

## Against Tyre (26:1-28:19)

### The End of the City of Tyre (chapter 26)<sup>1358</sup>

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1358

Rabbi Fisch comments that “This and the following two chapters deal with the fate of Tyre. The Divine communication was made to the prophet in the year, and probably in the very month, of the fall of Jerusalem. Tyre represents Phoenicia which bordered on the land of Israel, and at one time her territory extended as far as Kadesh in Galilee and Carmel...It is worthy of note that, though friendly relations always existed between Phoenicia and Israel, the prophet portrays her destruction in more threatening colors and in greater detail than with any other nation...

“In proclaiming Tyre’s downfall, he could not have been motivated by his personal or the national feeling of revenge. Tyre had, in fact, forfeited her right of existence by her excessive commercialism. Her lust for material gain knew no bounds, and their wealth produced in the population a sense of pride and arrogance which resulted in a complete disregard for human suffering. The demoralization of Tyre was strikingly evidenced by her malicious joy over the destruction of Jerusalem, and particularly by her exultant boasting: *Aha, she is broken...I shall be filled with her that is laid waste (verse 2)*...

After a siege of thirteen years (as recorded in Josephus, **Antiquities X, xi. 1**), Nebuchadnezzar subdued Tyre and so made way for its disappearance from the scene of history.” (P. 172)

Reimer entitles **26:1-28:19** “Oracles Against Tyre.” He states that “The oracles are neatly divided into three large segments by the concluding refrain at **26:21**, **27:36**, and **28:19**. With further subdivisions, there are seven units in all...This lengthy collection, surpassed only by the Egypt oracles, immediately raises the question, Why so much about Tyre? The answer seems to be that, of the states addressed by Ezekiel, only Tyre and Egypt had the power to withstand Babylon: Egypt’s power was military, Tyre’s was economic. This latter factor is especially prominent in Ezekiel’s oracles.” (P. 1537)

Darr comments that “Biblical oracles against Tyre tend to criticize the city for its pride and possibly betray a bias against commercialism (spawned, perhaps, by jealousy). **Isaiah 23:7** portrays ‘her’ as a peripatetic woman bent on colonization and the establishment of far-flung trade routes. **Isaiah 23:8** extols her glory, the better to savor Yahweh’s ultimate control of this wealthy, powerful, and haughty queen. The mostly prose conclusion of **Isaiah 23** predicts that Tyre will be ‘forgotten’ for seventy years, a single lifespan. **Isaiah 23:15-16** then avers that at the end of that period, the city’s situation will become that of an aging harlot. In this ‘trollop’s [female prostitute’s] tune,’ Tyre, the ‘forgotten’ prostitute, is encouraged to play the harp while walking the streets. Apparently Tyre is being encouraged to leave retirement and attract new customers. Tyre will be visited by Yahweh and will resume ‘intercourse’ with the nations. With the assertion that Tyre’s earnings, a prostitute’s pay, will be

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dedicated to Yahweh, the final blow falls. The unfortunate consequence is that Yahweh and Israel become Tyre's pimps.

“In the course of Ezekiel's seven oracles against Tyre, he too will accuse the city and its king of hubris and excessive commercialism (though his use of female imagery falls far short of Isaiah's imaginative tropes). Moreover, **26:2-6**, the first of his oracles against the city, condemns Tyre for perceiving in Jerusalem's destruction an opportunity further to line its own pockets. But Zimmerli is correct, I think, when he points to a broader, theological basis for the prophet's hostility. For Ezekiel, Babylon was Yahweh's instrument of judgment against Judah. In 587 B.C.E. not only Jerusalem, but also Egypt and Tyre, were rebelling against Nebuchadnezzar. Jerusalem fell; Egypt and Tyre did not. Their ability to withstand Babylonian assault ran counter to Ezekiel's understanding of God's plan for the nations. Hence, both Tyre and Egypt were the objects of his scorn, their fates of crucial and ongoing concern. Ezekiel's latest dated words (**29:18-21**) concern Yahweh's decision to 'give the land of Egypt to king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon' (**29:19a**) as compensation for his inability to destroy Tyre. In fact, Nebuchadnezzar was ultimately incapable of felling either foe.” (P. 230)

Reimer states that “Some have claimed that the Tyre oracles, especially **chapter 26**, are examples of unfulfilled prophecy. Ezekiel announces the devastation of Tyre at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar (**26:7-13**). Tyre eventually capitulated but was not destroyed, as Ezekiel eventually knew (**29:17-20**). How is this so-called 'failure' of the prophetic word to be explained?...

“Some recent interpreters have preferred to identify Alexander the Great's victory over Tyre in 332 B.C.E. with Ezekiel's prophecy. This interpretation is unsatisfactory, however, because it does not do justice to the expectation that *Babylon* would destroy Tyre (compare **26:7**)...Others appeal to [YHWH's] sovereign freedom, claiming He is able not only to carry out a threat but also to relent, as with Nineveh in **Jonah 3**. However, there is no suggestion that Tyre repented as did Nineveh, and this approach renders the interpretation of prophecy quite arbitrary...A third strategy lays emphasis on the element of promise rather than prediction: no matter the actual outcome, the real intent was to subject Tyre to [YHWH's] sovereignty by the prophetic word. However, this reading is unsatisfactory in that it seems to render insignificant the details of Ezekiel's language...A further possibility is to read **Ezekiel 26** along the lines suggested in **chapter 16**, that, that metaphorical language should not be confused with literal language. Since much of this prophecy is metaphorical, one should not look for literal fulfillment...

“Finally, it is also clear that biblical prophecy is not necessarily exhausted in a single historical horizon (compare Jeremiah's 70 years (**Jeremiah 25:12; Daniel 9:2, 20-27**)). So too here, Tyre's initial reduction in Ezekiel's day (see **Ezekiel 26:1-21**) was but the firstfruits of the unfolding of [YHWH's] judgment on Tyre. The exposition here seeks to steer carefully through these difficulties.” (P.1537)

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<sup>1358</sup>(...continued)

Reimer comments on **26:1-21**, which he entitles “Against Tyre.” He states that “The prophet announces the destruction of Tyre at the hands of the Babylonians in four oracles grouped into two pairs, each linked by the Hebrew *ki* (**verses 7, 19**; ‘for,’ ‘because’; see **25:6**): **26:1-6** and **7-14** look toward Tyre being razed; **verses 15-18** and **19-21** stand imaginatively on the other side of destruction, depicting reactions to Tyre’s demise...

“To the claim that the prophecies in **chapter 26** were never fulfilled, the best answer recognizes that the prophecy against Tyre in **verses 3-14** is a complex one. It combines elements that would be fulfilled in the attack of Nebuchadnezzar (he besieged Tyre for 13 years, from 585-572 B.C.E., an attack described in **verses 7-11**), and in the subsequent attack and conquest by Alexander the Great in 332 (this provides a fulfillment for the complete destruction predicted in **verses 3-6** and **verses 12-14**)...**Old Testament** prophecies often contain different elements that are fulfilled in the near future and in the more distant future. In addition, some parts of **chapter 26** were not even fulfilled until a time later than Alexander (see **verse 14**).” (P. 1537)

Matties comments on **26:1-21** that “The announcement of judgment against Tyre divides into four parts (**verses 1-6, 7-14, 15-18, 19-21**). The poetry mixes storm and military imagery.” (P. 1194)

Reimer comments on **26:1-6** that “Apart from the date formula (see **verse 1**), this unit bears striking similarity to those of **chapter 25** and thus serves as a ‘hinge’ between that sequence on Judah’s nearest neighbors (see **25:1-32:32**) and this larger complex of Tyrian oracles. Like those nations, Tyre had been involved with the coalition referred to in **Jeremiah 27:3**, and now is censured for its insult to and exploitation of Jerusalem (**Ezekiel 26:2**).” (P. 1537)

Matties notes that in **verses 1-6** “The oracle depicts Tyre’s enemies as a storm that levels the city into the sea and destroys the towns and villages that Tyre controls.” (P. 1194)

Hilmer notes that “Tyre, the island capital of Phoenicia, present-day Lebanon...was involved in an anti-Assyrian coalition in 594 B.C.E. (see **Jeremiah 27:3**). Ezekiel, more than any other prophet, prophesied against Tyre (see **chapters 27-28**; but also see **Isaiah 23**; **Jeremiah 25:22**; **47:4**; **Joel 3:4-5**; **Amos 1:9-10** and **Zechariah 9:2-4**).” (P. 1262)

1359

The Divine word concerning Tyre came to Ezekiel in the year between 587-86 B.C.E. Ezekiel predicts that the island capital of Phoenicia (modern day Lebanon) will be invaded from the north by the invading armies of Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Her mainland settlements will all be destroyed, and the island city itself will be torn down--although the actual fulfillment of this prediction did not happen until centuries later, under the Greek armies of Alexander the Great (332 B.C.E.). Nebuchadnezzar raised a  
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וַיְהִי בַעֲשֵׂתֵי-עֶשְׂרֵה שָׁנָה בְּאַחַד לַחֹדֶשׁ

And it happened in (the) eleventh year, on (day) one to the month,<sup>1360</sup>

הָיָה דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:

YHWH's word was / came to me, saying:

26:2 בֶן-אָדָם

Son of Adam / Humanity,

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<sup>1359</sup>(...continued)

15-year long siege against Tyre, but there is no historical record of its being destroyed at that time. Thus Ezekiel's prediction was proven both true and partially wrong by the events of history (compare the correction made in **Ezekiel 29:17-20**, where Ezekiel acknowledges that Nebuchadnezzar was unsuccessful in his campaign against Tyre). The lament of Tyre's neighboring princes is given in **verses 17-18**. Tyre is going down to death!

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 1-6** “The Sin and Overthrow of Tyre.”

Darr comments that “Ezekiel’s first oracle against Tyre bears striking resemblances to the five oracles against Israel’s neighboring states in **chapter 25**. Here, as there, Tyre’s offense lies in its response to Jerusalem’s calamity. Like Ammon, she has exclaimed ‘Aha!’ an expression of malicious glee... Her ostensible [apparent] delight springs from the realization that the destruction of a competing trade center spells additional business and profit for herself.” (P. 231)

<sup>1360</sup>

Rabbi Fisch notes that it was the eleventh year of Zedekiah, “the year in which Jerusalem was captured,” and that it was the first day of the month, but “since the month is not stated, it is probable that the reference is to the fifth month in which the fate of Jerusalem was sealed.” (P. 172)

Reimer notes that the date “falls within the span of 587 / 586 B.C.E. According to Josephus, Nebuchadnezzar’s siege against Tyre was launched around 586 / 585 B.C.E., and lasted 13 years (**Jewish Antiquities** 10.228).” (P. 1537)

Hilmer notes that “The entire year dates from April 23, 587 B.C.E. to April 13, 586 B.C.E. The oracle must date from the end of that year, in the 11<sup>th</sup> (February 13, 586 B.C.E.) or the 12th month (March 15, 586 B.C.E.)...This is the fifth date in the [Scroll] (see **1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1**).” (P. 1262)

יַעַן אֲשֶׁר-אָמְרָה צָר עַל-יְרוּשָׁלַם׃

Because Tyre said concerning Jerusalem,

הָאֵחַ נִשְׁבְּרָה דְלַתוֹת הָעַמִּים

Heach! / Aha! Doors of the peoples was (sic.) broken!<sup>1361</sup>

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1361

The Hebrew text here has the plural דְלַתוֹת הָעַמִּים, “doors of the peoples,” preceded and followed by singular verbs. Translations vary from

**King James**, “she is broken *that was* the gates of the people: she is turned unto me”;

**Tanakh**, “The gateway of the peoples is broken, it has become mine”;

**New Revised Standard**, “broken is the gateway of the peoples; it has swung open to me”;

**New International**, “The gate to the nations is broken, and its doors have swung open to me”;

**New Jerusalem**, “She is shattered, the Gateway to the Nations; she now gives way to me.”

**Rahfs**, εὕγε συνετρίβη ἀπόλωλεν τὰ ἔθνη ἐπεστράφη πρὸς με, “good! She is broken, she has been destroyed; the nations—it turned to me.” (A very difficult text to translate; **NETS** has “Good! It was shattered; the nations have perished; she has turned toward me.”)

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Jerusalem [here described as ‘the gate of the peoples’], which had attracted merchants from many countries, was no more. Therefore, thought the men of Tyre, her trade will henceforth be diverted to them. Their selfish satisfaction over Jerusalem’s calamity and desire to benefit from it brought about their own ruin. Though the actual fall of Jerusalem might not yet have been known to Tyre, it was already spoken of there as an accomplished fact because of its imminent certainty.” (P. 173)

Hilmer comments that Jerusalem is called the “gate to nations,” “Because of its geographical location, its political importance and the central role it played in international trade.” (P. 1262) Both of these comments are nice--but is it really what the text says? We think the text is confusing, enigmatic in nature.

Darr comments that “Unlike Ammon, Tyre is not depicted as relishing the profanation of Yahweh’s temple, the desolation of Judah’s territory, or the deportation of its population. Unlike Moab, she is not accused of questioning Judah’s uniqueness as the elect people of Yahweh. Unlike Edom and Philistia, she is not charged with seizing the moment of Judah’s destruction to exercise military vengeance against it. Tyre played no role in Israel’s / Judah’s fierce and ongoing territorial disputes with its nearest neighbors. Yet her crime, a ‘calculating and selfish mockery’ (Zimmerli), lays bare Tyre’s failure both to stand in awe of Yahweh’s sovereign power, as evinced in judgment upon God’s Own people, and to recognize the appropriate implications of that judgment for herself and for the other  
(continued...)

נִסְבָּה אֵלַי

It / she has turned around to me;<sup>1362</sup>

אִמְלֵאָה הַחֲרָבָה:

I shall be filled (as a result of) her having been laid waste!

26:3 לָכֵן כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה

Therefore, in this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

הֲנִי עָלֶיךָ צָר

Look at Me—upon / against you, Tyre!

וְהֵעֵלִיתִי עָלֶיךָ גּוֹיִם רַבִּים

And I will raise up against you many nations,<sup>1363</sup>

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<sup>1361</sup>(...continued)

nations of the world. She views Judah’s demise through profiteering eyes...Ezekiel’s God will not permit such greed and self-satisfaction to go unanswered.” (P. 231)

<sup>1362</sup>

Rabbi Fisch says a better translation is “it is turned”; and “the subject may be ‘gate’ or ‘merchandise’ to be understood...Jerusalem’s loss will be Tyre’s gain.” (P. 173)

<sup>1363</sup>

Rabbi Fisch states that the “many nations” mean “Nebuchadnezzar and his satellites.” (P. 173)  
Compare **2 Kings 25:1-2**,

1 וַיְהִי בְשָׁנַת הַתְּשִׁיעִית לְמַלְכוֹ

And it happened in the ninth year to / of his reign as king,

בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָעֲשִׂירִי בְּעָשׂוֹר לַחֹדֶשׁ

in the tenth month, on the tenth (day) to / of the month,

בָּא נְבֻכַדְנֶאצַּר מֶלֶךְ-בָּבֶל

Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came,

הוּא וְכָל-חֵילוֹ עַל-יְרוּשָׁלַם

he and all his army upon / to Jerusalem,

וַיִּחַן עָלֶיהָ

and he encamped against it.

(continued...)

כַּהֲעֵלוֹת הַיָּם לַגִּלְיוֹ:

like the sea raises up its waves!<sup>1364</sup>

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<sup>1363</sup>(...continued)

וַיִּבְנוּ עָלֶיהָ דִּיק סָבִיב:

And he built against it a siege-wall, all around (it).

2 וַתָּבֵא הָעִיר בַּמָּצוֹר

And the city came into / under the siege,

עַד עֶשְׂתֵּי עָשָׂר שָׁנָה לְמֶלֶךְ צִדְקִיָּהוּ:

until (the) eleventh year to / of the king Zedekiah.

Reimer comments that “The agents of destruction here are ‘many nations,’ described metaphorically as the crashing of the sea and its waves. The description that follows continues this figurative language. This was fulfilled partially by the siege of Nebuchadnezzar, and then more fully in the conquest by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.E...Both Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander the Great led the military forces from ‘many nations’ whom they had conquered. Nebuchadnezzar’s title ‘king of kings’ (26:7) reflected this reality and echoes historical records of Assyrian royal language. Alexander the Great, in attacking Tyre, had the help of 80 ships from Persia and 120 from Cyprus, in addition to soldiers from other nations.” (P. 1537)

1364

Rabbi Fisch quotes Lofthouse as stating, “All through these chapters the prophet seems to hear the waves beating upon the doomed city.” (P. 173)

Hilmer comments on the phrase “like the sea casting up its waves” that “for invading armies likened to waves of the sea, compare **Isaiah 17:12-13**,

12 הוּי הַמּוֹן עַמִּים רַבִּים

Alas / woe for a roar of many peoples--

כַּהֲמוֹת יַמִּים יַהֲמוּן

like roarings of seas they roar;

וּשְׂאוֹן לְאֻמִּים

and a crash of peoples,

כַּשְׂאוֹן מַיִם כְּבִירִים יִשְׂאוּן:

like a crash of mighty waters they will crash!

13 לְאֻמִּים כַּשְׂאוֹן מַיִם רַבִּים יִשְׂאוּן

Peoples will crash like (the) crash of many waters!

(continued...)

26:4<sup>1365</sup> וְשָׁחֲתוּ הַמּוֹת צֹר

And they will spoil / ruin Tyre's walls,

וְהָרְסוּ מִגְדָּלֶיהָ

and they will throw down her towers.

וְסָחִיתִי עֲפָרָהּ מִמֶּנָּה

And I will scrape her dust / dirt from her,

וְנָתַתִּי אוֹתָהּ לְצִחִיחַ סֹלֶעַ:

and I will give / place her for a shining rock!<sup>1366</sup>

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<sup>1364</sup>(...continued)

וַיַּעַר בּוֹ

And He rebuked it;

וְנָס מִמְּרַחֵק

and it fled far away.

וְרִדָּף כְּמִץ הָרִים לְפָנֵי-רוּחַ

And it was pursued like chaff of mountains before a wind,

וְכַגְלִגָּל לְפָנֵי סוּפָה:

and like a whirlwind before a storm.

Since Tyre was an island, the metaphor is especially appropriate here.” (P. 1262)

<sup>1365</sup>

Reimer comments on **verses 4-5** that “The location of Tyre ‘in the midst of the sea,’ often seen in extrabiblical sources as a sign of its security, is now described with derision (see also **verse 17**). In the conquests of Alexander the Great, Tyre was indeed destroyed and made like a bare rock.” (P. 1538)

<sup>1366</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that “After the destruction of Tyre by her invaders, all traces of her former glory will be swept away as by a tidal wave. What was once a magnificent city will then have the appearance of a bare rock.” (P. 173)

26:5 מִשְׁטַח חַרְמִים תִּהְיֶה

A spreading-place for (fishing) nets she will be,<sup>1367</sup>

בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם

in (the) midst of the sea.<sup>1368</sup>

כִּי אֲנִי דִבַּרְתִּי

Because I, I have spoken--

נֵאֻם אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה

(it is) a saying of my Lord YHWH--

וְהִיְתָה לְבוֹ לְגוֹיִם:

and she will be for plunder for the nations!<sup>1369</sup>

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1367

Rabbi Fisch notes, “The fishermen will find the dry, rocky island a suitable place for drying their nets.” (P. 173)

1368

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Tyre was built upon an island of rock, hence her name Tsor, meaning ‘rock.’” (P. 173)

1369

Compare **Ezekiel 25:7**, spoken concerning Ammon:

לָכֵן הִנְנִי נֹשֵׂתִי אֶת־יָדִי עָלֶיךָ

Therefore look at Me: I have stretched out My Hand against you (singular),

וְנָתַתִּיךָ- (לְבַג) [לְבוֹ] לְגוֹיִם

and I will give / make you for spoil / booty for the nations.

וְהִכַרְתִּיךָ מִן־הָעַמִּים

And I will cut you off from the peoples;

וְהָאֲבָדְתִיךָ מִן־הָאָרְצוֹת

And I will make you perish from the lands.

אֲשַׁמְדֶּךָ

I will destroy you.,

וַיִּדְעַת כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה:

(continued...)

26:6 וּבְנוֹתֶיהָ אֲשֶׁר בַּשָּׂדֶה

And her daughters who are in the field(s),<sup>1370</sup>

בַּחֶרֶב תִּהְרָגְנָה

with the sword will be murdered;

וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה:

and they will know that I (am) YHWH!

26:7<sup>1371</sup>

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<sup>1369</sup>(...continued)

And you will know that I (am) YHWH!

**Ezekiel 34:28**, spoken concerning Israel, when returned and renewed:

וְלֹא־יְהִי עוֹד בַּז לְגוֹיִם

And they will not again be an object of plunder for the nations;

וְחַיַּת הָאָרֶץ לֹא תֹאכְלֵם

and the land's wild animal(s) will not devour them;

וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לַבֵּטָח

and they will live for the security / securely,

וְאֵין מַחְרִיד:

and there will be no one making them afraid.

