

# EZEKIEL

## Chapter 27

### *A Lament for Tyre*

The word of the LORD came to me: 2 “Now you, son of man, raise a lamentation over Tyre, 3 and say to Tyre, who dwells at the entrances to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands, thus says the Lord GOD: “O Tyre, you have said, ‘I am perfect in beauty.’ 4 Your borders are in the heart of the seas; your builders made perfect your beauty. 5 They made all your planks of fir trees from Senir; they took a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you. 6 Of oaks of Bashan they made your oars; they made your deck of pines from the coasts of Cyprus, inlaid with ivory. 7 Of fine embroidered linen from Egypt was your sail, serving as your banner; blue and purple from the coasts of Elishah was your awning. 8 The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers; your skilled men, O Tyre, were in you; they were your pilots. 9 The elders of Gebal and her skilled men were in you, caulking your seams; all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in you to barter for your wares. 10 “Persia and Lud and Put were in your army as your men of war. They hung the shield and helmet in you; they gave you splendor. 11 Men of Arvad and Helech were on your walls all around, and men of Gamad were in your towers. They hung their shields on your walls all around; they made perfect your beauty. 12 “Tarshish did business with you because of your great wealth of every kind; silver, iron, tin, and lead they exchanged for your wares. 13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged human beings and vessels of bronze for your merchandise. 14 From Beth-togarmah they exchanged horses, war horses, and mules for your wares. 15 The men of Dedan traded with you. Many coastlands were your own special markets; they brought you in payment ivory tusks and ebony. 16 Syria did business with you because of your abundant goods; they exchanged for your wares emeralds, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and ruby. 17 Judah and the land of Israel traded with you; they exchanged for your merchandise wheat of Minnith, meal, honey, oil, and balm. 18 Damascus did business with you for your abundant goods, because of your great wealth of every kind; wine of Helbon and wool of Sahar 19 and casks of wine from Uzal they exchanged for your wares; wrought iron, cassia, and calamus were bartered for your merchandise. 20 Dedan traded with you in saddlecloths for riding. 21 Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your favored dealers in lambs, rams, and goats; in these they did business with you. 22 The traders of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; they exchanged for your wares the best of all kinds of spices and all precious stones and gold. 23 Haran, Canneh, Eden, traders of Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad traded with you. 24 In your market these traded with you in choice garments, in clothes of blue and embroidered work, and in carpets of colored material, bound with cords and made secure. 25 The ships of Tarshish traveled for you with your merchandise. So you were filled and heavily laden in the heart of the seas. 26 “Your rowers have brought you out into the high seas. The east wind has wrecked you in the heart of the seas. 27 Your riches, your wares, your merchandise, your mariners and your pilots, your caulkers, your dealers in merchandise, and all your men of war who are in you, with all your crew that is in your midst, sink into the heart of the seas on the day of your fall. 28 At the sound of the cry of your pilots the countryside shakes, 29 and down from their ships come all who handle the oar. The mariners and all the pilots of the sea stand on the land 30 and shout aloud over you and cry out bitterly. They cast dust on their heads and wallow in ashes; 31 they make themselves bald for you and put sackcloth on their waist, and they weep over you in bitterness of soul, with bitter mourning. 32 In their wailing they raise a lamentation for you and lament over you: ‘Who is like Tyre, like one destroyed in the midst of the sea? 33 When your wares came from the seas, you satisfied many peoples; 7 with your abundant

**wealth and merchandise you enriched the kings of the earth. 34 Now you are wrecked by the seas, in the depths of the waters; your merchandise and all your crew in your midst have sunk with you. 35 All the inhabitants of the coastlands are appalled at you, and the hair of their kings bristles with horror; their faces are convulsed. 36 The merchants among the peoples hiss at you; you have come to a dreadful end and shall be no more forever.”**

**27:1–9** The Lord tells Ezekiel to raise a lamentation over Tyre as mourners would over someone brought down to the pit (26:20). The prophet opens with a eulogy customarily spoken over the deceased (cf 2Sm 1:17–27). Tyre is compared with a magnificent ship, “perfect in beauty,” sturdily built, excellently equipped, lavishly arrayed, and manned by experienced mariners. On Great Sea trade. Cf Ac 27–28. (TLSB)

