did for Tyre will show the extent of Tyre's reach.

We start with Tyre's construction. In this passage, the LORD pictured Tyre as a ship. It was not a ship, it was a city, but it was a city that saw hundreds of ships enter and leave through its two entrances every day.

The planks that created the hull for the Tyre ship were made of fir sold to them from Senir. We would call them pine trees and we know the name of Senir in the New Testament as Mount Herman which was located north of the Sea of Galilee. Senir was the Amorite name for Mount Herman.

The mast of the ship was made of cedar from the *cedars of Lebanon*. Tyre was just a few miles from the main bulk of the land of Lebanon. It was good that Tyre secured its mast when it did. Nebuchadnezzar would cut almost all the *cedars of Lebanon* down during his campaign against Tyre.

The oars used with the ship were made of oak purchased and made in Bashan. Bashan was the large green area east of the Sea of Galilee where cows were famously known for their grazing of the land.

The deck wood was made of boxwood procured from the island of Cyprus. It is the island in the northeast corner of the Mediterranean Sea that looks like a hand with a northeastward pointing finger on the map.

The sails of the ship were made from the linen spun from the cotton of Egypt. Egypt was a long way from Tyre, yet, its Egyptian cotton, as we know it today was widely desired even as a thousand thread count sheet of Egyptian cotton is still a **"distinguishing mark"** of the country.

The awnings, the tents that were pitched on the decks of the ships to protect the sailors from all sorts of weather conditions were from the areas of the world famous for blue and purple dyes. A coastland area which produced these dyes was called **"Elishah"** and it refers to coasts on the waters between eastern Italy and western Greece.

b) The Workers of Tyre

27:8 "The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers; **27:8** Your wise men, O Tyre, were aboard; they were your pilots. **27:9** "The elders of Gebal and her wise men were with you repairing your seams; **27:9** All the ships of the sea and their sailors were with you in order to deal in your merchandise. **27:10** "Persia and Lud and Put were in your army, your men of war. **27:10** They hung shield and helmet in you; they set forth your splendor. **27:11** "The sons of Arvad and your army were on your walls, all around, **27:11** and the Gammadim were in your towers. **27:11** They hung their shields on your walls all around; they perfected your beauty.

Next, the LORD presented the human personnel who worked in and around the metaphorical ship of Tyre.

Sidon was a seaport city located about twenty miles north of Tyre. It was one of the oldest seagoing cities on the Mediterranean Sea established long before the city of Tyre. As such, most men who lived in Sidon were seamen.

Arvad was a small island off the coast of Syria just north of Sidon. It, too, was primarily a seamen's town. Sidon and Arvad were known for their experienced seamen.

The men of Gebal were experienced craftsmen known for their ability to repair the hulls of the ships and just about any other wooden structure. Today, the city is called Jebeil. The seams between the planks had to be tight enough that the side planks, when wet from the sea water would swell enough to make the ship watertight. The builders of the ship could not place the dry planks too tight. When moistened by water, the swelling boards would buckle and produce large open holes.

But the ships with their crews were not enough. The high seas were dangerous, the cargos were valuable, the lure for the thief was inevitable. An army was needed.

Persia provided men for the army of Tyre. We know the country as Iran today.

Lud also provided men. It sat in Asia Minor to the northwest of Tyre and the New Testament calls the town Lydia. Paul would plant a Church there.

Put rested to the west of Egypt. We know the country by the name of Libya. Both Lud and Put were known for their guerrillas or mercenaries, killer who would do that which a common soldier would not. Such dreadful men also came from Arvad mentioned above (27:8) along with mercenaries from Helech and Gammad. Heleck was a Chaldean name for the country of Cilicia. In that country the town of Tarsus rested. We know the place because Saul of Tarsus, the Apostle Paul, was born there. It was located in modern-day Turkey on the mainland north of the island of Cyprus. We do not know the location of Gammad. All these were warriors hired to protect Tyre and its grand merchandise dynasty.