<sup>1370</sup>

Rabbi Fisch states that “her daughters that are in the field” refers to “the towns and villages on the mainland of which Tyre was the capital. Not she alone, but the population of all the Phoenician cities will perish.” (P. 174)

Reimer states that “Her daughters...are the villages on the mainland that were opposite the island city of Tyre. They were destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and again by Alexander.” (P. 1538)

<sup>1371</sup>

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 7-14** “Nebuchadnezzar the Executor of [YHWH’s] Judgment.”

Reimer comments that the oracle in these verses “develops its briefer partner (**verses 2-6**), adding specificity and concreteness to the imagery as its message is reinforced. Some repeated vocabulary

(continued...)

כִּי כֹה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה

Because in this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

הֲנִי מֵבִיא אֵל-צָר נְבוּכַדְרֶעֶצַר

Look at Me—bringing<sup>1372</sup> to Tyre, Nebhukhadrettsar / Nebuchadnezzar,<sup>1373</sup>

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<sup>1371</sup>(...continued)

contributes to their coherence (‘walls’ and ‘towers,’ **verses 4 and 9**; ‘bare rock,’ **verses 4 and 14**; ‘a place for the spreading of nets,’ **verses 5 and 14**.)” (P. 1538)

Matties comments on **verses 7-14** that “Nebuchadrezzar (Babylonian spelling) is *king of kings* who comes fully equipped with a massive military machine (**verse 7**). **Verses 8-14** describe the siege and conquest in exceptional detail, concluding with a prediction that Tyre would never be rebuilt (see also **29:17-20**). In fact, Tyre was not destroyed until Alexander the Great conquered the city in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.” (P. 1194)

Darr entitles **verses 7-14** “The Siege Against Tyre.” She comments that “Commentators observe that in the following ‘account’ of Nebuchadrezzar’s siege of Tyre (**verses 8-14**), the most detailed siege description in **Hebrew Scripture**, the army’s activities follow logically one upon the other. First, a city’s outlying settlements are destroyed (**verse 8a**); second, siege works are erected against its defenses (**verses 8b-9**); third, troops enter the city through its breached walls (**verses 10-11a**); fourth, the population is slaughtered (**verse 11b**); fifth the city is pillaged [robbed, using violence] (**verse 12a**); sixth, its buildings and walls are demolished (**verse 12b**). They also recognize, however, that this type of siege account is ill-suited to Tyre’s island setting, especially in its references to a siege wall, ramp, and battering rams...Only **verse 12b**, with its reference to casting ‘your stones and timber and rubble...into the water,’ and the concluding **verse 14**, which returns to the threats in **verses 4-5** (Tyre will become a ‘bare rock’ and ‘a place for spreading nets’) reflect its particular location...Hence it becomes difficult to assess the extent to which the siege description sheds light on an actual assault against Tyre...

“The description is vivid, inviting its audience both to see and to hear the onslaught, the trampling hooves of horses raise clouds of dust, the deafening din of chariots shakes the city’s walls, luxurious buildings (the palace complex:) crash to the ground. The reference to the cessation of music in **verse 13** recalls **Amos 5:23**: ‘Take away from Me the noise of your songs; / I will not listen to the melody of your harps’ (NRSV). However, whereas Amos refers to Yahweh’s rejection of Israel’s cultus, the silencing of Tyre’s songs results from the decimation of its population. God’s lethal punishment through the agency of Nebuchadrezzar’s army is irrevocable. The city shall never be rebuilt. The oracle’s closing closing formulas reiterate that everything which Ezekiel has proclaimed will surely occur, for his words are, in fact, God’s Own.” (P. 233)

1372

(continued...)

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<sup>1372</sup>(...continued)

Hilmer takes the phrase “Look at Me—bringing...Nebuchadnezzar” to be “a clear indication of [YHWH’s] sovereignty over the nations.” (1262) Compare **28:7; 29:8**.

1373

Rabbi Fisch notes that “This spelling of the name by Ezekiel, *Nebuchadretstsar*, which is also found in the **Scroll of Jeremiah**, is nearer the Babylonian *Nabu-kudurri-usur*, meaning ‘Nebo protect (my) labor.’” (P. 174)

Reimer notes that this is “Nebuchadnezzar (II) of Babylon [who] reigned 605-562 B.C.E.” (P. 1538)

Hilmer notes that this is “the first of four references to him in **Ezekiel** (see **29:18-19; 30:10**). He ruled from 605 to 562 B.C.E., and his name means ‘O (God) Nabu, Protect My Son’ or ‘O (God) Nabu, Protect My Boundary.’ Jeremiah and Ezekiel both proclaimed that this [non-Jewish] king would be used by [YHWH] to do His work.” (P. 1262) See:

**Jeremiah 25:9,**

הַנִּנִּי שְׁלַח

Look at Me sending—

וְלָקַחְתִּי אֶת־כָּל־מִשְׁפְּחוֹת צָפוֹן

and I will take all (the) clans (of the) north

נְאֻם־יְהוָה

—(it is) a saying of YHWH—

וְאֶל־נְבוּכַדְרֶאֱצַר מֶלֶךְ־בָּבֶל עַבְדִּי

and to Nebukhadrethsar king of Babylon, My servant.

וְהָבֵאתִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ הַזֹּאת

And I will bring them against this land,

וְעַל־יֹשְׁבֵיהָ

and against its inhabitants,

וְעַל־כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם הָאֵלֶּה סָבִיב

And against all these nations (all) around.

וְהַחֲרַמְתִּים

And I will destroy them;

וְשָׂמְתִים לְשָׂמָה וְלְשָׂרְקָה

and I will place / make them into a waste / horror, and for an (object of) derisive hissing,

וְלִחְרָבוֹת עוֹלָם:

and into long-lasting desolations / wastes!

(continued...)

מֶלֶךְ-בָּבֶל מִצָּפוֹן

king of Babylon, from (the) north,<sup>1374</sup>

מֶלֶךְ מְלָכִים

king of kings--<sup>1375</sup>

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<sup>1373</sup>(...continued)

**Jeremiah 27:6,**

וְעַתָּה אֲנִי נָתַתִּי אֶת-כָּל-הָאָרְצוֹת הָאֵלֶּה

And now I, I have given all these lands

בְּיַד נְבוּכַדְנֶאֱצַר מֶלֶךְ-בָּבֶל עַבְדִּי

into (the) hand of Nebukhadhnetstsar, king of Babylon, My servant;

וְגַם אֶת-חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה

and also (the) wild animal(s) of the field,

נָתַתִּי לוֹ לְעַבְדּוֹ:

I have given to him, to serve him.

1374

Rabbi Fisch states that “from the north” means from Babylon. Of course, this raises questions concerning Ezekiel’s geography, since Babylon was due east of Jerusalem.

Hilmer notes that “The direction from which Nebuchadnezzar would descend on Tyre after first marching his army up the Euphrates River valley rather than across the Arabian Desert.” (P. 1262)

Compare **Jeremiah 1:13,**

וַיְהִי דְבַר-יְהוָה אֵלַי שֵׁנִית לְאָמֹר

And YHWH's word came to me a second time, saying:

מָה אַתָּה רֹאֶה

What are you seeing?

וָאָמַר סִיר נֹפֵחַ אֲנִי רֹאֶה

And I said, A boiling pot I'm seeing--

וּפָנָיו מִפְּנֵי צָפוֹנָה:

and its face is coming from [the] north.

1375

This title, “king of kings,” implying that Nebuchadnezzar “had dominion over many vassal kings” (so Rabbi Fisch, p. 174), is found with reference to him also in:

**Daniel 2:37,** (Aramaic)

(continued...)

בְּסוּס וּבְרֶכֶב

on a horse and with a chariot,

וּבַפָּרָשִׁים וְקָהָל וְעַם־רָב:

and with horsemen and an assembly, and a great people!<sup>1376</sup>

26:8<sup>1377</sup> בְּנוֹתֶיךָ בַּשָּׂדֶה

Your daughters in the field,<sup>1378</sup>

בְּחֶרֶב יִהְרַג

with the sword he will murder!

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<sup>1375</sup>(...continued)

מֶלֶךְ מֶלֶךְ מְלִכִּיא

the king, king of the kings

**Ezra 7:12**, (Aramaic), where Artaxerxes is called

מֶלֶךְ מְלִכִּיא

king of the kings

1376

Rabbi Fisch notes that the “great people” refers to the people “drawn from the nations he had subjected.” (P. 174)

1377

Reimer comments on **verses 8-10** that “Ezekiel’s oracle includes many of the traditional elements of siege warfare, at the same time conjuring up much of its claustro-phobia.” (P. 1538)

1378

For this phrase “daughters in the field,” see **verse 6** with its footnote.

Rabbi Fisch states that “The Babylonian military operation against Tyre is described in chronological order. The first to suffer were the cities on the mainland. Then came the attack on the island-city by means of forts or moveable towers, mounds and bucklers, the last being probably large shields which gave cover to the besiegers. Finally the battering rams came into operation (**verse 9**).” (P. 174)

וַיִּתֵּן עָלֶיךָ דָּיֵק

And he will place against you a siege-wall,<sup>1379</sup>

וַיִּשְׁפֹּךְ עָלֶיךָ סִלְלָה

and he will pour out against you a mound;

וַיִּהְיֶה עָלֶיךָ צָנָה:

and he will raise against you a (large) shield.

26:9 וּמַחֲוֵי קַבְלֹו יִתֵּן בְּחַמוֹתֶיךָ

And (the) striking of his siege-engines<sup>1380</sup> he will place against your walls;

וּמִגְדֵּלְתֶיךָ יִתֵּן בְּחַרְבוֹתָיו:

and your towers he will pull down with his swords.<sup>1381</sup>

26:10 מִשִּׁפְּעַת סוּסָיו

from (the) abundance of his horses,

יִכְסֶּךָ אֲבָקָם

he will cover you (with) their dust.

מִקוֹל פָּרָשׁ וּגְלָגַל וְרֶכֶב

From (the) sound of horseman and (wagon-)wheel and chariot,

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1379

Hilmer notes that “Nebuchadnezzar’s 15-year siege of Tyre began shortly after the fall of Jerusalem. There is no record that Tyre fell at this time.” (P. 1262)

1380

Rabbi Fisch notes that this is “a different noun for battering rams...used in **Ezekiel 21:27**.” He states that it is literally “the smiting of his attacking engine.” (P. 174)

1381

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “his axes,” but Rabbi Fisch says the Hebrew is literally “his swords.” (P. 175)

תִּרְעָשְׁנָה הַחוֹמוֹתֶיךָ

your walls will shake<sup>1382</sup>

בְּבֹאוֹ בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ

when he enters into your gates,

כְּמִבּוֹאֵי עִיר מִבְּקָעָה:

like entrances (to) a city that has been ripped open.

26:11 בַּפָּרְסוֹת סוּסָיו יִרְמָס אֶת־כָּל־חוֹצוֹתֶיךָ

With the hooves of his horses he will trample all your streets.

עַמֶּךָ בַּחֶרֶב יִהָרֵג

Your people he will kill with the sword.

וּמִצְבּוֹת עֲזָךָ

And the pillars of your strength,<sup>1383, 1</sup>

לְאֶרֶץ תִּהְרָד:

to the earth it (sic.) will come down.

26:12 וַיִּשְׁלְלוּ חֵילֶיךָ

And they will make spoil of your wealth,

וּבִזְזוּ רַכְלָתְךָ

and they will plunder your merchandise.

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1382

Rabbi Fisch states that “The description of the effect of the conqueror’s army is hyperbolic.” I.e., everything covered with dust, the walls shaking.

1383

Rabbi Fisch states that “The Jewish commentators define them as the towers and strongholds of the proud city. Modern authorities rather think of ornamental pillars, of which Herodotus tells that Tyre possessed two in honor of the national Deity, Melkarth.” (P. 175) See end-note 1 for a **Wikipedia** article on the Phoenician Deity, Melkarth.

וְהָרְסוּ חֻמוֹתַיִךְ

And they will throw down your walls,

וּבְתֵי חֲמֻדֶיךָ יִתְצֹוּ

and (the) houses of your delight they will pull down.

וְאֲבֵנֶיךָ וְעֲצֵיךָ וְעִפְרָיִךְ

And your stones, and your lumber, and your dirt,

בְּתוֹךְ מַיִם יִשְׂיִמוּ:

they will place in the midst of (the) water!<sup>1384</sup>

26:13 וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי הַמְּוִן שִׁירֶיךָ

And I will cause to cease (the) sound of your songs;

וְקוֹל כְּנֹרֶיךָ לֹא יִשְׁמַע עוֹד:

and (the) sound of your stringed instruments will not be heard again!

26:14 וְנָתַתִּיךָ לְצַחֲחִים כְּלֶעַ

And I will give / make you into a shining rock;

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1384

For this last line, the Greek translation (**Rahlfs**) has εἰς μέσον τῆς θαλάσσης ἐμβαλεῖ, “into (the) midst of the sea he will throw.” Rabbi Fisch notes that by the stones and lumber is meant “the rubble of the destroyed buildings...What remains of the city will be swept into the sea by the conquerors.” (P. 175)

Reimer comments on **verse 12**: “That Tyre’s wealth should be subject to plunder is not only inevitable in ancient warfare, it is also poetic justice, given its gloating (**verse 2**). However, by the time that Nebuchadnezzar conquered Tyre, much of value had been removed by sea, and apparently little wealth remained after 13 years of siege (see **29:18**). Later, Alexander the Great conquered Tyre by building a 2,600 foot causeway from the mainland out to the island fortress, thus fulfilling the prophecy of this verse, ‘your stones and timber and soil they will cast into the midst of the waters.’ (These materials came from the destruction of the city’s settlements on the mainland, **26:6, 8**.)” (P. 1538)

מִשְׁטַח תְּרָמִים תִּהְיֶה

a place for spreading (fish-)nets you (singular) will be.<sup>1385</sup>

לֹא תִבְנֶה עוֹד

You will not be built again.<sup>1386</sup>

כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה דִּבַּרְתִּי

Because I, YHWH, I have spoken!

נֶאֱמַר אֲדַבְּרֵי יְהוָה:

(It is) a saying of my Lord YHWH!

26:15<sup>1387</sup>

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1385

Rabbi Fisch notes to compare **verses 4-5**. “Kimchi renders: ‘she shall be a place...she shall be built’ etc., construing the verbs as third person feminine, since the second person feminine would require a different form.” (P. 176)

1386

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Tyre was completely destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and, as foretold by Ezekiel, was never rebuilt. The city now called Tyre, which was captured by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C.E., is another city with the same name, built on the mainland opposite the old Tyre (Kimchi).” (P. 176)

Reimer notes that “Tyre was rebuilt and reconquered several times after Alexander the Great, so the complete fulfillment of this prophecy did not come immediately. The modern city of Tyre is of modest size and is near the ancient site, though not identical to it. Archaeological photographs of the ancient site show ruins from ancient Tyre scattered over many acres of land. No city has been rebuilt over these ruins, however, in fulfillment of this prophecy.” (P. 1538) See the many photographs on the Internet of ancient Tyre and archaeological finds there.

Hilmer states that this prediction, “never be rebuilt,” was “eventually fulfilled by Alexander’s devastating siege in 332 B.C.E...Nebuchadnezzar captured the mainland city in 572 B.C.E., but the island fortress was not taken until Alexander the Great destroyed it in 332 B.C.E.” (P. 1262)

1387

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 15-18** Tyre’s Fate Dismays the Nations.” Darr entitles these verses “Mourning and Lamentation over Tyre.”

(continued...)

כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה לְצֹר

In this way my Lord YHWH spoke to Tyre:

הֲלֹא מִמִּפְלֹתֶיךָ

Will not, from (the) sound of your fall,<sup>1388</sup>

בְּאֵן קָלִל

with (the) groan of (the) wounded / pierced,

בְּהֲרֹג הָרֶגֶת בְּתוֹכֶךָ

when (there is) true slaughter in your midst,

יִרְעֲשׂוּ הָאֲיִלִּים:

the coastlands / islands will shake.

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<sup>1387</sup>(...continued)

Rabbi Fisch explains that by “the nations” are meant “the isles, the coastal states along the Mediterranean with which Tyre was commercially associated.” (P. 176)

Reimer comments that “Off the island itself, the vantage point is now that of the mainland cities (compare **verses 6, 8**) as their princes mourn the downfall of formerly majestic Tyre. The lament itself appears in **verses 17-18**, an outpouring of fear-induced grief. Laments feature prominently in the Tyre and Egypt oracles (compare **27:1-36; 28:11-19; 32:1-32**).” (Pp. 1538-39)

Matties states that “Tyre’s trading partners, colonies, and competitors on the seas hear the news of Tyre’s fall (**verse 15**), call a halt to their activities (**verse 16**), and mourn the loss of this great power by reciting a lament song (**verses 17-18**). The fall of this economic superpower causes others to lament not only for Tyre but also out of fear for their own future security and prosperity.” (P. 1194)

Darr comments that “Ezekiel’s third oracle concerning Tyre presupposes the report of the city’s demise in **verses 7-14**. Cast as Divine speech...it addresses Tyre directly, informing her of the mournful (re)actions of ‘the princes of the sea’ to news of her catastrophe and quoting the lament they raise over her...This imaginative scenario...attests to the anguish of Tyre’s trading partners, coastal city-states for whom the catastrophe brings grave economic consequences...Ezekiel’s third oracle concerning Tyre ends without benefit of closing formulae.” (P. 234)

1388

Rabbi Fisch states that “The prophet depicts the crash of the city’s collapse and the agonized moaning of the injured as audible to the neighboring states.” (P. 176)

26:16 וַיִּרְדּוּ מֵעַל כִּסְאוֹתָם

And they shall descend from their thrones,<sup>1389</sup>

כָּל נְשִׂאֵי הַיָּם

all (the) princes of the sea.<sup>1390</sup>

וְהִסִּירוּ אֶת־מְעִילֵיהֶם

And they will turn aside / remove their robes,<sup>1391</sup>

וְאֶת־בְּגָדֵי רִקְמָתָם יִפְשְׁטוּ

and (the) embroidered garments they will strip off.

חֲרָדוֹת יִלְבְּשׁוּ

They will clothe themselves with trembling / fear / anxiety,<sup>1392</sup>

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1389

Rabbi Fisch states that “To express their sympathy with Tyre, the rulers of the adjacent states will go into mourning.” (P. 176)

1390

Hilmer notes that these “princes” are “called kings in **Ezekiel 27:35**. They were probably trading partners with Tyre.” (P. 1262)

1391

Hilmer notes that “Usually mourners tore their clothes (**Job 2:12**) and put on sack-cloth, but compare the king of Nineveh in **Jonah 3:6**,” who is said to have removed his clothing before putting on sackcloth. (P. 1262)

1392

Hilmer says they will do this “because of political shock waves from the fall of such a powerful city.” (P. 1262) Compare **Ezekiel 7:27a, b, c**,

הַמֶּלֶךְ יִתְאַבֵּל

The king will mourn,

וְנָשִׂיא יִלְבַּשׁ שְׂמֹמָה

and (the) prince / chief /king will dress (in) devastation / waste.

(continued...)

עַל־הָאָרֶץ יֵשְׁבוּ

upon the earth / land they will sit / dwell.<sup>1393</sup>

וַחֲרָרוּ לְרִגְעִים

And they will tremble by (the) moments;

וְשִׁמְמוּ עֲלֶיךָ:

And they will be appalled over you.

26:17 וְנִשְׂאוּ עֲלֶיךָ קִינָה

And they will raise a lamentation / funeral dirge over you,

וְאָמְרוּ לָךְ

and they will say to you,

אֵיךְ אֲבָדְתָּ נְוֶשֶׁבֶת מִיַּמִּים

How you have perished, one inhabited from (the) seas!<sup>1394</sup>

הָעִיר הַהֵלֵלָה אֲשֶׁר הָיְתָה חֲזָקָה בַיָּם

The city, the one praised, which was the strong one in the sea--<sup>1395</sup>

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<sup>1392</sup>(...continued)

וַיִּדְּי עַם־הָאָרֶץ תַּבְּהִלָּנָה

And (the) hands of (the) people of the land / earth will be disturbed.

<sup>1393</sup>

Compare **Job 2:13**, where the three friends of Job, upon seeing his wretchedness, came and sat with him on the earth for seven days in silence.

<sup>1394</sup>

Rabbi Fisch notes that “Kimchi explains the phrase as: ‘that was enriched from the merchandise brought to you over the seas.’” (P. 177) But this is not what the text says. It says “inhabited from (the) seas,” i.e., sea-going people from all across the Mediterranean came to Tyre to make it their home.

<sup>1395</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Tyre was the most powerful of the coastal states.” (P. 177)

תִּיא וַיִּשְׁבִּיהָ

she and her inhabitants,

אֲשֶׁר־נָתַנוּ חִתִּיתָם לְכָל־יֹשְׁבֵיהָ:

who gave / placed their fear to / on all her inhabitants!<sup>1396</sup>

26:18 עֲתָה יִחַרְדּוּ הָאֲיִן יוֹם מִפְּלִתְךָ

Now they will tremble, the coasts / regions (at the) day of your fall.