**27:3** *merchant of the peoples.* People of many nations who frequented Tyre. (TLSB)

*I am perfect in beauty.* See 28:12; cf. 28:2 for a similar prideful statement. Since Tyre is described as a stately ship in the following verses, some translate, “You are a ship, perfect in beauty.” (CSB)

**27:4** *borders are in the heart of the seas.* Tyre’s ships dominated the Great Sea and established its trade routes and colonies as far away as Spain. (TLSB)

**27:5–6** *fir ... cedar ... oaks ... pines.* Nearby Lebanon mountains were a rich source of shipbuilding timber. (TLSB)

**27:5** *Senir.* Amorite name for Hermon, the Anti-Lebanon mountain (or range) famed for cedar. (CSB)

Lofty peak in the Anti-Lebanon Range better known as Mount Hermon. (TLSB)

**27:6** *Kittim.* It was originally the name of a town in southern Cyprus colonized by Phoenicia. (CSB)

**27:7** *linen ... sail, serving as your banner.* Emblem of Tyre emblazoned on the sail. (TLSB)

*Elishah.* A city on the east side of Cyprus; also the oldest name for Cyprus. (CSB)

Tentatively identified as a city on Cyprus. (TLSB)

**27:8** *Sidon.* A harbor city 25 miles north of Tyre, which sometimes rivaled her in political and commercial importance. (CSB)

*Arvad.* Another Phoenician island-city, off the Mediterranean coast and north of Sidon. (CSB)

Island c 100 mi N of Tyre. (TLSB)

*rowers.* To get ships out of port and to guide them during contrary winds. (TLSB)

**27:9** *Gebal.* Byblos, an important ancient city on the coast between Sidon and Arvad. (CSB)

Or, Byblos. Seaport south of Arvad. (TLSB)

*caulking.* Or, “repairing.” (TLSB)

*all ... barter for your wares. Bursting with trade. (TLSB)*

**27:10–11** The Tyrian luxury liner could sail confidently to distant ports because its home base was protected by mercenaries assembled from far and wide. (TLSB)

**27:10** *Lydia*. In Asia Minor. (CSB)

*Put*. Libya, in North Africa, west of Egypt. (CSB)

*Lud and Put*. Territories on the African coast, west of the delta. (TLSB)

*men of war*. The ship image is abandoned, and Tyre is now described literally—as a city (see “walls” and “towers” in this and the next verse), complete with a mercenary army gathered from the whole world. (CSB)

**27:11** *Helech*. Cilicia, the mountainous region in southeast Asia Minor. The name occurs only here in the Bible. (CSB)

*Gammad*. Either (1) northern Asia Minor, or (2) a coastal town near Arvad. It is not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. (CSB)

**27:12–25a** The Tyrian ship of state boasted of splendor and opulence because of lucrative trade in choice wares obtained from nations in all parts of the ancient world. The list of countries with which Tyre had profitable commercial relations constitutes a veritable map of antiquity. Javan (v 13) is Greece; Tubal and Meshech (v 13) are in Asia Minor; Beth-togarmah (v 14) is the territory later known as Armenia; Dedan (v 15) is possibly the island of Rhodes off the coast of Asia Minor; Syria (v 16) is north of Judah; Damascus (v 18) is the capital of Syria; Helbon (v 18) is north of Damascus; Uzal (v 19) is a trading center in southern Arabia; Dedan (v 20) is in central Arabia; Kedar (v 21) is in northern Arabia; Sheba and Raamah (v 22) with Canneh and Eden (v 23) are at the southern end of Arabia; Haran (v 23) is in Mesopotamia; Asshur (v 23) is in Assyria; Chilmad (v 23) remains unidentified. (TLSB)

**27:12** *Tarshish*. Traditionally located on the coast of southern Spain, but the island of Sardinia has also been suggested. Passages such as 1Ki 10:22; Jnh 1:3 imply that it was a long distance from the Canaanite coast. The list of places in vv. 12–23 generally follows a west-to-east direction. (CSB)

*did business with you*. Great Sea shipping trade. (TLSB)