c) The Associates of Tyre

27:12 "Tarshish was your customer because of the abundance of all kinds of wealth; with silver, iron, tin and lead they paid for your wares. **27:13** "Javan, Tubal and Meshech, they were your traders; with the lives of men and vessels of bronze they paid for your merchandise. **27:14** "Those from Beth-togarmah gave horses and war horses and mules for your wares. **27:15** "The sons of Dedan were your traders. Many coastlands were your market; ivory tusks and ebony they brought as your payment. **27:16** "Aram was your customer because of the abundance of your goods; they paid for your wares with emeralds, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral and rubies. **27:17** "Judah and the land of Israel, they were your traders; with the wheat of Minnith, cakes, honey, oil and balm they paid for your merchandise. **27:18** "Damascus was your customer because of the abundance of your goods, because of the abundance of all kinds of wealth, because of the wine of Helbon and white wool. **27:19** "Vedan and Javan paid for your wares from Uzal; wrought iron, cassia and sweet cane were among your merchandise. **27:20** "Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding. **27:21** "Arabia and all the princes of Kedar, they were your customers for lambs, rams and goats; for these they were your customers. **27:22** "The

traders of Sheba and Raamah, they traded with you; they paid for your wares with the best of all kinds of spices, and with all kinds of precious stones and gold. 27:23 "Haran, Canneh, Eden, the traders of Sheba, Asshur and Chilmad traded with you. 27:24 "They traded with you in choice garments, in clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of many colors and tightly wound cords, which were among your merchandise.

And now the LORD named the customer list or associates of the ship of Tyre. It spanned the known world. It started with Tarshish, the furthest point in the Northeastern Mediterranean Sea that the ships would sail to and from.

From Tarshish, a city in Spain came silver, iron, tin and lead. Greece, the same as modern Greece, provided slaves and bronze tools. Tubal, located in Central Turkey below the Black Sea also provide slaves and bronze tools. Meshech, also in Central Turkey, provided the same as Greece and Tubal. Beth Togarmah, located in Eastern Turkey today provided horses and mules. Rhodes, the same as modern Rhodes, furnished ivory and ebony. Aram, today's Syria, sent turquoise stones, purple fabric, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and rubies. Judah, yes, the Southern Kingdom had provided what it was known for, wheat, olive oil, balm, confections, and honey. Damascus, the capital city of Aram or today's Syria, delivered wine and wool. Danites, a place we cannot locate, supplied wrought iron, cassia used in making perfume and calamus, an herb for cooking. Greeks left by Alexander the Great in Uzal, modern Yemen, also provided wrought iron, cassia and calamus. Dedan, located on the far east side of Saudi Arabia next to the Persian Gulf, provided saddle blankets for all animals such as horses, camels, and pack mules. Arabia, located in the center of Saudi Arabia today provided lambs, rams and goats. Kedar, located in the north portion of Saudi Arabia, delivered lambs, rams and goats. Sheba, located in Southern Saudi Arabia conveyed spices, precious stones and gold. Raamah, also from Southern Saudi Arabia provided the same. Haran, Canneh, Eden, Seba, Asshur and Kilmad, all areas in Mesopotamia, the old Assyrian Empire area, rounded out the customers and merchants with blue fabric, embroidered work, and multicolored rugs.

d) The Carriers of the Merchandise of Tyre

27:25 "The ships of Tarshish were the carriers for your merchandise. And you were filled and were very glorious In the heart of the seas. 27:26 "Your rowers have brought you Into great waters; The east wind has broken you In the heart of the seas. 27:27 "Your wealth, your wares, your merchandise, Your sailors and your pilots, Your repairers of seams, your dealers in merchandise And all your men of war who are in you, With all your company that is in your midst, Will fall into the heart of the seas On the day of your overthrow.

As stated in the commentary on the previous passage, Tarshish was the farthest port in the Northeastern Mediterranean Sea to which the ships would sail to and from Tyre. When the LORD said, **"The ships of Tarshish"** it was a reference to the large ships that were made in the port of Tarshish and sold or leased to Tyre to move the merchandise to and from its warehouse.