וְנִבְהָלוּ הָאֲיִים אֲשֶׁר־בַּיָּם מִצֵּאתְךָ:

and the coastlands that are in the sea are dismayed at your going forth!<sup>1397</sup>

26:19<sup>1398</sup>

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1396

This last line of **verse 17** is given varying translations:

**King James**, “which cause their terror *to be* on all that haunt it”;

**Tanakh**, “Who cast their terror on all its inhabitants”;

**New Revised Standard**, “who imposed your terror on all the mainland”;

**New International**, “you put your terror on all who lived there”;

**New Jerusalem**, “used to spread terror all over the mainland”;

**Rahlfs**, ἡ δοῦσα τὸν φόβον αὐτῆς πᾶσι τοῖς κατοικοῦσι αὐτήν, “the one giving / placing her fear on all the ones dwelling (in) her.” **NETS** has “that imposed terror of itself on all its inhabitants.”

1397

Rabbi Fisch states that this means “When the Tyrian population is driven into captivity, consternation will overcome their neighbors.” (P. 177)

1398

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 19-21** “Tyre’s Descent into the Underworld.”

Reimer states that “The final oracle [**verses 19-21**] anticipates the closing of the entire foreign-nation collection, which bemoans the arrival of the nations in the underworld place of the dead (**32:17-32**; compare **Job 3:13-19**). The repeated phrase those who go down to the pit (twice, Ezekiel 26:20; see **32:18**) refers to the state of those whom death has separated from communion with [YHWH] (compare **Isaiah 38:13**).” (P. 1539)

(continued...)

כִּי כֹה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה

Because in this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

בְּתַתִּי אֶתְךָ עִיר נִחְרָבָת

When I make you a desolated city,

כְּעָרִים אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נֹשְׁבוּ

like cities which were not inhabited;

בְּהֶעֱלֹת עֲלֶיךָ אֶת־תְּהוֹם

when (the) ocean-depth<sup>1399</sup> is raised over you,

וּכְסוּךָ הַמַּיִם הַרְבִּיבִים:

and the many waters cover you--

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<sup>1398</sup>(...continued)

Matties comments that “Like the first of these four scenes, **verses 19-21** highlight the Divine ‘I,’ Who sends the devastated city into the realm of the dead: the Pit (**verses 20-21**). The deep and the great waters of **verse 19** are not mythic powers [as commonly held in the ancient Near East], but are [YHWH’s] agents of judgment.” (P. 1195)

Darr states that “The fourth of Ezekiel’s oracles against Tyre...underscores that Tyre’s fate is Yahweh’s doing. Here, the prophet imagines Tyre’s descent to the underworld...Tyre makes its final journey down to the Pit...where reside those who have already died, ‘the people of long ago’...In the netherworld (literally ‘the lowest land’), amid ancient ruins, she will dwell with the dead...Tyre will cease to exist. Though sought for, she will never again be found...Owing to their location, the Tyrians were able to withstand the assaults of the mighty empires Assyria and Babylonia. Like the inhabitants of ‘inviolable’ Jerusalem, they presumed their security. But Ezekiel asserts that the same Deity Whose judgment is manifested in Jerusalem’s destruction is bent upon their demise as well.” (P. 235)

<sup>1399</sup>

Hilmer’s translation has “ocean depths,” and he comments that this means “the primeval, chaotic mass—the ‘deep’ [תְּהוֹם, **tehom**] of **Genesis 1:2**. Tyre’s collapse into the sea is described in almost cosmic terms.” (P. 1262)

26:20 וְהוֹרַדְתִּיךָ אֶת-יִוְרְדֵי בּוֹר

and I will cause you to go down with those descending (to the) pit / cistern / sheol,<sup>1400</sup>

אֶל-עַם עוֹלָם

to a people (from) long ago.<sup>1401</sup>

וְהוֹשַׁבְתִּיךָ בְּאֶרֶץ תַּחְתִּיּוֹת

And I will cause you to dwell in a land of lowest parts,

כְּחֶרְבֹת מֵעוֹלָם

like the waste-lands of long ago,

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1400

Rabbi Fisch states that “Ezekiel envisages Tyre descending into the underworld which is inhabited by the dead of former ages.” (P. 177)

Hilmer states that the בּוֹר, “pit,” “cistern,” “well,” means ‘the earth below.’”

1401

Hilmer holds that the “people of long ago” means “Those long dead.” (P. 1263) See: **Psalm 143:3,**

כִּי רָדַף אוֹיְבִי נַפְשִׁי

Because an enemy pursued my innermost-being / life;

דָּכָא לְאֶרֶץ חִיתִּי

he crushed my life to the earth.

הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי בְּמַחְשָׁכִים כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם:

He caused me to sit in dark places, like those long dead.

**Lamentations 3:6,**

בְּמַחְשָׁכִים הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי

He caused me to dwell in dark places,

כְּמֵתֵי עוֹלָם:

like dead people (for) long-lasting time!

אֶת־יֹרְדֵי בֹר

with those going down (to the) pit / cistern / sheol,<sup>1402</sup>

לְמַעַן לֹא תִשְׁבֵּי

so that you will not be inhabited,<sup>1403</sup>

וְנָתַתִּי צְבִי בְּאֶרֶץ חַיִּים:

and I will place beauty in (the) land of (the) living.<sup>1404</sup>

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1402

L. Waechter, in his article on *sheol* in **Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament XIV**, pp. 239-48, states that בֹר, **bhor** is a “parallel expression to שְׂאוֹל, **sheol**. “*Bor*, ‘cistern, water pit,’ is one of the most frequent names for the underworld in the **Old Testament**, a name used in part in place of *sheol* in [parallel lines]...The two terms are used in close proximity in **Isaiah 38:18; Ezekiel 31:14b, 15a**, etc. The characteristic expression for descent into the underworld in Israel is the idiom יֹרְדֵי בֹר, *yoredhey bhor*, ‘those who go down to the Pit’ [used here in **Ezekiel 26:20**]...An expression analogous to [‘lowest sheol’ is ‘lowest pit’], corresponding, e.g., to יַרְכְּתֵי־בֹר, ‘depths of the Pit’ (...**Ezekiel 32:23**).” (P. 242)

1403

Rabbi Fisch comments that “The destruction will be complete and irreparable.” (P. 178)

1404

Rabbi Fisch comments on the clause “I will set glory [our ‘beauty’] in (the) land of the living,” that it is a difficult clause which interrupts the sequence. Modern exegetes emend the text to make it apply to Tyre: ‘so that you shall not remain in the land of the living’...

“According to the Jewish commentators Ezekiel draws a contrast between the fate of Tyre and Judea. The land of the living is taken to be a designation of the holy land...in contradistinction to the nether parts of the earth to which Tyre is assigned. As against the latter’s hope to profit by Jerusalem’s fall (**verse 2**), [YHWH] decrees Tyre’s disappearance and Israel’s restoration.” (P. 178)

Translations of the last two lines of **verse 20** vary:

**King James**, “that thou be not inhabited; and I shall set glory in the land of the living”;

**Tanakh**, “so that you shall not be inhabited and shall not radiate splendor in the land of the living”;

**New Revised Standard**, “so that you will not be inhabited or have a place in the land of the living”;

**New International**, “and you will not return or take your place in the land of the living.”

(continued...)

26:21 בְּלִהוֹת אֶתְנֶךָ וְאֵינְךָ

I will give you calamities,<sup>1405</sup> and you will be no longer;

וְתִבְקָשִׁי וְלֹא-תִמְצָאִי עוֹד לְעוֹלָם

and you will be sought, and you will not be found again to long-lasting-time!<sup>1406</sup>

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<sup>1404</sup>(...continued)

**New Jerusalem**, “so that you can never come back or be restored to the land of the living”;

**Rahfs**, ὅπως μὴ κατοικηθῆς μηδὲ ἀνασταθῆς ἐπὶ γῆς ζωῆς, “so that you will not be inhabited, nor rise up upon the land of life.”

The last four of these translations claim that Tyre can never experience what **Ezekiel 37:1-14** teaches will happen to Israel. But Ezekiel’s vision of the River of Life flowing from Israel’s new sanctuary to the Dead Sea—the “deadest” place on earth—envisions life being granted to the dead. What do you think? Does your theology allow for any hope for Tyre? And if Ezekiel 16 offers hope to the cities of Sodom, Samaria, and Jerusalem, that have experienced destruction by YHWH’s fire, should we not expect hope to be given to Tyre?

<sup>1405</sup>

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “terror,” and he comments that Tyre will become “a cause of dismay to other peoples (compare **verses 15-17**).” (P. 178)

<sup>1406</sup>

For the total negativity of this verse, compare **Ezekiel**:

27:36, סַחֲרִים בְּעַמִּים שָׂרְקוּ עֲלֶיךָ

Merchants among the people hiss / whistle over you:

בְּלִהוֹת הָיִית

you have become a dreadful calamity,

וְאֵינְךָ עַד-עוֹלָם:

and you are no longer—until long-lasting time!

28:19, כָּל-יֹדְעֶיךָ בְּעַמִּים שָׂמְמוּ עֲלֶיךָ

All those knowing you among the peoples were appalled at you.

t'yyIēh' tAhāL'B;

Dreadful calamities you were--

וְאֵינְךָ עַד-עוֹלָם:

and you are no longer—until long-lasting time!

נֹאם אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה:

(It is) a saying of my Lord YHWH.<sup>1407</sup>

### Ezekiel's Lament for Tyre--

#### Both as "Ship of State," and as a City (Chapter 27)<sup>1408</sup>

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1407

Darr comments that “The concluding recognition formula, which appears only here in all of Ezekiel’s oracles against Tyre, proclaims the ultimate goal of Yahweh’s punishment of the island fortress. The Tyrians read Jerusalem’s fate through the lens of how they might profit from that catastrophe. But when they have experienced God’s lethal intervention, they will (in their dying moment?) be forced to acknowledge that Yahweh’s sovereign control of events extends to their own history as well. The **Scroll of Ezekiel** longs for, insists upon, that moment of recognition not only for Israel, but also for other nations.” (P. 232)

1408

There is an amazing breadth of international and commercial knowledge reflected in Ezekiel's message against Tyre. Her proud ship of state is about to be wrecked in the heart of the sea, and bitter mourning and lament are about to be raised over her horrible end.

Rabbi Fisch comments that “In this chapter Ezekiel pictures Tyre as a magnificent ship constructed from the best material, furnished with the choicest equipment and manned by the most skillful sailors...He then describes in graphic imagery and in a remarkably detailed style the various types of merchandise which made up the ship’s cargo. Sailing proudly on the high seas, it was overtaken by a tempest and suffered shipwreck. Everything on board was lost. The disaster caused intense consternation among the neighboring cities; and seamen, merchants and kings uttered lamentation over the catastrophe.” (P. 178)

Reimer entitles **27:1-36** “A Lament Against Tyre.” He comments that “This remarkable passage, the second installment of the Tyre series, is both simple and complex. Its simplicity lies in the unfolding narrative line, set in the form of a lament. Its complexity is in the wealth of detail and technical artistry displayed throughout. Tyre is likened to a merchant ship, whose fortunes are traced from the shipyards (**verses 4-7**) and crew (**verses 8-11**) to its tragic loss at sea (**verses 26-27**) and the outcry its loss produces (**verses 28-32a**)—all culminating in a lament-within-a-lament (**verses 32b-36**). A lengthy aside in the middle of the chapter (**verses 12-25**) offers a sort of commercial litany, as Tyre’s many trading partners and their wares are dolefully itemized...A striking feature of the lament, lending to its sober tone, is the complete lack of invective; nor is [YHWH] mentioned within the oracle. In spite of some obscure details and uncertain place names, the force of the lament is clear enough: for all its splendor and in spite of its wealth, Tyre is doomed.” (Pp. 1539-40)

(continued...)

<sup>1408</sup>(...continued)

Matties comments on **27:1-36** that “This mocking lament for Tyre begins with a magnificent boast (**verse 3**). The prophet pictures Tyre as a great ship that carries the grandest cargo money can buy, but it is destroyed by a storm. The irony is that Tyre’s powerful position at *the heart of the seas* is also the place of its death (**verses 4, 25, 27**). The poem in three parts describes the beauty of the ship (**verses 1-11**), provides an inventory of Tyre’s trading partners and goods (**verses 12-25a**), and recounts the sinking of the ship and the response to that event (**verses 25b-36**).” (P. 1195)

Darr comments that “Ezekiel’s fifth and longest oracle against Tyre, a Phoenician city-state situated on an island just off the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, testifies to his literary prowess, including his mastery of metaphor. In earlier oracles, he has repeatedly demonstrated powerful acumen [the ability to make good judgments and quick decisions], his in-depth knowledge of numerous and wide-ranging topics, including their technical vocabularies, and his familiarity with and creative use of religious traditions. **Ezekiel 27** itself justifies placing the prophet among the intellectual cognoscenti [intellectuals, thinkers] of his ancient Near Eastern world. To read it is to stand in awe of its author..

“The oracle consists of two major sections, each of which can be further divided into subsections. The ‘then’ section, **verses 3-25**, describes in great detail the splendid merchant-man–constructed of the finest materials (**verses 5-7**), manned and maintained by elite Phoenician ‘sailors’ (**verses 8-9a**), and defended by mercenaries drawn from the ends of the known world (**verses 10-11**). Poetry gives way to prose in **verses 12-25a** as the oracle rehearses at length Tyre’s trade partners and the commodities of exchange. The list is long and imposing, a literary emporium of the world’s goods, ranging from necessities, like agricultural products and livestock, to luxury items—gold and silver, precious gems, ivory, and ebony (copper is noticeably absent). Itself a treasure trove for historians (presenting ‘information of incalculable value about Tyre’s trade and zones of economic influence, so much so that it is considered to be one of the most relevant sources of information for reconstructing the Phoenician economy in the day of the Mediterranean expansion’ [Aubet, **The Phoenicians and the West**, p. 98], it impresses readers ancient and modern with the wealth, prestige, and cosmopolitanism of this ancient city ‘ship’...Each detail of the prophet’s dirge amplifies the impact of the whole and invites its audience to invest in this ‘ship of dreams’—a symbol of exotic locales, seafaring adventure, and fabulous wealth—until in Newsom’s words: ‘Ezekiel simply takes the ship to sea and sinks it in a single, sudden verse’ (**verse 26**) [Cheryl Newsom, ‘A Maker of Metaphors: Ezekiel’s Oracles against Tyre,’ in **The Place Is Too Small for Us**, edited by Robert P. Gordon, p. 197].” (P. 237)

<sup>1409</sup>

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 1-11** “The Ship: Its Beauty and Crew.”

Matties comments on **verses 1-11** that “After setting the stage (**verses 1-3a**), the oracle cites Tyre’s prideful boast, *I am perfect in beauty* (**verse 3b**; see also **16:14; 28:12; Lamentations 2:15**), which is also echoed in the last line of the poem (**verse 11c**). The beauty of the ship (and the harbor and  
(continued...)

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:

And YHWH's Word was / came to me saying:

27:2 וְאַתָּה בֶן־אָדָם

And you, Son of Adam / Humanity,

שָׂא עַל־צָר קִינָה:

take up<sup>1410</sup> a lamentation / funeral dirge concerning Tyre,<sup>1411</sup>

27:3 וְאַמַּרְתָּ לְצֹר (הַיִּשְׁבְּתִי) [הַיִּשְׁבֹּת] עַל־מְבוֹאֹת יָם

and you shall say to Tyre, the one dwelling upon entrances (of the) sea,<sup>1412</sup>

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<sup>1409</sup>(...continued)

city in **verses 9b-11**) is ascribed to the work of the builders (**verse 4b**), which is detailed in the following verses (**verses 5-8**) along with identification of the crew (**verses 8-9a**), merchant traders (**verse 9b**), and international mercenaries (**verses 10-11**).” (P. 1195)

<sup>1410</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that the verb “raise” is “always used in connection with a lamentation, because it was uttered in a loud voice.” (P. 178)

<sup>1411</sup>

That is, long before Tyre’s fall, the prophet Ezekiel is told to take up a lament, a funeral dirge over Tyre, proclaiming her fall / “death.” And we are reminded of **Isaiah 14**, where the prophet Isaiah predicted the fall of Babylon many long years before its fall, using similar imagery to that of Ezekiel. We think Ezekiel has been influenced by Isaiah. And we ask, Who do these so-called “prophets” in Israel think they are, predicting such things for these powerful, important Near-Eastern countries? Our answer is, They consider themselves spokespersons for YHWH, the Creator of the universe, the One Who is in control of every earthly government, giving them their power, using them as His tools, and then punishing, destroying them for their immoralities and pride!

<sup>1412</sup>

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has the singular “entry of the sea,” and he comments that “The Hebrew has the plural ‘entries,’ signifying the two sections of the harbor which were known respectively as ‘the Sidonian’ and ‘the Egyptian,’ the former facing the town of Sidon to the northeast of the island.” (P. 179)

(continued...)

רִכְּלַת הַעַמִּים אֶל-אֵיִם רַבִּים

(the) merchant of the peoples, to many coastlands--<sup>1413</sup>

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה

In this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

צֹר אֶת אֶת אֲמַרְתָּ אֲנִי כְּלִילַת יָפִי

Tyre, you said, I, complete beauty!<sup>1414</sup>

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<sup>1412</sup>(...continued)

Darr comments that “Tyre ‘sits (enthroned) at the entrances (plural) of the sea,’ and is ‘merchant of the people on many coastlands.’ The first suggests the city’s geographical location—the principal factor in its commercial success. Enthroned at a point of access to the sea, Queen Tyre with her two sea-ports, the Sidonian to the north and the Egyptian to the south, exemplifies the truth of the popular adage, ‘location is everything.’ The second phrase highlights the role that locale affords her...Tyre’s commercial enterprise is far flung.”

1413

Rabbi Fisch states that “Tyre traded with the numerous settlements in that part of the world.” (P. 179)

1414

For this phrase, most English translations have “I am perfect in beauty.” The Greek translation (**Rahlfs**) has ἐγὼ περιέθηκα ἑμαυτῆι κάλλος μου, “I, I wrapped myself (with) my beauty.” **New Jerusalem** has “I am a ship perfect in beauty.”

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Tyre coveted the praise which was once bestowed upon Jerusalem (compare **Lamentations 2:15** where the same phrase occurs)” but of Jerusalem. (P. 179)

ס סָפְקוּ עֲלֶיךָ כַּפַּיִם

They clapped (their) hands over you,

כָּל-עֹבְרֵי דָרֶךְ

all those passing by a road;

שָׂרְקוּ וַיִּנְעוּ רֹאשָׁם

they hissed and shook their head

(continued...)

27:4 בְּלֵב יַמִּים גְּבוּלֶיךָ

In (the) heart of (the) seas (are) your borders;<sup>1415</sup>

בְּנִיךָ כִּלְלוּ יִפְיֶיךָ:

your builders perfected your beauty.<sup>1416</sup>

27:5<sup>1417</sup>

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<sup>1414</sup>(...continued)

עַל־בֵּת יְרוּשָׁלַם

at (the) Daughter of Jerusalem,

הַזֹּאת הָעִיר שִׁיאָמְרוּ

(saying:) Is this the City of which they said

כְּלִילַת יָפִי

Perfection of beauty,

מְשׁוֹשׁ לְכָל־הָאָרֶץ:

a rejoicing for all the earth?

1415

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Built on a rocky island, Tyre was the Venice of antiquity. Consequently the simile of a ship was most appropriately applied to her. Unlike a small boat which has to hug the shore, the ship, to which Tyre is likened, sails over the high seas.” (P. 179)

1416

Compare **Ezekiel 27:11**,

בְּנֵי אַרְוַד וְחֵילֶךָ עַל־חוֹמוֹתֶיךָ סָבִיב

Sons of Arwadh and Cheylek (were) upon your walls (all) around,

וְגַמְדִים בְּמִגְדְּלוֹתֶיךָ הָיוּ

and Gamadians were in your towers.

שְׁלִטְיָהֶם תָּלוּ עַל־חוֹמוֹתֶיךָ סָבִיב

their shields (?) they hung upon your walls (all) around,

הֵמָּה כִּלְלוּ יִפְיֶיךָ:

these perfected your beauty.

1417

Reimer comments on **verses 5-6** that “The wood comes from the regions corresponding to modern Lebanon (Senir is north of Mount Hermon) and the Golan Heights (Bashan).” (P. 1540)

בְּרוֹשִׁים מִשְׁנִיר

Cypress / fir trees from Senir—<sup>1418</sup>

בָּנוּ לָךְ אֶת כָּל-לַחְתֵּיִם

they built for you all your planks

אַרְזֵי מִלְבָּנוֹן

Cedar tree(s) from Lebanon,<sup>1419</sup>

לָקְחוּ לַעֲשׂוֹת תֶּרֶן עֲלֶיךָ:

they took to make a mast over you.

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1418

Rabbi Fisch comments that “This timber [cypress] was also used for building the temple (1 Kings 5:24).” (P. 179)

וַיְהִי חִירוֹם נָתַן לְשִׁלְמֹה

And Chiyrom [‘Hiram’] was givng to Solomon

עֲצֵי אֲרָזִים וְעֲצֵי בְרוֹשִׁים

cedar trees and cypress / fir trees,

כָּל-חֲפָצָיו:

all his desire.