**27:13** *Tubal and Meshech*. Both in Asia Minor. (CSB)

*exchanged human beings*. Slave trade. (TLSB)

**27:14** *Beth Togarmah*. In eastern Asia Minor, present-day Armenia (see 38:6). (CSB)

*war horses*. Asia Minor was known for its horses. (CSB)

**27:15** *Dedan*. A large island off the southwest coast of Asia Minor that served as gateway to the Aegean islands. It was an early major trading center (see Ac 21:1). (CSB)

*ivory tusks and ebony*. African luxuries. (TLSB)

**27:16** *Aram*. Syria. Since Damascus, the capital of Aram, is mentioned in v. 18, perhaps Edom is meant here. (CSB)

**27:17** *Israel traded with you*. In the past. Since 722–721 B.C. Israel had ceased to exist as a political state. (CSB)

*Minnith*. An Ammonite town, apparently famous for its wheat; “wheat from Minnith” possibly denoted a superior quality of wheat. (CSB)

*balm*. Gum or oil from one of several plants; a product of Gilead (see Ge 37:25; Jer 8:22; 46:11). (CSB)

**27:18** *Damascus*. Capital of Aram (see note on v. 16; see also Isa 7:8). (CSB)

*Helbon*. A town north of Damascus, still in existence and still a wine-making center. The name occurs only here in the Bible. (CSB)

*Zahar*. Modern S\ah\ra, an area northwest of Damascus, where grazing is still common today. (CSB)

**27:19** *Uzal*. See Ge 10:27; 1Ch 1:21; perhaps Yemen or the area between Haran and the Tigris. (CSB)

*cassia*. Similar to the cinnamon tree. The only other Biblical mention of it is in Ex 30:24, where it appears in a list of aromatic plants. (CSB)

*calamus*. An aromatic reed. (CSB)

**27:21** *Arabia and ... Kedar*. A general expression for the Bedouin tribes from Aram to the Arabian Desert. For Kedar see Isa 42:11; 60:7; Jer 49:28. (CSB)

**27:22** *Ramah*. A city in southern Arabia. (CSB)

**27:23** *Haran*. A city east of Carchemish, in present-day eastern Turkey. It was well-known in ancient times as a center both for trade and for the worship of the moon-god Sin. From here Abraham moved to Canaan (see Ge 11:31; 12:4). (CSB)

*Canneh*. Of uncertain location, presumably in Mesopotamia. It is often identified with Calneh (Isa 10:9; Am 6:2). (CSB)

*Eden*. A district south of Haran, mentioned in connection with Haran in 2Ki 19:12. See Beth Eden in Am 1:5. (CSB)

*Asshur*. Can mean the city, the country (Assyria) or the people (Assyrians). Here it is probably the city south of Nineveh that gave its name to the country. (CSB)

*Chilmad*. If a town, it is yet unidentified; presumably in Mesopotamia. Some read “all Media.” (CSB)

**27:24** *carpets*. Similar to modern Persian rugs. (TLSB)

**27:25** *Tarshish*. Vessels capable of carrying heavy cargoes and going great distances (cf 1Ki 10:22). (TLSB)

**27:26** *east wind*. Disastrous at sea (Ps 48:7) as well as on land (Jer 18:17). It possibly symbolizes Nebuchadnezzar (as in 17:10; 19:12). (CSB)

**27:27** *Your riches*. Tyre typifies godless self-sufficiency and self-determination. Every such anti-God power structure will share its fate. In Rv 18, John makes Babylon the symbol of opposition to God and describes its downfall in terms reminiscent of Tyre's shipwreck. (TLSB)

**27:28–31** Ships lost in v 27 evoke mourning by sailors and traders. (TLSB)

**Ch 27** God requests that nations sing a funeral lament over the destruction of Tyre. His arm is stretching out to oppose His enemies and to reach His people, to save them from themselves. Today, take His hand and ask Him to lead you on life's way. His arm of salvation, stretched out at Calvary, reaches across time to save you. • Father, the nations bow before You. Keep us steadfast in Your ways, for You alone provide eternal salvation. Through our service, further Your kingdom. Amen. (TLSB)