Next, the picture painted in this passage seemed to metaphorically place all the merchandise of Tyre aboard its ship in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. Then came the **"east wind."** It was a reference to Nebuchadnezzar whose home was found in the Middle East. It would sink Tyre's ship into the deep. The ship of Tyre would be broken into pieces. But what did all of Tyre's workers who were on real ships floating in the sea do?

e) The Death of Tyre

27:28 "At the sound of the cry of your pilots The pasture lands will shake. 27:29 "All who handle the oar, The sailors and all the pilots of the sea Will come down from their ships; They will stand on the land, 27:30 And they will make their voice heard over you And will cry bitterly. They will cast dust on their heads, They will wallow in ashes. 27:31 "Also they will make themselves bald for you And gird themselves with sackcloth;

And they will weep for you in bitterness of soul With bitter mourning. 27:32 "Moreover, in their wailing they will take up a lamentation for you And lament over you: 'Who is like Tyre, Like her who is silent in the midst of the sea? 27:33 'When your wares went out from the seas, You satisfied many peoples; With the abundance of your wealth and your merchandise You enriched the kings of earth.

No doubt, when Nebuchadnezzar surrounded Tyre and made a siege on the city for eleven years as history records, all commerce in the city came to a halt just as it did when he surrounded Jerusalem. Tyre should not have said, **"Aha!"** No doubt, ships were on their way to deliver goods from Tyre to the countries around the Mediterranean Sea, load the ships with locally made goods and return to Tyre to start the process again and again. As the loaded ships arrived to enter one of the two entrances to the city, the army of Nebuchadnezzar would have been seen instantly from a distance. What would the employees of Tyre do? What could they do? Nothing but weep in despair, throw dust on their heads to show their grief and roll in the ashes of the cooled fire. Like when attending a funeral, they shaved their heads and they donned scratchy goat hair clothing to punish their bodies as their hearts and souls were punished. Their mouths would open as they began to moan their lament. Where could they unload their cargo? Who would pay them for their labors? With the death of Tyre, the workers could think only of the days of prosperity gone and the coming days of economic famine.

f) The Memory of Tyre

27:34 'Now that you are broken by the seas In the depths of the waters, Your merchandise and all your company Have fallen in the midst of you. 27:35 'All the inhabitants of the coastlands Are appalled at you, And their kings are horribly afraid; They are troubled in countenance. 27:36 'The merchants among the peoples hiss at you; 27:36 You have become terrified And you will cease to be forever.'"

The end of Tyre would be followed by its memory. A lesson should be learned here. A principle should be drawn from the LORD's prophecy in this past passage. What is that lesson? It is this. Here is what happened with Tyre.

Tyre's commerce grew quickly and it had hundreds of years of success. It seemed to be an industry that could not fail. It seemed to be the goose that laid the golden egg every day of every year for years and years. The merchant who did not do business with Tyre would be seen as the fool of fools. Investors put their money in the stock, clearly at risk but extremely profitable for trading session upon session, century after century. The rush of a product to market had to be part of the scheme for the *wanna-be* entrepreneurs longing for the payback, aching for success.

We need only to look back forty years in the history of the United States to list the one-hundred-year-old companies that no longer exist, and their fall was a total surprise. Think of the department stores, hardware stores, food establishment, and oil and gas companies that are long gone. Folded. Buried. But at what cost? Who lost the most? The stockholders! Who owned the stock in Tyre? The merchants of all the countries and cities listed above. Who owned the stock of the one-hundred-year-old companies that shut their doors in the last forty years? The employees of America with their retirement funds invested in those stocks. When a company closes, somebody loses a lot of money. The bigger the company, the more people lose money. With those massive losses come a disdain for the companies that in the hearts and minds of the investors was stolen. What would investors do who had such losses? They would be gripped with fear of the fall. Their countenances would fall because of the vanishing of their fortunes. The mere mention of the name of the closed company would boil up from deep within the investors. a great hiss spewed right through their teeth. Nothing else could be done to change the great loss except to simply hiss.