Rabbi Fisch adds that Senir was a mountainous district in Transjordan known by several names. It was called ‘Hermon’; the Sidonians, who were the original inhabitants, named it ‘Sirion,’ and the Amorites ‘Senir,’ meaning ‘snow’ in their language. It was also known as ‘Sion’—see **The Soncino Chumash on Deuteronomy 3:9.**” (P. 179)

Hilmer states that Senir was “the Amorite name for Hermon, the Anti-Lebanon mountain (or range) famed for cedar.” (P. 1262)

1419

Rabbi Fisch notes that “Lebanon was famous for its Cedars.” (P. 179) See the many pictures of Lebanon cedars on the Internet.

27:6 אֱלוֹנִים מִבָּשָׁן

Oak trees from Bashan,<sup>1420, 2</sup>

עָשׂוּ מִשׁוֹטֵיךָ

They made (into) your oars.

קִרְשֵׁךָ עָשׂוּ-יָשָׁן

Your board(s) / deck they made (from) Ivory--<sup>1421</sup>

בַּת־אֲשֻׁרִים מֵאֵי [כַּתִּים] כַּתִּים:

daughter of boxwood from coastlands of Kittim<sup>1422</sup> / Cyprus.<sup>1423</sup>

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1420

Rabbi Fisch notes that Bashan “was east of the Jordan; its oaks are mentioned again in **Isaiah 2:13** and **Zechariah 11:2**.” (P. 179) See end-note 2 for a **Wikipedia** article on Bashan, and on the Internet see “Oaks of Bashan,” with its many pictures, especially of some oaks of tremendous size.

Hilmer states that Bashan was “rich pastureland east of the Sea of Galilee, known for its sleek cattle (**Deuteronomy 32:14**; **Psalm 22:12**; **Amos 4:1**) and its oak trees (**Ezekiel 27:6** and **Isaiah 2:13**).” (P. 1282)

1421

The Greek translation (**Rahlfs**) has τὰ ἱερά σου ἐποίησαν ἐξ ἐλέφαντος, “the set-apart things of yours they made out of ivory.”

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “your deck [literally ‘your boards’ in the collective singular]”... “ivory inlaid in larch.” He comments that “This rendering follows the Targum and Rashi who read *bath ashurim* as one word meaning ‘in the larch,’ the wood of a coniferous tree, defined as box-wood or a species called by the Arabs ‘sherbin.’ It would then be identical with *teashshur* which occurs in **Isaiah 41:19**; **50:13**. Kimchi and Metsudath David understand the text as: ‘the Ashurites made your deck out of ivory brought from the isles of the Kittites’...but this interpretation would require the word to be read as *ashshurim* (compare **Genesis 25:3**).” (Pp. 179-80)

1422

The Masoretes offer two readings: first, the *kethibh*, “what is written,” כַּתִּים; and second, the *qere*, “to be read,” כַּתִּים, correcting the spelling of the original text.

1423

(continued...)

27:7 שֶׁשֶׁבֶרְקָמָה מִמִּצְרַיִם הָיָה מְפֹרָשֵׁן

Fine embroidered linen from Egypt<sup>1424</sup> was / became your spread out sail,

לְהִיּוֹת לָךְ לְנֵס

to become for you for an ensign;<sup>1425</sup>

תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְגָּמָן מֵאֵי אֵלִישָׁה

violet and red-purple from (the) coastlands of Elishah<sup>1426</sup>

הָיָה מְכַסֶּה:

was / became your covering / awning.<sup>1427</sup>

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<sup>1423</sup>(...continued)

Hilmer notes that “The Hebrew word for Kittim...was originally the name of a town in southern Cyprus colonized by Phoenicia.” (P. 1263)

<sup>1424</sup>

See **Ezekiel 16:10**.

<sup>1425</sup>

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “for an ensign.” He comments that “A flag of identification” is meant. “As no distinctive flags were used on ships in ancient times, the color of the sails served that purpose.” (P. 180)

<sup>1426</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments concerning the isles of Elishah that “Elishah was a son of Javan who became the founder of a people (**Genesis 10:4**). Italy, Sicily and Greece have been suggested for their territory. ‘Dido’s other name, Elissa, would suggest Carthage, or perhaps more generally the North African coastland. Racial and commercial ties between Carthage and Tyre were close’ (Lofthouse).” (P. 180)

Hilmer notes that Elishah was “a city on the east side of Cyprus; also the oldest name for Cyprus.” (P. 1263)

<sup>1427</sup>

Rabbi Fisch notes that מְכַסֶּה, **mekhassek** is “literally ‘your covering’; usually understood as a deck-awning. Others propose ‘cabin,’ a part of the ship partitioned off by the material named.” (P. 180)

27:8<sup>1428</sup> יִשְׁבִּי צִידוֹן וְאַרְוָד הָיוּ שָׂטִים לָךְ

Inhabitants of Tsiydhon<sup>1429</sup> and Arwadh<sup>1430</sup> were / became rowers for you.

חֲכָמֶיךָ צוֹר הָיוּ לָךְ

Your wise ones (from) Tyre were in you--

הֵמָּה חַבְלֵיךָ:

they (were) your sailors.

27:9 זְקֵנֵי גִבְל וְחַכְמֵיהָ הָיוּ לָךְ

Elderly men of Gebhal / Byblos,<sup>1431, 3</sup> and her wise men were in you;

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1428

Reimer notes on **verses 8-9** that “The mariners came from various Phoenician coastal cities.” (P. 1540)

1429

Rabbi Fisch notes that “Sidon seems to have been at that time a vassal of Tyre. It ‘lay to the north of Tyre, about half-way between it and Beirut, and was probably the oldest Phoenician town, Tyre being a colony. Sidon is the firstborn of Canaan (**Genesis 10:15**), and is called Great Sidon in **Joshua 19:28**...At a later time Tyre eclipsed her mother in power and wealth’ (Davidson).” (P. 180)

Hilmer comments that Sidon was “a harbor city 25 miles north of Tyre, which sometimes rivaled her in political and commercial importance.” (P.1263)

1430

Rabbi Fisch notes that “Arvad is named as a son of Canaan in **Genesis 10:18**. ‘Arvad is an island town founded by Sidonian fugitives, north of Tripoli, now *Ruwad*’ (Lofthouse). Its inhabitants were renowned for their seamanship.” (P. 180)

Hilmer states that Arvad was “another Phoenician island-city, off the Mediterranean coast and north of Sidon.” (P. 1263)

1431

Rabbi Fisch says to “Compare **1 Kings 5:32**, where the Gebalites are stated to have been engaged in building the temple. It is the modern Jebel, mid-way between Tripoli and Beirut.” (P. 180) See multiple pictures of Tripoli, Beirut, and Jebel on the Internet. For a **Wikipedia** article on Lebanon, see end-note 3.

(continued...)

מְחִיֵּקֵי בְּרִיחְךָ

making firm your breach(es).<sup>1432</sup>

כָּל-אַנְיֹת הַיָּם וּמַלְחֵיהֶם הָיוּ בְּךָ

All ships of the sea and their mariners were in you;

לְעֵרֵב מֵעֲרָבֶךָ:

to barter (for) your merchandise.<sup>1433</sup>

27:10 פָּרַס וְלֹד וּפְחֻט הָיוּ בְּחֵילֶךָ

Persia<sup>1434</sup> and Lud and Phut<sup>1435</sup> were in your army,<sup>1436</sup>

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<sup>1431</sup>(...continued)

Hilmer states that Gebal is Byblos, “an important ancient city on the coast between Sidon and Arvad.” (P. 1263) See **1 Kings 5:32**<sup>Heb</sup> / **5:18**<sup>Eng</sup>

וַיִּפְסְלוּ בְנֵי שְׁלֹמֹה וּבְנֵי חִירֹם וְהַגְּבָלִים

And they hewed out--Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the men of Gebal;

וַיַּכְיִנוּ הָעֵצִים וְהָאֲבָנִים לְבְנוֹת הַבַּיִת:

and they prepared the trees and the stones to build the house / temple.

<sup>1432</sup>

Rabbi Fisch's translation has “were in you your calkers,” and he comments that the phrase is literally “the strengtheners of your breach,” i.e. “ship-carpenters.” (P. 180)

The translations we are consulting vary, from “were in thee thy calkers,” to “were within you, Making your repairs,” to “within you, caulking your seams,” to “as shipwrights to caulk your seams,” to *ἐν σοί οὗτοι ἐνίσχυσον τὴν βουλήν σου*, “in you these were strengthening your will / counsel.”

<sup>1433</sup>

Rabbi Fisch's translation has “to exchange you merchandise.” He comments that “From far and wide the nations brought their wares to Tyre and exchanged them for Tyrian goods.” (P. 181)

<sup>1434</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Persia is mentioned here for the first time in the **Bible**. Attracted by the might and wealth of Tyre, her mercenaries came from distant lands, such as Persia, Lud and Put.”

(P. 181) The other occurrences of the noun פָּרַס, **paras**, “Persia” in the **Hebrew Bible** are:

(continued...)

## אֲנָשֵׁי מִלְחָמָתְךָ

men of your war.<sup>1437</sup>

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<sup>1434</sup>(...continued)

**2 Chronicles 36:20, 22, 23;**  
**Ezra 1:1, 2, 8; 3:7; 4:3, 5, 7, 24; 6:14; 7:1; 9:9;**  
**Esther 1:3, 14, 18; 19;**  
**Isaiah 58:7;**  
**Ezekiel 27:10 (here); 38:5;**  
**Daniel 5:28; 10:1, 13 and 20.**

Whether you agree with Rabbi Fisch or not will depend on your dating of these various portions of the **Hebrew Bible**. Some will hold that **Isaiah 58:7** is long prior to Ezekiel, and others will hold that Daniel was an older contemporary of Ezekiel in Babylonian captivity, and that therefore his writing was probably prior to Ezekiel's.

<sup>1435</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Though Lud and Put occur together here and in **Ezekiel 30:5**, they are of different descent. Lud is Semitic and Put Hamitic (compare **Genesis 10:6, 22**). Some identify Lud with the Lydians of western Asia Minor; others suggest the ‘Lubdi,’ a people inhabiting the land between the upper Tigris and the Euphrates. Put is the Egyptian ‘Punt’ on the western coast of the Red Sea.” (P. 181)

Reimer comments that “Persia (modern Iran), Lud (probably in Asia Minor), and Put (Libya) mark out a vast geographical triangle from which mercenaries were drawn. The actual location of Lud is uncertain. The most common view is that Lud is Lydia (a region in western Asia Minor, later a Roman province and now part of modern Turkey), but some place it in northern Africa.” (P. 1540)

Hilmer simply states “Lydia...in Asia Minor. Put...Libya, in North Africa, west of Egypt.” (P. 1263)

<sup>1436</sup>

Hilmer comments that “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.” (P. 1263)

<sup>1437</sup>

Darr comments that “Trading vessels were prime targets for pirates, and so it comes as no surprise that this one is protected by soldiers, mercenaries from Paras (Persia), Lud (Lydia), and Put (Libya)...These forces and their armaments give to Tyre splendor.” (Pp. 239-240)

מִגֵּן וְכֹבֵעַ תְּלוּ-בָךְ

Shield and helmet they hung in you--<sup>1438</sup>

הַמָּוֶה נָתַנוּ הַדְּרָךְ:

they gave (you) your glory.<sup>1439</sup>

27:11<sup>1440</sup> בְּנֵי אַרְוַד וְחַיֵּלְךָ עַל-חֻמוֹתֶיךָ סָבִיב

Sons of Arwadh and Cheylek<sup>1441</sup> (were) upon your walls (all) around,

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1438

Rabbi Fisch comments that “It was the practice in ancient times to hang weapons on towers and fortresses.” (P. 181) Compare **Song of Songs 4:4**,

כְּמִגְדַל דָּוִד צִוְּאֶרְךָ

Like David's tower, your neck,

בְּנוּי לְתַלְפִּיּוֹת

built for weapons / shields;

אַלֶּף הַמָּגֵן תְּלוּי עָלָיו

a thousand shields hang upon it,

כָּל שְׁלֵטֵי הַגְּבוּרִים:

all the weapons of the (strong) men / warriors.

1439

Rabbi Fisch's translation has “they set forth your comeliness,” and he comments that “The subject of the verb is the foreign troops with their magnificent weapons.” (P. 181)

1440

Reimer comments on **verse 11** that “The identifications of the final group of place names are uncertain. They serve to complete the ‘beauty’ boasted of in **verses 3-4**.” (P. 1540)

1441

For Arvad, see **verse 8**.

Rabbi Fisch comments on the noun חַיֵּלְךָ, **cheylek**, that if it means a people, “it is an unidentified people. Rashi, Kimchi and others render: ‘and your army’...Ehrlich explains the conjunction as the equivalent of the Arabic *pha* and translates: ‘The men of Arvad constituted your army upon your walls’” which Rabbi Fisch explains as meaning “to protect the city from hostile attack.” (P. 181)

(continued...)

וְגַמְדִּים בְּמִגְדָּלוֹתַיךָ הָיוּ

and Gamadians were in your towers.<sup>1442</sup>

שְׁלִטֵיהֶם תָּלוּ עַל-חוֹמוֹתַיךָ סָבִיב

their shields (?) they hung upon your walls (all) around,

הִנָּה כְּלָלוּ יִפְיֶיךָ:

these perfected your beauty,

27:12<sup>1443</sup>

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<sup>1441</sup>(...continued)

Hilmer states that חֵיֶלֶךְ, **cheylek** is Cilicia, the mountainous region in southeast Asia Minor. The name occurs only here in the **Bible**.” (P. 1263) We agree with Rashi and Kimchi that the word means “your army,” and we wonder where Hilmer got the idea that it means Cilicia. Eichrodt translates by “your army.” (P. 379) Cooke gives no help at this point.

<sup>1442</sup>

Rabbi Fisch states that the Gammadim are “a people not mentioned elsewhere. The Targum understood it as ‘Cappadocian’ and Kimchi as ‘pygmies,’ who acted as observers on the towers so as not to be noticed by the enemy; or, because they were high up on the towers, they looked small like pygmies. The **Septuagint** translates by a word meaning ‘guards.’” (P. 181) That word is φύλακες, **phulakes**.

Hilmer says concerning Gammad that “Either (1) northern Asia Minor, or (2) a coastal town near Arvad. It is not mentioned elsewhere in the **Bible**.” (P. 1263)

<sup>1443</sup>

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 12-25** “The Commerce of Tyre.” Darr entitles these verses “Tyre’s Trading Partners and Their Commodities of Exchange.”

Reimer states that “The impressive range of merchant connections begins and ends with Tarshish, probably in southern Spain, implying that Tyre’s trade stretched along the whole extent of the Mediterranean.” (P. 1540)

Matties comments on **verses 12-25a** that “A prose section provides an inventory of the places and products of Tyre’s enterprise. Beginning and ending with *Tarshish* (**verses 12, 25a**), the farthest port in Spain, the list move to *Greece* and *Anatolia* (Turkey) and to *Syria-Palestine*, *Arabia*, and the *Mesopotamian partners*. *Judah* and *Israel* stand at the center of the eleven regions. Tyre is replete with luxury goods, and the city’s economic privileges have made it the source of power and pride.” (P. 1196)

תַּרְשִׁישׁ סַחְרָתָךְ

Tarshish<sup>1444</sup> (was) your fellow-traveler,

מֵרַב כָּל־הוֹן

from a multitude of every (type of) wealth--<sup>1445</sup>

בְּכֶסֶף בְּרִזָּל בְּדָיִל וְעוֹפָרַת נָתַנוּ עִבּוֹנֵיךְ:

in / with silver, iron, tin and lead, they gave / bought your wares.

27:13 יוֹן תְּבַל וּמֶשֶׁךְ

Ionia / Greece, Tubhal and Meshek--<sup>1446</sup>

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1444

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Tarshish is “identified with Tartessus, a Phoenician port and mining district in southern Spain.” (P. 181) Tarshish is mentioned numerous times in the **Hebrew Bible**, at:

**Exodus 28:20** and **39:13**;

**1 Kings 10:22** and **22:49**;

**2 Chronicles 9:21**; **20:36** and **37**;

**Esther 1:14**;

**Psalms 48:8** and **72:10**;

**Isaiah 2:16**; **23:1, 10, 14**; **60:9** and **66:19**;

**Ezekiel 1:16**; **10:9**; **27:12** (here); **25**; **28:13**; **38:13**;

and **Jonah 1:3**.

Hilmer comments that Tarshish is “traditionally located on the coast of southern Spain, but the island of Sardinia has also been suggested. Passages such as **1 Kings 10:22** and **Jonah 1:3** imply that it was a long distance from the Canaanite coast...

“The list of places in **verses 12-23** generally follows a west-to-east direction.” (P. 1263)

1445

Rabbi Fisch comments that the people of Tarshish “exchanged their metals for Tyrian goods.

The noun עִבּוֹן, (**izzabhon** is found only in this chapter” at **Ezekiel 27:12, 14, 16, 19, 22, 27** and **33**.

The noun “is derived from the verb עִזַּב, ‘to abandon, leave,’ and the noun apparently signifies that which is ‘left’ with the purchaser.” (P. 182)

1446

(continued...)

הַמָּה רֹכְלִיךְ

they (were) your traders--

בְּנִפְשׁ אָדָם וּכְלֵי נְחֹשֶׁת נָתַנוּ מֵעֲרַבְדֵּי:

with human life<sup>1447</sup> and bronze<sup>1448</sup> vessels, they gave / bought your merchandise.

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<sup>1446</sup>(...continued)

Rabbi Fisch comments that these are the “names of three sons of Japheth (**Genesis 10:2**). *Javan* is the Hebrew term for the Ionians, the Greeks of Asia Minor. *Tubal* and *Meshech* are usually identified with the Tibareni and Maschi who lived southeast and south respectively of the Black Sea. These peoples supplied Tyre with slaves and copper.” (P. 182)

Reimer state that “The names Javan, Tubal, and Meshech are first found as sons of Japheth in **Genesis 10:2** (repeated in **1 Chronicles 1:5**). But in Ezekiel’s time the names signified geographical regions, perhaps peopled by descendants of those men. The primary import of the names here is to signify the far-off places with which Tyre did business...

“More specifically, ‘Javan’ (Hebrew *yawan*) was a collective **Old Testament** name for Greece or the Greeks (the same Hebrew term is translated ‘Greece’ in **Daniel 8:21; 10:20; 11:2; Zechariah 9:13**). ‘Tubal’ refers to ancient Tabal, which is now central Turkey (the province of Cappadocia in **New Testament** times). ‘Meshech’ refers to a people known in Greek literature as the *Moschoi*, who settled in an area on the southeast edge of the Black Sea (northeastern part of modern Turkey).” (Pp. 1540-41)

<sup>1447</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that this is literally “with the soul of man,’ i.e. ‘human soul, human being,’ used in the collective sense. In **Joel 4:6** Tyre is condemned for having sold Jude-ans to Javan who then traded in them.” (P. 182)

4:6, וּבְנֵי יְהוּדָה וּבְנֵי יְרוּשָׁלַם

And Judah's children and Jerusalem's children,

מִכְרָתֶם לְבְנֵי הַיּוֹנִים

you have sold to the children of Greece

לְמַעַן הִרְחִיקֶם מֵעַל גְּבוּלֶם:

in order that you might remove them far from your border.

But here in **Ezekiel 27:13** there is no mention of the nationality of the human beings who have been sold as slaves. Ezekiel’s view is much more “universal” than is that of Joel, and we are reminded of passages in the **Hebrew Bible** that while forbidding making slaves of fellow Hebrews, allow the purchasing of non-Jewish slaves.

(continued...)

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<sup>1447</sup>(...continued)

From **Wikipedia** we quote: “The **Hebrew Bible** contains two sets of rules governing slaves: one set for Hebrew slaves (**Leviticus 25:39-43**) and a second set for Canaanite slaves (**Leviticus 25:45-46**). The main source of non-Hebrew slaves were prisoners of war. Hebrew slaves, in contrast to non-Hebrew slaves, became slaves either because of extreme poverty (in which case they could sell themselves to an Israelite owner) or because of inability to pay a debt. According to the **Hebrew Bible**, non-Hebrew slaves were drawn primarily from the neighboring Canaanite nations, and religious justification was provided for the enslavement of these neighbors: the rules governing Canaanites was based on a curse aimed at Canaan, a son of Ham, but in later eras the Canaanite slavery laws were stretched to apply to all non-Hebrew slaves.

“The laws governing non-Hebrew slaves were more harsh than those governing Hebrew slaves: non-Hebrew slaves could be owned permanently, and bequeathed to the owner's children, whereas Hebrew slaves were treated as servants, and were released after six years of service or the occurrence of a jubilee year...

“The laws governing Hebrew slaves were more lenient than laws governing non- Hebrew slaves, but a single Hebrew word, *ebed* is used for both situations. In English translations of the **Bible**, the distinction is sometimes emphasized by translating the word as "slave" in the context of non-Hebrew slaves, and "servant" or "bondman" for Hebrew slaves...

“The **Torah** forbids the return of runaway slaves who escape from their foreign land and their bondage and arrive in the land of Israel. Furthermore, the **Torah** demands that such former slaves be treated equally to any other resident alien. This law is unique in the Ancient Near East.” (7/27/2020)

It seems apparent that Ezekiel goes beyond this distinction between Hebrew and non-Hebrew slaves, condemning all traffic in human lives!

Hilmer skips over these mentions of human slavery in his notes, and we think it is very important for commentators to take full notice of such matters, refusing to skip over them.

<sup>1448</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that “The Hebrew נְחֹשֶׁת, **nechosheth** is more strictly translated ‘copper.’ It was a pure metal. Compare **Deuteronomy 8:9**, where Moses is depicting as describing the promised land:

אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר לֹא בְמִסְכֵּנֹת תֹּאכַל-לֶחֶם בָּהּ לֶחֶם

a land where you will not eat bread in it with scarcity;

לֹא-תִחְסַר כֹּל בָּהּ

you will not lack anything in it;

(continued...)

27:14 מִבֵּית תּוֹגַרְמָה

From Beth / House of Togharmah--<sup>1449</sup>

סוּסִים וּפָרָשִׁים וּפָרָדִים

Horses and horsemen<sup>1450</sup> and mules,<sup>1451</sup>

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<sup>1448</sup>(...continued)

אֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲבִנֶיהָ בַרְזֶל

a land whose stones (are) iron,

וּמִהַרְרֵיהָ תַּחֲצֹב נְחֹשֶׁת:

and from its mountains you will dig out copper / bronze.

1449

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Togarmah...was the name of one of the sons of Gomer (**Genesis 10:3**), and is supposed to denote Armenia which Herodotus mentions as famed for its horses and mules. In **Ezekiel 38:6** Togarmah is described as situated in the extreme north.” (P. 182)

Reimer states that “Beth-togarmah was located in the region of Carchemish and Harran.” (P. 1541)

Hilmer notes that Beth Togarmah was “in eastern Asia Minor, present-day Armenia.” (P. 1263) See **Ezekiel 38:6**, where the armies of Gog are depicted as including:

גֹּמֶר וְכָל־אֲנָפָיו

Gomer and all his bands / armies;

בֵּית תּוֹגַרְמָה יִרְכָּתִי צָפוֹן

House of Togharmah, (from) extreme parts of (the) north,

וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲנָפָיו

and with all his bands / armies--

עַמִּים רַבִּים אִתְּךָ:

many people (are) with you.

1450

Rabbi Fisch comments concerning “horsemen,” that “If this is the sense of פָּרָשִׁים, **parashiym**, they were mercenaries who drove the war-chariots of Tyre. More probably the meaning is ‘steeds, war- (continued...)’

נָתְנוּ עִבּוֹנֵיךָ:

they gave / bought your wares.

27:15 בְּנֵי דֶדָן רְכָלֶיךָ

Children of Dhedhan,<sup>1452</sup> your traders;

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<sup>1450</sup>(...continued)

horses,' as contrasted with סוּסִים, **susiym**, horses employed for peaceful purposes. The noun may possibly have that signification in **Isaiah 28:28; Jeremiah 46:4** and **Joel 2:4.**" (P. 182)

1451

Translations vary:

**King James**, "horses and horsemen and mules." **Tanakh**, same;

**New Revised Standard**, "horses, war horses, and mules.

**New International**, "work horses, war horses and mules."

**New Jerusalem**, "your horses, chargers, mules."

**Rahlf's**, ἵππους καὶ ἰππεῖς, "horses and horse-riders."

Hilmer comments that "Asia Minor was known for its horses." (P. 1263) See **1 Kings 10:28**,

וּמוֹצֵא הַסּוּסִים אֲשֶׁר לְשִׁלְמֹה מִמִּצְרַיִם

And the export of the horses which belonged to Solomon (was) from Egypt

וּמִקֹּוּהַ

and from Kue [in Cilicia];

סַחְרֵי הַמֶּלֶךְ יִקְחוּ מִקֹּוּהַ בְּמַחֲרִיר:

(the) king's traders took (them) from Kue at a price.

1452

Rabbi Fisch comments that "Since, however, Dedan occurs again in **verse 20**, in its proper place in connection with the Arabian tribes, it has been suggested that this was a different Dedan, situated on the Persian Gulf." (P. 182) See **Ezekiel 25:13** for its mention of Dedan.

Hilmer's translation follows **Rahlf's**, which has υἱοὶ Ῥοδίω, "sons of Hrodians." He comments that Rhodes was "a large island off the northwest coast of Asia Minor that served as a gateway to the Aegean islands. It was an early major trading center (see **Acts 21:1**)."

אֵיִם רַבִּים סְחָרַת יָדְךָ

many coast-lands, merchandise of your hand.<sup>1453</sup>

קָרְנוֹת שֵׁן (וְהוֹבְנִים) [וְהוֹבְנִים] הִשִּׁיבוּ אֶשְׁכָּרְךָ:

(With) ivory tusks, and ebony<sup>1454</sup> they returned your gift / payment.

27:16 אָרָם סְחָרְתְּךָ מִרַב מַעֲשֵׂיֶיךָ

Aram / Syria<sup>1455</sup> (was) your merchant, from / because of (the) abundance of your products,<sup>1456</sup>

בְּנִפְךָ אֶרְגָּמָן וְרִקְמָה

in emerald(s), purple / red-purple, and embroidery;

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1453

The phrase סְחָרַת יָדְךָ occurs only here in the **Hebrew Bible**. We understand it to mean “merchandise of your hand.” Rabbi Fisch says to “compare *the merchants of your hand* in **verse 21**. The phrase *of your hand* probably means ‘in your service.’” (P. 182)

1454

The Masoretes offer two readings: first, the *kethibh*, “what is written,” וְהוֹבְנִים; and second, the *qere*, “to be read,” וְהוֹבְנִים. A matter of correct spelling, as the Masoretes correct the original Hebrew text.

Rabbi Fisch comments that “The Hebrew is *hobnim*, a loan-word which appears in Egyptian as *heben*, in Greek as *hebenos* and Latin as *hebenum*. The Targum (followed by Rashi) understood the meaning to be ‘peacocks,’ but Kimchi gives the correct translation [ebony].” (Pp. 182-83)

1455

Hilmer notes that “Since Damascus, the capital of Aram [/ Syria], is mentioned in **verse 18**, perhaps Edom is meant here [most Hebrew manuscripts have Aram / Syria; some Hebrew manuscripts and the Syriac translation have Edom].” (P. 1264)

1456

Rabbi Fisch’s translation of מַעֲשֵׂיֶיךָ has “your wealth,” but he comments that it is literally “works,” i.e. “The manufactured articles exported to Tyre by other peoples.” (P. 183)

וּבוּיִן וְרִאמֹת וְכִדְפָר

and fine linen, and corals, and precious stones / rubies–

נָתְנוּ בְּעִזְבוֹנֵיךָ:

they gave / paid among your wares.<sup>1457</sup>

27:17 יְהוּדָה וְאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵמָּה רֹכְלֵיךָ

Judah and (the) Land of Israel–they (were) your traders--<sup>1458</sup>

בְּחֲטִי מִנִּית וּפַנָּג וְדִבְשׁ

in wheats of Minnith,<sup>1459</sup> and pannag / cake(s)<sup>1460</sup> and honey;

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1457

Rabbi Fisch comments on **verse 16** that “Syria supplied Tyre with precious stones and beautiful fabrics. The Syrian town, Damascus is mentioned in **verse 18**. Some Hebrew manuscripts, and the **Septuagint** read ‘Edom.’” (P. 183)

1458

Hilmer notes that Israel’s trading with Tyre was “in the past. Since 722-721 B.C.E., Israel had ceased to exist as a political state.” (P. 1264)

1459

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Minnith was an Ammonite town mentioned in **Judges 11:33**. **2 Chronicles 27:5** records the large quantities of wheat and barley which the Ammonites paid to king Jotham as tribute.” (P. 183)

Hilmer notes that the phrase “wheat from Minnith” possibly “denoted a superior quality of wheat.” (P. 1264)

1460

This is the only occurrence of the noun פַּנָּג, **phannagh** in the **Hebrew Bible**, and therefore its meaning cannot be determined. **Brown-Driver-Briggs** states that it is “apparently some kind of food.” Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “balsam,” and he comments that “Kimchi understood it as the name of another place from which wheat was exported.” (P. 183) Some of the translations we are consulting simply transliterate, with “pannag”; others have “millet,” or “confections.” The Greek translation (**Rahlfs**) evidently translates by πρῶτου, “first.”

וְשֵׁן וְצָרִי נָתַנוּ מֵעֲרָבָד׃

and oil, and balsam / balm<sup>1461</sup>—they gave / paid (for) your merchandise.

27:18 דַּמָּשֶׁק סַחֲרָתְךָ בְּרַב מַעֲשֵׂיֶךָ

Damascus<sup>1462</sup> (was) your trader, in / because of (the) abundance of your products,

מֵרַב כָּל־הוֹן

from (the) abundance of all (your) wealth--

בֵּינֵן חֶלְבֹן וְצֹמֶר צָחָר׃

in wine of Chelbon,<sup>1463</sup> and reddish-grey<sup>1464</sup> wool.

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1461

Hilmer states that “*balm*...was a “gum or oil from one of several plants; a product of Gilead (see **Genesis 37:25; Jeremiah 8:22; 46:11**).” (P. 1264)

1462

Damascus was the capital city of Aram / Syria. The city is mentioned some 25 times in the **Hebrew Bible** at: **Genesis 15:2; 2 Samuel 8:5, 6; 1 Kings 11:24; 19:15; 2 Kings 5:12; 8:7, 9; 14:28; 16:9; Song of Songs 7:5; Isaiah 7:8; 8:4; 17:1; Jeremiah 49:24, 27; Ezekiel 27:18 (here); 47:16, 17, 18; 48:1; Amos 1:3 and 5.**

1463

Rabbi Fisch quotes Lofthouse as stating, “Chelbon, now Chalbum, nine miles north of Damascus in Anti-Lebanus; it is mentioned as a wine district in Assyrian lists. Persian kings drank no other wine, and the district is still famous as a wine center.” (P. 183)

Hilmer notes that Helbon is “a town north of Damascus, still in existence and still a wine-making center. The name occurs only here in the **Bible**.” (P. 1264)

1464

Rabbi Fisch states that the Hebrew צָחָר, **tsachar** “occurs in another form in **Judges 5:10**. On the analogy of the Arabic, some authorities prefer the translation ‘reddish-grey, tawny.’” (P. 1830) This

is the translation given by **Brown-Driver-Briggs**. The Greek translation (**Rahlfs**) has ἔρια ἐκ Μιλήτου, “wool from Miletus.” Hilmer spells the name “Zahar,” and states that it is “modern Sahra, an area northwest of Damascus, where grazing is still common today.” (P. 1264)

27:19 דָּן וַיָּוֶן מֵאֻזַּל בְּעִזְבוֹנֵיךָ נָתַנִּי

And Dhan<sup>1465</sup> and Yawan<sup>1466</sup> from Uzal<sup>1467</sup> as / among your wares they gave / bought;

בְּרִזְלַ עֲשׂוֹת קָדְהָ וְקָנָה

wrought iron,<sup>1468</sup> cassia (spice)<sup>1469</sup> and calamus (aromatic reed),<sup>1470</sup>

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1465

Rabbi Fisch's translation has "Vedan" from the Hebrew וְדָן, which we translate "And Dhan." Rabbi Fisch comments that "The place cannot be identified with certainty. Aden, or Waddan near the Arab city Medina, has been conjectured." (P. 183)

Hilmer's translation has "Danites," and he notes that this is "a term that Homer used for Greeks. Some read (as does [Rahlfs] 'and wine from' for 'Danites and Greeks from.'" (P. 1264)

1466

Rabbi Fisch comments that this is "Certainly not the same as the land in **verse 13**. A Greek colony in Arabia has been suggested." (P. 183)

1467

We are mystified by the first three Hebrew words in this line. Translations vary:

**King James**, "Dan also and Javan going to and fro";

**Tanakh**, "Vedan and Javan from Uzal"; **New Revised Standard**, same;

**New International**, "and casks of wine from Izal";

**New Jerusalem**, "Dan and Javan, from Uzala";

**Rahlfs**, καὶ οἶνον εἰς τὴν ἀγοράν σου, "and wine for your market-place."

We take this to be another example of the "enigmatic nature of the prophetic message" in Israel. The text is obscure, and translators can only guess at its meaning. Is this what is meant by those who claim the biblical text is "inerrant" and "infallible"?

Rabbi Fisch's translation of מֵאֻזַּל is "yarn." He states that "This rendering of מֵאֻזַּל is obtained by identifying the root *azal* (with *aleph*) with the Aramaic *azal* (with *ayin*), 'to spin.' Several Hebrew manuscripts and the **Septuagint** read *me'uzzal*, 'from Uzzal.' The name occurs in **Genesis 10:27** and is taken to be the old designation of Sanaa, the capital of Yemen in southern Arabia. The translation will then be: 'Vedan and Javan exported your wares from Uzal.'" (P. 183) Hilmer suggest that Uzal is "perhaps Yemen or the area between Haran and the Tigris." (P. 1264)

1468

(continued...)

בְּמַעֲרָבָךְ הָיְיָהּ:

as your merchandise.<sup>1471</sup>

27:20 דִּדְחַן רֹכֵלֶתְךָ:

Dedhan<sup>1472</sup> (was) your trader,

בְּבִגְדֵי־חֹפֶשׁ לְרִכְבָּהּ:

in garments of *chophesh*<sup>1473</sup> for riding.

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<sup>1468</sup>(...continued)

Rabbi Fisch's translation has "massive iron." He states that "Kimchi explains as 'bright iron,' which is found in some English translations...connecting *ashoth* with the verb *ashath* found in **Jeremiah 5:28**, 'they are become sleek.' In Mishnaic Hebrew *esheth* means 'wrought metal, metal bars,' and that is probably its significance here." (P. 184)

1469

Hilmer states that cassia "is similar to the cinnamon tree. The only other biblical mention of it is in **Exodus 30:24**, where it appears in a list of aromatic plants." (P. 1264)

1470

Rabbi Fisch comments on cassia, and calamus, that "These spices were used as ingredients of the oil for anointing the tabernacle and the priests (**Exodus 30:23-24**)." (P. 184) Hilmer states simply that calamus is "an aromatic reed." (P. 1264)

1471

Translations of this last line of **verse 19** vary:

**King James**, "were in thy market."

**Tanakh**, "traded for your wares";

**New Revised Standard**, "were bartered for your merchandise."

**New International**, "in exchange for your wares";

**New Jerusalem**, "in exchange for your goods."

**Rahlfs**, ἐν τῷ συμμίκτω σου ἐστίν, "is in the co-mingled goods or yours."

1472

For Dedan, see **25:13** and **27:15**.

1473

(continued...)

27:21 עֲרַב וְכָל־נְשֵׂי־אֵי קֶדָר

Arabia<sup>1474</sup> and all (the) princes of Qedhar (tribe),<sup>1475</sup>

הֵמָּה סַחְרֵי יָדְךָ

they (were) merchants (at) your hand--

בְּכִרִים וְאַיִלִּים וְעִתּוּדִים

in male-lambs<sup>1476</sup> and rams and male goats--

בָּם סַחְרִיךָ:

with them, your merchants.

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<sup>1473</sup>(...continued)

This is the only occurrence in the **Hebrew Bible** of this word, שֹׁפֶשֶׁת, **chophesh**; and therefore, its meaning can only be guessed at. Translations vary from “precious clothes (for chariots,” to “saddle-cloths for riding,” to “saddle-blankets,” to “κττηνῶν ἐκλεκτῶν, “choice beasts (for chariots).” Rabbi Fisch states that its literal meaning is “clothes of freedom.” (P. 184)

<sup>1474</sup>

Rabbi Fisch states that “Arabia is a term for the nomadic Bedouins of the eastern deserts.” (P. 184)

<sup>1475</sup>

Rabbi Fisch states that “Kedar is a nomad race in the Syrian-Arabian desert, probably descended from Kedar, the second son of Ishmael (**Genesis 25:13**). They were renowned for their flocks (**Isaiah 60:7**).” (P. 184)

Hilmer notes that Arabia and...Kedar is “a general expression for the Bedouin tribes from Aram to the Arabian Desert. For Kedar, see **Isaiah 42:11; 60:7** and **Jeremiah 49:28**.” (P. 1264)

<sup>1476</sup>

Rabbi Fisch notes that “The Targum renders: ‘oxen,’ and Kimchi remarks that its reading of the text was *becharim* for *becharim*. The Masoretic Text suits the context better.” (P. 184)

27:22 רְכָלֵי שְׁבָא וְרַעְמָה הָמָּה רְכָלֵיךָ

Traders of Shebha<sup>1477</sup> and Raemah<sup>1478</sup>—these (were) your traders,

בְּרֹאשׁ כָּל-בָּשֶׂם וּבְכָל-אֶבֶן יְקָרָה וְזָהָב

with (the) top / best of all balsam,<sup>1479</sup> and every precious stone, and gold,

נָתַנוּ עִבּוּנֶיךָ:

they gave / paid (for) your merchandise.

27:23 חָרָן וְכַנְּהַ וְעֵדְהֵן

Charan<sup>1480</sup> and Kanneh<sup>1481</sup> and Edhen--<sup>1482</sup>

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1477

See **Ezekiel 23:42** with its footnote.

1478

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Raamah was the son of Cush and the father of Sheba (**Genesis 10:7**). The Sabaeans were a powerful people living in the southwest of Arabia. ‘The ruins of their capital Marib still remain, six days’ journey east of Sanaa, the capital of Yemen. Their caravans (**Job 6:19**) traded to Syria and other countries with gold, precious stones and aromatics (**1 Kings 10:2; 10; Isaiah 60:6; Jeremiah 6:20; Psalm 72:15**)’ (Davidson). Raamah is supposed to have inhabited the region of the Persian Gulf.” (P. 184) Hilmer says that “Raamah was a city in southern Arabia.” (P. 1264)

1479

Rabbi Fisch’s translation is “chief of all spices,” and he says that means “spices of the best quality.” (P. 184)

1480

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “Haran,” and he comments that it is “an ancient and well-known city in Mesopotamia. On account of its geographical position, being situated on the route from Babylon to Syria, it was an important commercial center. It was from Haran that Abraham migrated to Canaan (**Genesis 12:4**).” P. 184)

Hilmer states that Haran was “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  
(continued...)

רְכֵלֵי שֶׁבְא

traders (with) Shebha;<sup>1483</sup>

אַשּׁוּר כְּלִמָּד רְכֵלֵתָד:

Assyria<sup>1484</sup> (and) Kilmadh (were) your traders.<sup>1485</sup>

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<sup>1480</sup>(...continued)

here Abraham moved to Canaan (see **Genesis 11:31; 12:4**).” (P. 1264)

1481

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “Canneh.” He comments that “Some identify it with Calneh in **Genesis 10:10**, otherwise called Calno (**Isaiah 10:9**), a city in Babylon.”

Hilmer states that Canneh is “of uncertain location, presumably in Mesopotamia. It is often identified with Calneh (**Isaiah 10:9; Amos 6:2**).” (P. 1264)

1482

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “Eden,” and he comments “Compare **2 Kings 19:12; Isaiah 37:12; Amos 1:5**. On Assyrian inscriptions it is called Bit-Adini, situated on either side of the Euphrates, due south of Haran.” (P. 184)

1483

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “the traffickers of Sheba,” which he says means “The peoples of Haran, Canneh and Eden, who traded also with Sheba, brought their wares to Phoenicia.” (Pp. 184-85)

1484

Rabbi Fisch states that the name Asshur “normally indicates Assyria, which is inappropriate in this connection since that people had long been on the decline. Some identify it with Sura on the Euphrates, or with a town situated on the west side of the Tigris, now the ruined site of Kalat Serkat.” (P. 185)

Hilmer comments that Asshur “can mean tht city, the country (Assyria) or the people (Assyrians). Here it is probably the city south of Nineveh that gave its name to the country.” (P. 1264)

1485

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “Asshur was as your apprentice in traffic,” and he comments that “The Hebrew reads *asshur kilmad*, which [some translations render] ‘Asshur (and) Chilmad’ on the authority of the **Septuagint**. The latter has been identified with Kalwadha near Bagdad. The Targum has ‘and the Medes’ (*umadai*). [Another translation] construes as the preposition כִּי, ‘as,’ and *lemad*, a  
(continued...)

27:24 הַמָּה רִכְלֵיךָ

These (were) your traders,

בְּמִכְלָלִים בְּגָלוּמֵי תְּכֵלֶת וְרִקְמָה

in gorgeous garments,<sup>1486</sup> in clothes of violet and embroidery,

וּבְגִנְזֵי בְּרָמִים

and in treasure chests (filled with) different cloths;

בְּחֻבְלִים חֲבָשִׁים וְאַרְזִים

bound with cords<sup>1487</sup> and made secure

בְּמַרְכָּלְתֶּךָ:

in your market-place.

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<sup>1485</sup>(...continued)

derivative of *lamad*, ‘to learn’; but this is most improbable Hebrew for *as your apprentice*. It seems best to understand *asshur kilmad* as a place-name which is unknown.” (P. 185)

Hilmer states that Kilmad, “if a town, it is yet unidentified; presumably in Mesopotamia. Some read ‘all Media.’” (P. 1264)

1486

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “gorgeous fabrics,” which he says is “literally ‘things perfected’; a general term which is detailed by what follows: *wrappings*, or ‘cloaks.’ The Hebrew *gelome* occurs nowhere else except in the verb and wrapped it (**2 Kings 2:8**). The word is Aramaic and has cognates in other Semitic languages. It occurs frequently in Rabbinic Hebrew...*Rich apparel*. The Hebrew *beromim* is not found elsewhere. It appears to denote garments made of materials which consisted of different colored strands.” (P. 185)

1487

Rabbi Fisch states that “bound with cords” refers “either to the *chests* or to the clothing in them. Another suggestion is that *chabalim*, *chabushim* and *aruzim* (cedar-lined) denote manufactured articles; the first two being ‘cords’ and ‘belts’ respectively, and the last, articles made of cedar-wood.” (P. 185)

27:25 אֲנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ שְׂרוּתֶיךָ מֵעֲרַבְךָ

Ships of Tarshish<sup>1488</sup> (were) your travelers, (with) your merchandise.<sup>1489</sup>

וְתִמְלֵאִי וְתִכְבְּדֵי מְאֹד בְּלֵב יַמִּים:

And you were filled and made exceptionally heavy<sup>1490</sup> in (the) heart of (the) seas.<sup>1491</sup>

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1488

For ships of Tarshish, see **verse 12**.

1489

Rabbi Fisch's translation has "The ships of Tarshish brought you tribute for you merchandise," and Rabbi Fisch comments that "Kimchi renders: 'were your caravans for your merchandise.' The noun *sharothayich* is thus connected with the verb *shur*, 'to journey' (compare **Isaiah 57:9**); a cognate noun in Arabic means 'caravan.' Fleets of large ships from remote Tarshish brought a variety of rich cargo to Tyre. With this clause the list of the nations which traded with Tyre is concluded. The latter part of the verse resumes the description of the gallant ship where it broke off in **verse 9**." (P. 185)

Hilmer likewise states that here in **verse 25** "the ship image is resumed." (P. 1264)

1490

Rabbi Fisch comments that "A ship overladen with cargo is in danger of being wrecked during a storm. Similarly, Tyre's overweening pride contributed to her downfall." (P. 185)

1491

Rabbi Fisch states that "in the heart of the seas" is "an allusion to Tyre's geographical location (see **verse 4**)." (P. 185)

Matties comments on **27:25b-36** that "The last section of the poem opens with an ominous note about the heavily laden ship. This ship sinks into the heart of the seas (**verses 26-27**). The response of the onlookers (**verses 28-32a**) is expressed in a lament (**verses 32b-36**). The rhetorical question of **verse 32b**, 'Who was ever destroyed like Tyre?' anticipates a negative answer: no one. The lament reflects authentic surprise and fear, since Tyre's wealth represented prosperity for all (**verse 33**). Tyre is brought down by the source of its strength (**verse 34**). With Tyre gone, what might become of the global economy (**verses 35-36**)?" (P. 1196)

Darr comments on this section that "The 'now' section of the dirge, **verses 25b-36**, commences with the shipwreck (**verses 26-27**) and then describes the agonized responses of various constituencies for whom Tyre's sinking spells disaster. In a deft rhetorical move, Ezekiel first portrays other mariners (continued...)

27:26<sup>1492</sup> בַּמַּיִם רַבִּים הֵבִיאוּךָ

Into many waters<sup>1493</sup> they brought you,

הַשָּׂטִים אֶתְךָ

the ones rowing you;

רוּחַ הַקְּדִים שָׁבַרְךָ בְּלֵב יַמַּיִם:

the east wind broke / shattered you in (the) heart of (the) seas!<sup>1494</sup>

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<sup>1491</sup>(...continued)

abandoning their fleets, standing on the shore, and mourning the loss of the great vessel and its crew, and then places a dirge on their lips (**verses 32-36**), thereby creating a lament within a lament.

“The mariners’ dirge, the reader assumes, is heartfelt, as are the emotions—appallment, fear, sorrow—of those who hear of the catastrophe at sea. Is Ezekiel’s lament also a genuine outpouring of grief? The sequential reader who arrives at this oracle fresh on the heels of **chapter 26**, and so knows of Tyre’s greedy and self-serving response to the destruction of Jerusalem (**26:2**) and of Yahweh’s intention utterly to eradicate it, will conclude that his lamentation is an example of derision in disguise. This is true even though the oracle itself neither accuses Tyre of sin...nor gloats explicitly over its demise (or portrays others doing so) and, save for the messenger formula in **verse 3**, contains not a single reference to God. Its present placement, following the four preceding oracles against the city-state, determines in a significant way the reader’s construal of the sinking of ship Tyre.” (Pp. 237-238)

<sup>1492</sup>

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 26-36** “The Shipwreck.” Darr entitles these verses “Shipwreck, Sorrow, and Disastrous Consequences.” She comments that “With verse 26a, the vessel’s rowers are said to bring it into high seas. Verse 26b states, in very succinct fashion, that the east wind breaks it ‘in the heart of the seas.’ Heretofore, Ezekiel’s development of the ‘Tyre is a ship’ trope has focused upon positive associations with its vehicle (ship)—its beauty, expert crew, and thriving trade. Suddenly, however, he foregrounds a previous suppressed, but undoubtedly apt association with ships: they sometimes sink.” (P. 245)

<sup>1493</sup>

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “great waters,” and he comments that this means “the deep and dangerous open sea.” (P. 186)

<sup>1494</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments “For the danger of the east wind at sea, compare **Exodus 14:21**,

(continued...)

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<sup>1494</sup>(...continued)

וַיִּט מֹשֶׁה אֶת־יָדוֹ עַל־הַיָּם׃

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea;

וַיּוֹלֶךְ יְהוָה אֶת־הַיָּם בְּרוּחַ קָדִים עֲזָה׃

and YHWH caused the sea to move with a strong east wind,

כָּל־הַלַּיְלָה׃

all the night;

וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־הַיָּם לְחֶרֶב׃

and he placed the sea for dry ground;

וַיִּבְקְעוּ הַמַּיִם׃

and the waters were divided.

**Psalm 48:8**<sup>Heb</sup> / 7<sup>Eng</sup>

בְּרוּחַ קָדִים׃

By an east wind,

תִּשְׁבֵּר אֲנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ׃

You shatter ships of Tarshish.

**Jeremiah 18:17,**

כְּרוּחַ־קָדִים׃

Like an east wind,

אֶפְיָצֵם לְפָנַי אוֹיֵב׃

I will scatter them before an enemy.

עָרְף וְלֹא־פָנִים׃

(My) back, and not (My) face(s),

אֶרְאֶם בְּיוֹם אִידָם׃

I will show them on a day of their distress / calamity!

Rabbi Fisch comments that “The **Babylonian Talmud (Gittin 31b)** describes the east wind as making furrows in the sea like a ploughed field.” (P. 186)

Hilmer states that “It possibly symbolizes Nebuchadnezzar (as in **17:10; 19:12**).” (P. 1264)

Darr states that “The east wind is presented not as a natural phenomenon, but as an instrument of, or way of illumining, Yahweh’s judgment. Hence, the reader is predisposed to interpret **verse 26** as Divine punishment—another way of describing God’s utter destruction of Tyre, whose security was largely a consequence of its setting ‘in the heart of the seas,’ meets its violent end there.” (P. 245)

27:27 הוֹנֵךְ וְעִזְבוֹנֶיךָ מֵעֲרָבֶךָ

Your wealth and your wares, your merchandise;

מִלְחָיֶיךָ וְחַבְלֵיֶיךָ

your mariners and your sailors / rope-pullers;

מִחְזִיקֵי בְדָקֶךָ וְעֲרָבֶיךָ מֵעֲרָבֶךָ

those repairing breaches, and dealers (in) your merchandise;

וְכָל-אֲנָשֵׁי מִלְחַמָּתְךָ אֲשֶׁר-בְּךָ

and all men of your war / soldiers who are in / with you;

וּבְכָל-קְהָלְךָ אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹכְךָ

and with all your assembly that (is) in your midst--

יִפְּלוּ בְּלֵב יַמַּיִם

they will fall into (the) heart of (the) seas<sup>1495</sup>

בְּיוֹם מִפְּלִתְךָ:

on (the) day of your fall.

27:28 לְקוֹל זַעֲקַת חַבְלֵיֶיךָ

At (the) sound of your sailors' outcry,

יִרְעֵשׁוּ מִגְרָשׁוֹת:

(the) common lands will shake.<sup>1496</sup>

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1495

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Both crew and cargo will be completely lost in the shipwreck.” (P. 186)

1496

Rabbi Fisch's translation has “The waves shall shake.” He comments that “This translation of מִגְרָשׁוֹת, **migroshoth** is based on **Isaiah 57:20**, *the troubled (nigrash) sea*. Elsewhere in the **Bible** *migrash* denotes the pasture-land surrounding a city; hence Kimchi's explanation ‘suburbs’ which is

(continued...)

27:29<sup>1497</sup> וַיִּרְדּוּ מֵאֲנִיּוֹתֵיהֶם כָּל תַּפְשֵׁי מִשּׁוֹט

And they will descend from their ships, everyone handling an oar;

מִלְּחִים כָּל חַבְלֵי הַיָּם

mariners, all sailors of the sea,

אֶל-הָאָרֶץ יַעֲמֹדוּ:

to the land / earth (where) they will stand.<sup>1498</sup>

27:30 וְהִשְׁמִיעוּ עֲלֶיךָ בְּקוֹלָם

And they will cause to be heard concerning you with their voice(s),<sup>1499</sup>

וַיִּזְעֲקוּ מֵרָח

and they cry out (with) bitterness;

וַיַּעֲלוּ עִפְרָם עַל-רֵאשֵׁיהֶם

and they raise up dust upon their heads;<sup>1500</sup>

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<sup>1496</sup>(...continued)

found in [some English translations]. Ezekiel probably intends the neighboring districts along the coast.” (P. 186)

<sup>1497</sup>

Darr comments that ‘**Verses 29-31** movingly portray sailors disembarking from their ships and standing on the shore, wailing aloud at Tyre’s sinking, weeping bitterly, and engaging in various ritual acts of mourning: throwing dust upon their heads...rolling in ashes...cutting (or plucking out) their hair, and donning sackcloth.’ (P. 245)

<sup>1498</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments on **verse 29** that “After the disaster which overtook Tyre, sailors will refuse to sail in their ships dreading a like fate.” (P. 186)

<sup>1499</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that all of these sea-people, standing upon the shore, “will raise a lament over Tyre’s ruin.” (P. 187)

<sup>1500</sup>

(continued...)

בִּאֲפֵר יִתְפַּלְשׁוּ:

in the ashes they roll themselves.<sup>1501</sup>

27:31 וְהִקְרִיחוּ אֵלַיךָ קְרָחָה

And they make themselves bald for you,<sup>1502</sup>

וְחָגְרוּ שָׁקִים

and they wrap themselves in sack-cloths;

וּבְכוּ אֵלַיךָ בְּמַרְ-נֶפֶשׁ

and they will weep over you, in bitterness of innermost-being,

מִסֵּפֶד מָר:

a bitter mourning.

27:32<sup>1503</sup>

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<sup>1500</sup>(...continued)

Hilmer comments “See **26:16** for a similar scene.” (P. 1264)

1501

As Rabbi Fisch notes, all of these actions are “signs of mourning.” (P. 187) For “rolling in ashes,” compare **Micah 1:10**,

בְּגַת אֶל־תִּגְדוּ

In Gath, you (plural) shall not declare / *gad* (it);

בְּכוּ אֶל־תִּבְכוּ

you shall indeed not (even) weep!

בְּבֵית לְעֶפְרָה

In Beth Leaphrah / House for Dust / *Aphar*,

עֲפֹר (הַתְּפַלְשְׁתִּי) [הַתְּפַלְשְׁתִּי]:

roll yourself (imperative plural) (in the) dust / *aphar*!

1502

For making themselves bald, compare **Ezekiel 7:18; Isaiah 15:2; 22:12**.

1503

(continued...)

וְנָשְׂאוּ אֵלֶיךָ בְּנִיחָם קִינָה

And they will take up over you in their wailing a lamentation / funeral dirge,

וְקִוְנוּ עָלֶיךָ

and they will lament / sing their dirge over you:

מִי כְצֹר

Who is like Tyre,

כְּדָמָה בְּתוֹךְ הַיָּם:

like one silenced in (the) midst of the sea?<sup>1504</sup>

27:33 בְּצֵאת עֲבוֹנוֹךָ מִיָּמִים

When your wares went forth from (the) seas,

הַשְּׂבַעְתָּ עַמִּים רַבִּים

you satisfied many peoples;<sup>1505</sup>

בְּרַב הוֹנֵיךָ וּמַעֲרָבֶיךָ

with your great wealth and your merchandise,

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<sup>1503</sup>(...continued)

Reimer comments on **verses 32-36** that “The lament raised by the onlookers (**verses 28-29**) offers a miniature version of the whole chapter: wealthy Tyre, who enriches the entire economy, has sunk, instilling fear in the watching nations.” (P. 1541)

<sup>1504</sup>

Rabbi Fisch’s translation has “Who was like Tyre, fortified in the midst of the sea?” He comments that this translation “cannot be supported. The Hebrew *kedummah* can only be derived from the root *damam*, ‘to be silent,’ and must be rendered ‘like her that is brought to silence’...Tyre had been a busy and thriving city, her port resounding with the cries of sailors; now it is dead and reduced to utter silence.” (P. 187)

<sup>1505</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Tyre’s exports had been conveyed to many countries along the sea-routes, satisfying the needs of their inhabitants.” (P. 187)

הַעֲשִׂרְתָּ מַלְכֵי-אָרֶץ:

you enriched kings of (the) earth.

27:34 עַתְּ נִשְׁבַּרְתָּ מִיַּמֵּי

(In the) time of your being broken from / by (the) seas,<sup>1506</sup>

בְּמַעְמְקֵי-מַיִם

in depths of waters

מֵעֲרַבְךָ וְכָל-קְהֶלְךָ בְּתוֹכְךָ נָפְלוּ:

your merchandise and all your assembly (of people) in your midst, fell.

27:35<sup>1507</sup> כָּל יֹשְׁבֵי הָאֲיִלִּים שָׁמְמוּ עֲלֶיךָ

Everyone inhabiting the coastlands was appalled over you;<sup>1508</sup>

וּמַלְכֵיהֶם שָׁעְרוּ שֵׁעַר

and their kings—they bristled (their) hair;

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1506

Rabbi Fisch comments that this line means “by the agency of the seas. The sea, which was the source of her eminence, has become the cause of her ruin.” (P. 187)

1507

Darr comments that “**Verses 35-36a** describe the consternation of those for whom Tyre’s demise has grave economic consequences—the inhabitants of the coastlands...and their kings, the traders among the nations. Zimmerli states that to hiss (or whistle) is to gloat: ‘Tyre’s rivals rejoice over her fall.’ He has misconstrued the line’s meaning, however...Theirs is an expression of profound grief, as the context demands. **Verse 36b**, with its reference to horror (‘dreadful end’) and Tyre’s eternal extinction, echoes **26:21.**” (P. 246)

1508

Rabbi Fisch comments that the inhabitants of the islands “dreaded that a similar doom would overtake them.” (P. 188)

רָעְמוּ פָּנִים:

they thundered (?) (their) faces.<sup>1509</sup>

27:36 סַחֲרִים בְּעַמִּים שָׂרְקוּ עֲלֶיךָ

Merchants among the people hiss / whistle over you:<sup>1510</sup>

בְּלִהוֹת הַיִּית

you have come into a dreadful calamity,

וְאַיִנְךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

and you are no longer—until long-lasting time!<sup>1511</sup>

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1509

Rabbi Fisch's translation has "And their kings are horribly afraid, They are troubled in their countenance." He comments that they were "inwardly broken in spirit and outwardly showing anxiety in their faces." (P. 188)

1510

Rabbi Fisch notes that the verb translated "hiss / whistle" "denotes amazement and dismay." (P. 188)

1511

Rabbi Fisch says to see **Ezekiel 24:14**, and quotes Lofthouse as writing, "This figure of the mighty and overladen ship, proudly venturing out into the waters which are to be her ruin, is the most striking example in the **Bible** of the thought familiar to Hebrew and Greeks alike—that pride prepares the way for its own fall." (P. 188)

Darr reflects on **chapter 27** that "It invites its readers into the world of Tyre's rich and far-flung trade network. The 'lament,' which the prophet introduces as Yahweh's Own Word to Tyre (though its actual audience is his fellow exiles) describes the magnificent vessel and its crew, celebrates its commercial success, but then describes its demise and the anguished reactions of those whose fortune sinks with the ship...The sailors lament in **27:32-36** is heartfelt, but Ezekiel's larger lamentation, especially when read in the light of the preceding chapter, is not...

"The prophet's anger toward Tyre likely derived from that city's ability, by virtue of its geographical setting, to survive Nebuchadnezzar's forces, God's instrument of judgment, despite its apparent complicity in a plan to rebel against Babylon (**Jeremiah 27:3**)...The only hint of Tyrian wrongdoing appears in **27:3**, where she boasts, 'I am perfect in beauty.' The text goes on to substantiate that claim in (continued...)

## Against the Prince / King of Tyre (28:1-19)<sup>1512</sup>

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<sup>1511</sup>(...continued)

subsequent verses, but the reader who knows that hubris is a frequent charge in prophetic oracles against foreign nations and rulers will likely detect in her utterance the proverbial pride that goes before a fall. The reader will likely detect Yahweh behind the east wind that wrecks the vessel, but the lament proper contains no explicit reference to a Deity. Were it not for its introduction, and our knowledge of Ezekiel's antipathy toward Tyre, we might read **Ezekiel 27** as what it purports to be—an actual lament over a city which, from the prophet's perspective, is as good as dead.

“Hals points out that while the ‘shocking jolt’ of Tyre’s sinking can lead to remarks about the transitory nature of splendor and riches, as well as the folly of placing one’s trust in those values, the text itself makes no such observations. He is correct, but it is difficult to read **Ezekiel 27** without entertaining those thoughts. Today, no less than in Ezekiel’s own, the forces of nature can wipe out material resources in the twinkling of an eye. During tornado season, for example, television news reports show scene after scene of devastation wrought by wind, rain, and hail. Families, even entire communities, can in a matter of moments lose all of their possessions. Fires can leave people with only the clothes on their backs. Even when life is not lost, these are lamentable catastrophes; and they force us to reckon with the impermanence of our possessions, even as we mourn their ruin. Those same news reports also testify to the strength of the human spirit, however, when they display congregations standing and worshiping at sites where churches and synagogues stood only days before.

“The story of Jesus’ encounter with a young man whose life was a model of commandment keeping, but whose many possessions were too high a price to pay even for eternal life (**Matthew 19:16-22**), reminds us of the importance of weighing our priorities. We marvel at his short-sighted decision (‘When the young man heard [Jesus’] Word, he went away grieving, for he had many possessions,’ **Matthew 19:22 NRSV**), but then must ask ourselves if we are guilty of following his example. The dangers posed by wealth is a recurring **New Testament** theme. One thinks also of Jesus’ ‘Sermon on the mountain,’ when he taught, ‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal; but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also’ (**Matthew 6:19-21 NRSV**).

“Ezekiel’s oracle against ship Tyre impressed the author of **Revelation 18**, who used it (including a trade list) as the model for portions of his taunt concerning the fall of Rome (called ‘Babylon’). In three dirges, kings (**Revelation 18:9-10**), merchants (**Revelation 18:11-17a**) and mariners (**Revelation 18:17b-20**) lament the great city, destroyed by fire. ‘Alas, alas, the great city,’ the shipmasters, seafarers, sailors, and sea traders intone, ‘where all who had ships at sea grew rich by her wealth! For in one hour she has been laid waste’ (**Revelation 18:19 NRSV**).” (Pp. 246-247)

1512

(continued...)

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<sup>1512</sup>(...continued)

The ruler of Tyre is pictured in "mythological" language in **chapter 28**--as if he were the first Adam / Humanity in the Garden of Eden. He has grown proud, looking upon himself as a God rather than simply a finite human being--and therefore YHWH sentences him to a violent death in the heart of the seas. Ezekiel's lament over the ruler of Tyre is given in **verses 12-19**, where the mythological language is continued, with the king of Tyre identified as the guardian cherub on the holy mountain of [YHWH], something completely absent from the **Genesis** depiction of Eden. In this lament, Ezekiel uses some of the language of **Genesis 2** and **3**, picturing this ruler as having relived the ancient story of the fall of humanity there. But the mythological language goes beyond that of **Genesis 2-3**, and is evidently linked to the "Garden of Eden" stories that were circulated in Phoenicia, as becomes evident from the reading of the **Gilgamesh Epic**. Strangely, and grotesquely, Bible-belt sensationalists have used this chapter as a description of the origin and fall of Satan!

Rabbi Fisch comments that "This [**chapter 28**] is the conclusion of the three chapters directed against Tyre. Here the guilt and punishment of Tyre are laid at the door of the prince of Tyre who is regarded as the embodiment of the people. The root cause of Tyre's collapse was her abundance of wealth. In her vast material resources, which she attributed exclusively to her genius, she found her only purpose in life. Spiritual values had no place in the minds of her population; self-glorification and self-sufficiency reigned supreme. Such arrogance and demoralization must lead to destruction. In a lament of striking imaginative power, Ezekiel describes the fall of Tyre and her expulsion from the Garden of Eden, repeating his message that the multitude of her sins produced the fire which would eventually consume her..

"In conclusion he turns to Zidon, which lay about twenty miles north of Tyre, and pronounces her doom. With the destruction of Israel's immediate neighbors, who were to him a *pricking brier* and a *piercing thorn*, his national existence will be resumed. By the execution of judgment upon the heathen nations for their iniquities and fulfilment of His promise to restore Israel to his ancient glory, [YHWH's] holy name will be sanctified throughout the world." (P. 188)

Reimer comments that "The final part of the Tyre oracles brings the movement of Tyre's hubris [pride] to a climax. While its pride was implied throughout **chapter 26**, and led to self-exaltation in **chapter 27**, here Tyre claims Deity (**28:2**)...

"Two distinct laments are presented: **verses 1-10** assail the pride of Tyre's king; **verses 11-19** present him as a primordial [first created] being fallen from grace. In neither case does a particular king seem to be in view; rather, Tyre is personified through its monarch. Tyre's wealth is constantly in view, as it has been throughout **chapters 26-27**, intrinsically bound up with its opposition to [YHWH]." (P. 1542)

Matties comments on **28:1-19** that "Two satirical poems with features of judgment and lament highlight the king of Tyre. Incorporating themes from the ancient Near Eastern creation traditions  
(continued...)

28:1<sup>1513</sup> וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:

And YHWH's word was / came to me saying:

28:2 בֶּן־אָדָם אָמַר לְנָגִיד צָר

Son of Adam / Humanity, say to (the) prince of Tyre,<sup>1514</sup>

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<sup>1512</sup>(...continued)

(including **Genesis 1-3**), Ezekiel emphasizes the remarkable reversal of one whose beauty, wealth, and wisdom are brought to nothing because of pride (see also **Isaiah 14:12-20**). The chapter divides into two parts, one a judgment speech (**verses 1-10**) and another a lament (**verses 11-19**)." (P. 1197)

<sup>1513</sup>

Rabbi Fisch entitles **verses 1-10** "Guilt and Punishment of the Prince of Tyre."

Reimer states that **28:1-10**, "Although cast in lament form, the structure of this oracle takes the familiar pattern of grounds of indictment (**verses 2b-6**) and outcome (**verses 7-10**) with a formulaic conclusion. Pride is at the center of the charge, reinforced by the repetition of the word 'heart' (Hebrew *lebh* or *lebabh*), used eight times in the span of **verses 2-8**." (P. 1542)

Matties states that "In **28:1-10** the king of Tyre is accused of pride (**verses 1-5**) and is sentenced to death (**verses 6-10**)." (P. 1197)

<sup>1514</sup>

Rabbi Fisch states that "It is conjectured that Ithobal II was ruler of Tyre at the time. The attitude of the king also reflected the feelings of his subjects." (P. 189)

Reimer notes that "The king of Tyre is designated prince (Hebrew *nagidh*). It could simply be a stylistic variation for 'king' (compare **Psalms 76:12**), where it is a poetic parallel to 'kings'). If it has further value beyond a simple designation for a national leader, this term could imply a Divinely appointed, charismatic leader as it does in older Hebrew usage. If so, it further emphasizes the hubris [pride] of this figure." (P. 1542)

Hilmer notes that the phrase "ruler of Tyre" [**New International**] "may refer to the city of Tyre as ruler, or to Ittobaal, the king then ruling Tyre (see **verse 12**)." (P. 1265)

Matties comments that "The king (named 'prince,' Hebrew *nagid*, see also **Psalms 76:13**) is one whose heart is proud (see also **verses 5, 17**). He has equated his own island throne with the *seat of the Gods*. Claiming to be Divine, the king falsely assumes Divine power and wisdom." (P. 1197)

כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה

In this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

יַעַן גָּבַהַ לִבְךָ

Because your heart was high / haughty,<sup>1515</sup>

וַתֹּאמֶר אֵל אֲנִי

and you said, Supreme God (am) I!<sup>1516</sup>

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1515

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Haughtiness to the point of self-deification was his besetting sin.” (P. 189) See:

**Ezekiel 27:3**, where the prince of Tyre claims he is “complete beauty”;

**Proverbs 16:18**,

לִפְנֵי־שֹׁבֵר גָּאוֹן

Before a crash—pride / exaltation;

וְלִפְנֵי כְּשָׁלוֹן גָּבַהַ רוּחַ:

and before a stumbling, height / haughtiness of spirit.

**Acts 12:21-23**,

21 τακτῆ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ ὁ Ἡρώδης ἐνδυσάμενος ἐσθῆτα βασιλικὴν

But then on an appointed day the Herod having put on royal robes,

[καὶ] καθίσας ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος

[and] having sat upon the throne,

ἔδημηγόρει πρὸς αὐτούς,

was giving a public address to them.

22 ὁ δὲ δῆμος ἐπεφώνει·

And then the people was crying out,

θεοῦ φωνὴ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου.

(It is) God’s voice, and not of a man!

23 παραχρῆμα δὲ ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν ἄγγελος κυρίου

But then immediately an angel of (the) Lord struck him,

ἀνθ’ ὧν οὐκ ἔδωκεν τὴν δόξαν τῷ θεῷ,

because he did not give the glory to the God.

καὶ γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος ἐξέψυξεν.

And being eaten by worms, he breathed his last.

1516

(continued...)

מוֹשֵׁב אֱלֹהִים יֹשְׁבֵתִי

(The) seat of God / Gods, I sat (on),

בְּלֵב יַמִּים

in (the) heart of (the) seas!<sup>1517</sup>

וְאַתָּה אָדָם וְלֹא־אֵל

But / and you (are) a human being, and not Supreme God!

וַתִּתֵּן לְבִדְךָ כְּלֵב אֱלֹהִים:

And you gave / made your heart like (the) heart of God / Gods!<sup>1518</sup>

28:3 הֲנֵנָה חָכְמָה אַתָּה (מִדָּנִיָּאל) [מִדָּנִיָּאל]

Look—you (are) wiser than Daniel--<sup>1519</sup>

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<sup>1516</sup>(...continued)

Rabbi Fisch's translation has "And you have said: I am a God." (P. 189) We say no. What the king of Tyre has said is "Supreme God (am) I!" He does not claim to be just another God. He claims to be El, the chief God of the Canaanite pantheon!

1517

Rabbi Fisch states that the prince of Tyre "regarded his realm, cut off from the land by the sea, as a Divine abode. 'The beauty and splendor of the place, its richness and renown, possibly also its isolation, make it something not of the earth' (Davidson)." (P. 189)

1518

Rabbi Fisch states that "Ehrlich regards heart here, as often elsewhere, the seat of intellect; so the meaning is, 'though you did hold your understanding to be as the understanding of God.'" (P. 189)

1519

The Masoretes offer two readings: first, the *kethibh*, "what is written," מִדָּנִיָּאל; and second, the *qere*, "to be read," מִדָּנִיָּאל, correcting the spelling of the original Hebrew text.

Rabbi Fisch comments that the phrase "You are wiser than Daniel!" is "a sarcastic comparison. In **Ezekiel 14:14, 20** Daniel was mentioned as an outstanding example of piety, here of wisdom. Of him the Babylonian king said, No secret causes you trouble (**Daniel 4:6**)." P. 189) Matties states that "Wiser than Daniel (or the Danel from Ugaritic tales), this king's wealth has made him proud." (P. 1197)

כָּל־סִתּוּם לֹא עִמְמוּדָּה:

everything closed, they will not hold dark (for) you!<sup>1520</sup>

28:4<sup>1521</sup> בַּחֲכָמָתְךָ וּבִתְבוּנָתְךָ

In / by your wisdom and in / by your understanding

עָשִׂיתָ לָּךְ חַיִּל

you made for yourself wealth.<sup>1522</sup>

וַתַּעַשׂ זָהָב וְכֶסֶף בְּאוֹצְרוֹתֶיךָ:

and you made / squeezed<sup>1523</sup> gold and silver into your treasuries.

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1520

Translations of this last line of **verse 3** vary:

**King James**, “there is no secret that they can hide from thee.”

**Tanakh**, “In no hidden matter can anyone Compare to you.”

**New Revised Standard**, “no secret is hidden from you”;

**New International**, “Is no secret hidden from you?”

**New Jerusalem**, “no sage as wise as you!”

**Rahlfs**, οὐκ ἐπαίδευσάν σε τῆ ἐπιστήμῃ αὐτῶν, “Did they not discipline you in / with their knowledge?”

We think this statement ties in with **Daniel 4:6**, and shows that it is the Daniel of the biblical **Scroll of Daniel** that is referred to here.

1521

Reimer comments on **verses 4-5** that “Trade and commerce were the foundation of Tyre’s wealth, but then that wealth led Tyre to become proud, which led to aspirations to Deity.” (P. 1542)

1522

Rabbi Fisch comments that “The Tyrian ruler did possess wisdom of a sort–commercial acumen to amass wealth.” (Pp. 189-90)

1523

**Brown-Driver-Briggs** states that the verb עָשָׂה, (**asah**, not only means “do” or “make,” but also means “press” or “squeeze.” Perhaps, but we do not remember any passages where it has this meaning.

28:5 בְּרֵב חִכְמַתְךָ

With (the) abundance of your wisdom,

בְּרִכְלֹתֶיךָ הִרְבִּיתָ חֵילֶיךָ

with your merchandise you have increased your wealth

וַיִּגְבְּהַ לְבַבְךָ בְּחֵילֶיךָ:

and your heart has become higher / prouder with your wealth.

28:6 לָכֵן כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה

Therefore, in this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

יַעַן תַּתַּתְּךָ אֶת־לְבַבְךָ כְּלֵב אֱלֹהִים:

Because you gave / made your heart like (the) heart of God / Gods,<sup>1524</sup>

28:7<sup>1525</sup> לָכֵן הִנְנִי

therefore, look at Me—

מִבֵּיא עֲלֶיךָ זָרִים עָרִיצֵי גוֹיִם

One bringing against you strangers, terror-striking nations / peoples!<sup>1526</sup>

וַהֲרִיקוּ חֶרְבוֹתָם עַל־יַפֵּי חִכְמַתְךָ

And they will draw their swords against (the) appearances of your wisdom,

---

1524

Compare **verse 2**.

1525

Reimer comments on **verses 7-8** that “Here the agents of Divine punishment are unnamed foreigners, elsewhere identified with the Babylonians (**26:7; 29:18**; compare **30:10-11**). For descent to the pit, compare **26:19-21**.” (P. 1542)

1526

Rabbi Fisch comments that the terror-striking peoples are the Chaldeans (compare **Ezekiel 30:11; 32:12**)...They will destroy the material wealth which he had acquired by his wisdom and in which he gloried inordinately.” (P. 190)

וְחִלְלוּ יַפְעֹתַי:

and they will defile your splendor!<sup>1527</sup>

28:8 לְשַׁחַת יוֹרְדוֹךָ

To the pit<sup>1528</sup> they will bring you down!

וּמָתָה מִמוֹתַי חָלָל

And you will die—deaths of one pierced,

בְּלֵב יַמִּים:

in (the) heart of (the) seas!<sup>1529</sup>

28:9 הֲאֹמַר תֹּאמַר אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי לְפָנֵי הַרְגֹךָ

Will you indeed say, I (am) God, before those killing you?

וְאַתָּה אָדָם וְלֹא־אֵל

And you (are) a human being, and not a Supreme God,

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1527

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Because his overweening pride resulted in self-deification, he is doomed to annihilation...He thought of his status as Godlike; the Chaldeans will profane it.” (P. 190)

1528

L. Waechter, in his article on *sheol* in **Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament**, Volume XIV, pp. 239-48, states concerning the noun here, שַׁחַת, **shachath**, that “Another synonym for *sheol* similar to *bhor* is *shachath*, another word for ‘pit.’ albeit one that also includes the concrete notion of the pit as a trap. The term *shachath* can also evoke the notion of the grave. For example, the meaning of *schachath* in **Psalm 16:10** is clear since it parallels *sheol*: ‘For You do not give me up to Sheol, or let your faithful one see the pit (*schachath*).’ [Compare **Jonah 2:7**<sup>Heb</sup> / **6**<sup>Eng</sup>].” (P. 243)

1529

Rabbi Fisch comments that though the king of Tyre claims he is God, “God is eternal; [the Tyrian king] will meet with a violent end in the heart of the seas. Though his kingdom was surrounded by the sea and in a very strong strategical position, it will be no protection to him.” (P. 190)

Matties likewise states that “No assertions of invulnerability (**verse 9a**) will prevent his violent death. The sea, once his throne (**verse 2**), now becomes the place of his death (**verse 8**).” (P. 1197)

בְּיַד מַחֲלֵיידִ:

in (the) hand of those piercing you!<sup>1530</sup>

28:10 מוֹתֵי עֵרְלִים תָּמוּת

(The) deaths of uncircumcised ones you shall die,<sup>1531</sup>

בְּיַד־זָרִים

in (the) hand of strangers / foreigners!

כִּי אֲנִי דִבַּרְתִּי

Because I, I have spoken.

נֵאֻם אֲדֹנָי יְהוָה:

(It is) a saying of my Lord YHWH.

28:11<sup>1532</sup>

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1530

Rabbi Fisch asks, “Will [the king of Tyre] persist in claiming to be Divine when he faces his executioners?” (P. 190)

1531

Rabbi Fisch quotes Davidson who states “The term uncircumcised is employed by the prophet not in its usual sense, but in reference to the dead, who suffer death from the sword, and whose bodies either lie unburied and dishonored or are flung indiscriminately into the earth with no funeral honors.” (P. 190)

Hilmer states that the adjective “uncircumcised” is “used here in the sense of barbarian or uncouth. The Phoenicians, like the Israelites and the Egyptians, practiced circumcision (see **Ezekiel 31:18** and **32:19**).” (P. 1265.)

1532

Reimer comments on **verses 11-19** that “The final anti-Tyre oracle adds a plethora of detail. As in **chapter 27**, there is no indictment (like in **28:1-10**) but rather a narrative lament culminating in inevitable doom. The imagery is kaleidoscopic. [The king of] Tyre is likened to a second Adam, clearly a created being (**verses 13, 15**) and yet a ‘cherub’ (**verse 14**). It is in the ‘garden of God’ in **verse 13**, and on the ‘mountain of God’ in **verses 14** and **16**...

(continued...)

וַיְהִי דְבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי לֵאמֹר:

And YHWH's Word was / came to me saying:

28:12 בֶּן־אָדָם שָׂא קִינָה

Son of Adam / Humanity, take up a lamentation / funeral dirge

עַל־מֶלֶךְ צֹר

over / concerning Tyre's king.<sup>1533</sup>

וְאָמַרְתָּ לּוֹ

And you shall say to him,<sup>1534</sup>

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<sup>1532</sup>(...continued)

“Some would see **verse 17** as a poetic allusion, wherein Ezekiel likens the downfall of the proud king of Tyre to the fall and curse on Satan in **Genesis 3:1-15** [the word ‘Satan’ does not occur in **Genesis 3:1-15**]. At minimum, the extravagant pretensions of Tyre are graphically and poetically portrayed (compare **Ezekiel 28:4-5**), along with the utter devast-ation inflicted upon Tyre as a consequence (**verses 18-19**).” (P. 1542)

Matties comments on **verses 11-19** that “In a judgment speech couched in lament form, the king of Tyre is likened to the primeval human whom [YHWH] God created blameless, but whose pride led to expulsion from the garden (**Genesis 2-3**)...

“In **verses 11-14** metaphors describe the king's magnificence: the perfect royal seal (**verse 12b**); the garden of Eden (see also **Genesis 2**); clothed in jeweled splendor at his creation (**verse 13**; see also gems in **Genesis 2:11-12** [but certainly not being worn by Adam]; **Exodus 28:17-20; 39:10-13**); a cherub on the mountain of the Gods (**verse 14**; see also **Isaiah 14:13; Psalm 48:1**).” (P. 1197)

<sup>1533</sup>

Cooke comments that “This title [of ‘king’] has not so far been found in Phoenician inscriptions; but we now know that at least as early as the 10<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. the ruler of a Phoenician state was called *king*; in monuments of the 5<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E. the designation is usual. Josephus gives a list of the kings of Tyre in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. (**Against Apion, I. 21**), and **Herodotus** mentions the king of Tyre as second to the king of Tsidon in the council of Xerxes, 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. (**viii. 67**).” (P. 315)

<sup>1534</sup>

Rabbi Fisch notes that it is better to translate “concerning him” than “to him,” since “It is improbable that Ezekiel had personal contact with the Tyrian king.” (P. 191) But this would not be the  
(continued...)

כֹּה אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה

In this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

אַתָּה חֹתֶם תְּכַנִּית

You (are) one being sealed (with) perfect proportion,<sup>1535</sup>

מִלֵּא חֲכֵמָה וּכְלִיל יָפִי:

full of wisdom, and complete beauty.<sup>1536</sup>

28:13<sup>1537</sup>

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<sup>1534</sup>(...continued)

case is this is one of Ezekiel's "vision-stories," acted out by Ezekiel.

<sup>1535</sup>

Translations of this line vary:

**King James**, "Thou sealest up the sum";

**Tanakh**, "You were the seal of perfection"; **New International**, same;

**New Revised Standard**, "You were the signet of perfection

**New Jerusalem**, "You used to be a model of perfection";

**Rahlfs**, σὺ ἀποσφράγισμα ὁμοιωσεως, "You, a seal / signet of likeness."

**Rabbi Fisch**, "you seal most accurate."

Rabbi Fisch comments that this is "a phrase of doubtful meaning. The noun *tochnith* (most accurate) appears to be akin to *tochen* and *mathkoneth*, 'measurement.' If translated, 'you were one who seals measurement,' the sense is: he was perfect in physical form." (P. 191)

<sup>1536</sup>

Hilmer comments that "With cutting irony Ezekiel depicts the proud king of Tyre as the first man created, radiant with wisdom and beauty." (P. 1265)

<sup>1537</sup>

Reimer comments on **28:13** that "Putting Tyre in Eden, [גֶּן־אֱלֹהִים], the 'garden of God' forges a link with **Genesis 2-3**, but avoids connecting pagan Tyre with כֶּן־יְהוָה 'like the garden of Yahweh,' as in **Genesis 13:10** and **Isaiah 51:3**. Some of the precious stones in this difficult list cannot be identified with confidence. It parallels similar lists in **Exodus** of the composition of the breastpiece of the priestly garments (see **Exodus 28:17-29; 39:10-13**)." (P. 1542)

בְּעֵדֶן גַּן־אֱלֹהִים הָיִיתָ

In Eden, (the) garden of God / Gods, you were.<sup>1538</sup>

כָּל־אֲבֹן יְקָרָה מְסַכָּתְךָ

Every precious stone (was) your covering:<sup>1539</sup>

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1538

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Tyre, which abounded in material luxuries, is idealized and likened to the earthly Paradise created by God, Eden.” (P. 191) See **Ezekiel 31:8-9**.

Hilmer comments on the phrase “you were in Eden,” “Like Adam (**Genesis 2:15**). Ezekiel continues to use imagery of the creation and the fall to picture the career of the king of Tyre (see **31:9, 16, 18**).” (P. 1265)

Cooke comments that “Ezekiel makes use of a popular story which, we may suppose, ran somewhat like this; Once there lived in the garden of God, with the cherub who kept it, a glorious being, blameless by nature, gifted with wisdom and beauty; and he roamed at will among the flashing stones of paradise. Then came the tragedy. Elated by these tokens of favor, he grasped profanely at yet higher honors. Punishment followed swiftly: the cherub drove him from the garden on the sacred mountain, and hurled him to the earth. Just such another, says Ezekiel, is the king of Tyre, who for the same offence will meet with (the) same fate...

“The story belonged, no doubt, to the common stock of Semitic myths, some of them preserved in the Babylonian epics, some in Phoenician traditions. A select few are to be found in **Genesis**, purged by the genius of Hebrew religion; in Ezekiel the purifying process has not gone so far. Certain features of the story as given here, the mountain of God, the stones of fire, the gemmed robe, can hardly be of Hebrew origin; they come rather from Babylonia; not that Ezekiel borrowed them directly, but the folklore upon which he drew had been steeped in Babylonian mythology from early times.” (P. 315)

1539

Hilmer states that “Unlike Adam, who was naked (**Genesis 2:25**), the king is pictured as a fully clothed priest, ordained (verse 14) to guard God’s holy place. The 9 stones are among the 12 worn by the priest (**Exodus 28:17-20**). (The **Septuagint [Five [Scrolls] of Moses]** lists all 12.)” (P. 1265)

Rabbi Fisch comments that “This is usually understood in the sense that his robe was decorated with a variety of jewels. Ehrlich suggests that it was the royal umbrella or canopy under which he walked. The nine precious stones enumerated are identical with those which were set in three of the four rows of the high priest’s breastplate (**Exodus 28:17-20**). The **Septuagint** adds the three which omitted to complete the twelve.” (P. 191)

אֲדָם פְּטוּדָה וַיְהִלֵּם

carneian, topaz / chrysolite and jasper (?);

תַּרְשִׁישׁ שֶׁהֵם וַיִּשְׁפֹּה

tarshish / yellow jasper (?) and onyx (?);

סַפִּיר נֶפֶךְ וּבִרְקַת וַזָּהָב

sapphire, emerald (?) and (sparkling) emerald and gold--<sup>1540</sup>

מְלֵאכֶת תְּפִידָּה

work of your tambourines,<sup>1541</sup>

וַיִּנְקְבוּ בְּךָ

and your sockets [for placing the precious stones in] (were) in you,

בְּיוֹם הַבְּרָאָה כּוֹנְנֵנוּ:

on (the) day of your being created they were established.<sup>1542</sup>

28:14 אַתָּה-כְּרוּב מִמְּשָׁח

You, a cherub of expansion,<sup>1543</sup>

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1540

Rabbi Fisch notes that at the end of the list of precious stones, Ezekiel adds that phrase, “and gold.” Rabbi Fisch comments that “The precious metal also figured in the *covering*.” (P. 191)

1541

It seems clear that the phrase מְלֵאכֶת תְּפִידָּה means “work / product of your tambourines,” but there is nothing like this in the Greek translation (**Rahlfs**) nor in the English translations which we are consulting, and we cannot see any connection of this phrase with the context. It is enigmatic–puzzling--exactly what we should expect in the prophetic writings, according to **Numbers 12!**

1542

Rabbi Fisch comments that “It was as though these magnificent objects [precious stones in their sockets / settings] had been specially created and reserved for him on the day he was born [created].” (P. 191)

1543

(continued...)

הַסֹּכֵךְ

the one covering.<sup>1544</sup>

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<sup>1543</sup>(...continued)

The noun **מִשְׁחָח**, **mimshach**, which **Brown-Driver-Briggs** defines as meaning “expansion,” is found only here in the **Hebrew Bible**, and therefore its meaning is almost impossible to determine. Translations vary greatly:

**King James**, “Thou *art* the anointed cherub that covereth”;

**Tanakh**, “I created you as a cherub With outstretched shielding wings”;

**New Revised Standard**, “With an anointed cherub as guardian I placed you”;

**New International**, “You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you”;

**New Jerusalem**, “I made you a living creature with outstretched wings, as guardian”;

**Rahlfs**, μετὰ τοῦ χερουβ ἔθηκά σε, “With the cherub I placed you.”

**Darnell**, “You, a cherub of expansion.”

What can you make of this? How can there be so many differing translations of a single short line? We say this is another indication of the enigmatic, puzzling nature of the prophetic message. It is certainly anything but clear!

Hilmer comments that “The **Genesis** account has cherubim (plural) stationed at the border of the garden [of Eden] after the expulsion of Adam and Eve (**Genesis 3:24**).” (Pp. 1265-66) Here, by contrast it is a single cherub, identified with the king of Tyre.

<sup>1544</sup>

These first two lines (+) of **verse 14** are given varying translations:

**King James**, “Thou *art* the anointed cherub that covereth and I have set thee *so*”;

**Tanakh**, “I created you as a cherub With outstretched shielding wings”;

**New Revised Standard**, “With an anointed cherub as guardian I placed you”;

**New International**, “You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you.”

**New Jerusalem**, “I made you a living creature with outstretched wings, as guardian”;

**Rahlfs**, μετὰ τοῦ χερουβ ἔθηκά σε, “with the cherub I placed you” (that is, you are not the cherub, but were placed with the cherub);

**Rabbi Fisch**, “You were the far-covering cherub.”

Rabbi Fisch comments that “This rendering, which is based on Rashi, takes the word *mimshach* to mean ‘far-extending.’ The king of Tyre is compared to a *cherub* because the cherubim in the tabernacle and in Solomon’s temple spread their wings over the ark, symbolizing protection. Similarly, the king is described as the protector of the *garden of God*, Tyre.” (P. 192)

(continued...)

וַנִּתְּיָךְ בְּהַר קָדֵשׁ

And I gave / placed you on a mountain of set-apartness / set-apart mountain;<sup>1545</sup>

אֱלֹהִים הָיִיתָ

you were Gods / a God.<sup>1546</sup>

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<sup>1544</sup>(...continued)

Reimer comments that “As a guardian cherub, Tyre is like the cherubim guarding Eden (**Genesis 3:24**) rather than the ‘living creatures’ seen in **Ezekiel 1-3** and **8-11**, who are throne-bearers.” (P. 1542)

1545

Hilmer notes that “This does not reflect the **Genesis** story.” (P. 1266) No, not at all. There is no “holy mountain” in the **Genesis** story of creation. Hilmer adds that we should see “**Isaiah 14:13** for the figure of God dwelling on a mountain.” (**Ibid.**)

14:13 וַאֲתָהּ אָמַרְתָּ בְּלִבְבְּךָ

And you--you said in your heart,

הַשָּׁמַיִם אֶעֱלֶה

(Into) the heavens, I will go up!

מִמַּעַל אֲרִים כְּסֵאִי

From / to above I will exalt my throne!

וְאָשֵׁב בְּהַר־מוֹעֵד

And I will sit on the assembly-mount,

לְכוֹכְבֵי־אֵל בִּירְכֵתִי צָפוֹן:

at / to the far reaches of the north!

1546

Lines 3 and 4 can be divided differently. We have divided them as follows:

וַנִּתְּיָךְ בְּהַר קָדֵשׁ

And I gave / placed you on a mountain of set-apartness;

אֱלֹהִים הָיִיתָ

you were Gods / a God.

But they can also be divided as follows:

וַנִּתְּיָךְ בְּהַר קָדֵשׁ אֱלֹהִים

And I gave / placed you on a mountain of set-apartness of God;

(continued...)

בְּתוֹךְ אֲבִי-אֵשׁ הַתְּהַלַּכְתָּ:

In (the) midst of stones of fire you walked.<sup>1547</sup>

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<sup>1546</sup>(...continued)

הָיִיתָ בְּתוֹךְ אֲבִי-אֵשׁ

you were in (the) midst of stones of fire (from the next line; but the line apparently is meant to say “you walked in (the) midst stones of fire”).

Rabbi Fisch comments that “The phrase *the holy mountain of God* is best interpreted as synonymous with *the garden of God* as descriptive of Tyre. His accession to the throne is ascribed to the Divine will.” (P. 192)

<sup>1547</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments on the line “you have walked...stones of fire” that “The meaning is quite uncertain and all the commentators, ancient and modern, are hard driven to suggest an interpretation. If, as appears probable, stones of fire are jewels, an additional reference is made to the king’s appearance. As he walked about, he appeared to be surrounded by flashing rays of light [‘fire’].” (P. 192)

Cooke comments that “This inhabitant of paradise was arrayed in a gorgeous robe decorated with jewels, like a heavenly being (compare **Daniel 10:5-6**)...This conception may have come from Babylonia, where it was the custom to array the statues of the Gods, especially of those who were associated with light, in garments ornamented with precious stones...At this point in the Masoretic Text a catalogue of the gems has been inserted by some reader who was tempted to specify them, and borrowed the names from the well-known list of stones on the...’breastplate’ of the high priest, **Exodus 28:17-20 = 39:10-13**, which of course, has nothing to do with the robe worn in paradise...In the **Septuagint [Rahlfs]** the list is complete...

“From the time of his creation this inhabitant of paradise was clothed in splendid raiment; contrast **Genesis 2:25** [where Adam and Eve are depicted as being naked]...

“This [mountain of God] has nothing to do with ‘my holy hill of Zion’; its counterpart is rather the Babylonian ‘mountain of assembly in the far recesses of the north’ (**Isaiah 13:14**), or the mountain where the Gods assembled to determine the decrees of fate...In Ezekiel’s story, then, the garden was situated on the mountain of Elohim [God], a conception wholly foreign to the paradise-[story] of **Genesis 2**...

“What can be meant by ‘walking among stones of fire’? Again Babylonian mythology affords an explanation. In the **Epic of Gilgamesh** just quoted, one of the tablets, now much broken, appears to

(continued...)

28:15<sup>1548</sup> תָּמִים אַתָּה בְּדַרְכֶיךָ

You (were) complete / perfect in your ways,<sup>1549</sup>

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<sup>1547</sup>(...continued)

narrate that Gilgamesh came to the garden or park of jeweled trees, which lies by the eastern ocean...The *stones of fire* will thus be the gems which gave splendor and brilliance to the garden...

“From his creation (compare **verse 13**) this favored being lived a perfectly moral life, until he committed sin...Then he was cast out by the cherub as profane, and his blissful existence in paradise came to an end...The favored and arrogant hero of the paradise-story is none other than the king of Tyre, whose pride will shortly be punished by a shameful overthrow.” (Pp. 316-19)

Eichrodt agrees with this understanding, and concludes that “The description of the angelic being on the mountain of God is employed merely as an allegory for the king of Tyre and did not carry with it any force to compel Ezekiel to follow slavishly the lines of the myth. All that he was aiming at was to portray the unique position of the prince of the glittering commercial city in the colors of the myth, so as to display the enormity of his sin and the terrible change in his destiny. That he now stresses, with reference to the earthly city of Tyre, whose importance depended upon its world-wide trade, both the deeds of violence which so often accompany commerce, and also the whole commercial policy which has no scruples about injustice, but concerns itself only with heaping up gains, and claims that this is the source of all error...The deceitfulness of riches is the actual reason leading to contempt for the Will of God, and that again turns beauty and wisdom into a snare. So the profaner of the mountain of God is spoiled of his dignity by [YHWH] Himself and expelled from the heavenly sphere. [YHWH] casts him down to earth from the heights of heaven, i.e., He reduces the king who enjoys such high regard to a miserable helpless creature, whom the kings who used to fawn upon him now treat with contempt.” (Pp. 394-95)

<sup>1548</sup>

Matties comments on **28:15-19**: “The portrait uses the verb ‘to create’ (**verse 15**), as does **Genesis 1**. This king is blameless (following the verb walked in **verse 14b**, this echoes the description of Noah in **Genesis 6:9** and the charge to Abraham in **Genesis 17:1**). The fall of this king (**verse 15b**) originates in violent economic practices (**verse 16a**) and results in banishment from the mountain (garden) of God (**verse 16b**). Pride results in being brought down and exposed (**verse 17**). It is remarkable that Ezekiel should say that his economic injustice has defiled his own sanctuaries (**verse 18**).” (Pp. 1197-98)

Is the implication that Tyre’s sanctuaries were valid sanctuaries until defiled by pride? We think it is. What do you think? Are all other sanctuaries besides those in Israel false sanctuaries?

<sup>1549</sup>

(continued...)

מִיּוֹם הַבְּרָאָה

from (the) day you were created,

עַד־נִמְצָא עוֹלָתָהּ בְּךָ:

until injustice was found in you.<sup>1550</sup>

28:16 בְּרֵב רְכֻלְתֶּךָ

In / with (the) abundance of your merchandise<sup>1551</sup>

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<sup>1549</sup>(...continued)

Reimer comments on **verses 15 and 16** that “Tyre was blameless, as was Job (**Job 1:1; 12:4**). But trade, coupled with violence, triggers the downfall of this previously admirable creature; see also **Ezekiel 28:18**.” (P. 1543)

Hilmer comments that “The parallel to **Genesis 2-3** is clear.” (P. 1266)

<sup>1550</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that “Before his vast wealth filled him with conceit and ambition, there was no fault to be found with his conduct.” (P. 192)

Cooke states that “From his *creation* (compare **verse 13**) this favored being lived a perfectly moral life, until he committed sin; what that was is told in **verse 17**; here it is simply called iniquity (עוֹלָה); then he was cast out by the cherub [did he cast himself out? See **verse 14**] as profane, and his blissful existence in paradise came to an end. The parallel to **Genesis 3** is obvious: but there the first man is not called blameless (*tamim*; compare **Genesis 6:9; 17:1**), because his character was undeveloped and had to be proved.” (P. 319)

<sup>1551</sup>

There is nothing inherently wrong with רְכֻלָּה, **rekhullah**, “traffic,” or its related noun רְכֻלְתָּח, **rekhullathach**, “merchandise.” The danger lies in allowing חָמָס, **chamas**, “violence (especially to the poor)” to become associated with your traffic or your merchandise. See the lengthy article on חָמָס by H. Haag in **Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament** IV, pp. 478-487 from which we quote:

“The root חָמָס is scarcely attested outside Israel...The verb occurs 8 times in the **Old Testament**...The noun occurs 60 times...The verb refers to the arbitrary and autocratic appropriation of what belongs to God or one’s neighbor...In **Jeremiah 22:3** the subject matter is brutal exploitation of helpless  
(continued...) ”

מָלֵךְ תוֹכְךָ חָמָס וְהַחֲטָא

they filled your midst (with) violent treatment of the poor, and you sinned;<sup>1552</sup>

וְאֶחְלַלְךָ מִהַר אֱלֹהִים

and I profaned / polluted you from (the) mountain of God.<sup>1553</sup>

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<sup>1551</sup>(...continued)

aliens [emigrants], orphans, and widows...The most common synonym of חָמָס...is *shodh*, which means primarily oppression of the poor...and suggests that this is the basic meaning of חָמָס...

“The source of חָמָס is either greedy desire, when exploitation of the socially helpless is involved, or hate, especially in the case of false accusation...Thus חָמָס is cold-blooded and unscrupulous infringement of the personal rights of others, motivated by greed and hate and often making use of physical violence and brutality...The primary context of חָמָס is society. **Amos 3:10** accuses the prosperous society in Samaria of storing up חָמָס...in their magnificent houses, i.e., treasure and provisions acquired through illegal ‘oppression and exploitation’ of the poor...A favorite instrument of חָמָס is false accusation and unjust judgment. Especially in the **Psalms**, חָמָס appears in the context of the manifold afflictions of the unjustly persecuted psalmist who cries out to Yahweh and demands justice from Him...That the accused should experience חָמָס in court is all the more perverse, because it is in court that he should find protection from חָמָס.”

The most obvious exploitation of the poor in these chapters concerning Tyre is their involvement in human slavery, but undoubtedly there were manifold other ways in which exploitation of the poor would have been involved.

<sup>1552</sup>

Rabbi Fisch comments that “The prince is identified here with the city of Tyre for whose conduct of affairs he is held responsible. With the growth of commerce there was an increase of corruption, for which he must pay the penalty.” (P. 192)

We think it is a great failure of commentaries on **Ezekiel** to fail to identify the kind of violence that Tyre was guilty of. As we have seen with regards to the noun חָמָס, **chamas**, it is exploitation of and violence to the poor.

<sup>1553</sup>

(continued...)

וַאֲבָרָךְ כְּרוּב הַסֵּיף

And I destroyed you, cherub that covers,

מִתּוֹךְ אֲבְנֵי־אֵשׁ:

from (the) midst of (the) stones of fire.<sup>1554</sup>

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<sup>1553</sup>(...continued)

Translations of this line vary;

**King James**, “therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God”;

**Tanakh**, “So I have struck you down From the mountain of God”;

**New Revised Standard**, “so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God”;

**New International**, “ So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God”;

**New Jerusalem**, “I have thrown you down from the mountain of God”;

**Rahlfs**, καὶ ἐτραυματίσθης ἀπὸ ὄρους τοῦ θεοῦ, “and you were wounded / traumatized from the God’s mountain.”

We see no verb in the Hebrew text of this line for “casting” or “striking” or “driving,” or “throwing,” or “wounding / traumatizing.” At most the text means YHWH treated the proud king like the profane, polluted person he had become (and that would mean he would no longer have access to paradise). Such a verb will come in **verse 17** and compare **verse 18**.

1554

The last three lines of **verse 16** are given varying translations:

**King James**, “therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.”

**Tanakh**, “So I have struck you down From the mountain of God, And I have destroyed you, O shielding cherub, From among the stones of fire.”

**New Revised Standard**, “so I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God, and the guardian cherub drove you out from among the stones of fire.”

**New International**, “So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones.”

**New Jerusalem**, I have thrown you down from the mountain of God and destroyed you, guardian winged creature, amid the coals.”

**Rahlfs**, καὶ ἐτραυματίσθης ἀπὸ ὄρους τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἤγαγέν σε τὸ χερουβ ἐκ μέσου λίθων πυρίνων, “And you were wounded / traumatized from (the) mountain of the God; and the cherub led you out of (the) midst of (the) burning stones.”

We do not see the Hebrew text as saying anything about being “cast out / thrown out” from the mountain of God—only that the king was profaned in the mountain of God. And notice the ambiguity in the differing translations as to whether the king of Tyre was the cherub, or was driven out by the cherub.

(continued...)

28:17 נָבְהָ לְבָבְךָ בְּיָפְיֶךָ

Your heart grew high with your beauty;

שָׁחַתְּ חִכְמָתְךָ עַל-יִפְעָתְךָ

you spoiled your wisdom for the sake of your splendor.<sup>1555</sup>

עַל-אֲרֶץ הַשְּׁלֹכְתִיךָ

Upon / to (the) earth I threw you.<sup>1556</sup>

לְפָנַי מִלְּכִים נָתַתִּיךָ לְרְאוּתָהּ בָּךְ:

Before kings I gave / placed you, to look at / see you.<sup>1557</sup>

28:18 מֵרַב עֲוֹנוֹיֶיךָ

From (the) abundance of your iniquities,

בְּעוֹל רַבְלָתְךָ

in (the) injustice of your merchandise,

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<sup>1554</sup>(...continued)

We think the Hebrew text has caused these ambiguities, and that there is no way to be dogmatic as to what the text actually says. The text is enigmatic, puzzling—as **Numbers 12** teaches us to expect.

Rabbi Fisch states that the language of the verse is addressed to the prince, and “being profane he can no longer inhabit the mountain of God for which holiness and purity are essential qualifications. The verbs in this and the following verses are in the prophetic perfect. The punishment was still to be inflicted...He would be stripped of his power and magnificence, and cease to be *a covering cherub*, a protection, to Tyre and her population.” (P. 192)

1555

Rabbi Fisch comments that “True wisdom cannot be exercised where there is a spirit of arrogance. The qualities which made Tyre preeminent were neutralized by pride, so that instead of making still greater progress she will suffer eclipse and ruin.” (Pp. 192-93)

1556

Hilmer notes that being thrown to the earth means “expulsion from the heavenly garden.” (P. 1266)

1557

Rabbi Fisch states that this means that kings will “gloat over the city’s collapse.” (P. 194)

חִלְלֵתָּ מִקְדָּשֶׁיךָ

you polluted / profaned your sanctuaries!<sup>1558</sup>

וְאוֹצֵא־אֵשׁ מִתּוֹכְךָ

And I brought forth fire from / in your midst--<sup>1559</sup>

הִיא אֲכָלְתְּךָ

it devoured you.

וְאֶתְּנֶךָ לְאֶפֶר עַל־הָאָרֶץ

And I gave / placed you in ashes upon the earth.

לְעֵינֵי כָל־רְאִיךָ

in (the) eyes of everyone seeing you.

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1558

Rabbi Fisch states that “The allusion [in ‘profaning your sanctuaries’] is obscure. Rashi explains that Hebrew *mikdash* (your sanctuaries) as ‘your holiness’; while Kimchi, quoting **Amos 7:13**, the king’s sanctuary, gives it in both passages the meaning of ‘palaces.’ This, however, is doubtful. The term has possibly to be connected with the *garden of God* and the *holy mountain of God* which had been used in the description of Tyre. She once deserved to be called ‘your holy places’ over which the prince bore sway; but through moral debasement that title can no longer be applied and the city will be destroyed.” (P. 193)

Reimer comments on **verse 18** that “The priestly allusions are further developed as the sanctuaries are profaned.” (P. 1543)

Yes, Tyre’s “sanctuaries” are profaned. And does this not imply that once those sanctuaries were just that—places where Divine worship was conducted, validly, but now had been profaned by Tyre’s violence done to the poor?

1559

Rabbi Fisch comments that “The evil in the midst of Tyre will be the flame which reduces her to a heap of burnt ruins.” (P. 193)

28:19 כָּל־יִזְדָּעִיךָ בְּעַמִּים שָׁמְמוּ עָלֶיךָ

All those knowing you among the peoples were appalled at you.<sup>1560</sup>

בְּלִהְיוֹת הָיִיתָ

Dreadful calamities you were (in)--

וְאַיִנְךָ עַד־עוֹלָם:

and you are not--until long-lasting time!<sup>1561</sup>

### A Note of Promise for Israel (28:25-26)<sup>1562</sup>

28:25 כֹּה־אָמַר יְהוָה אֲדַנִּי יְהוָה

In this way my Lord YHWH spoke:

בְּקַבְּצִי אֶת־בַּיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל

When I gather Israel's house<sup>1563</sup>

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1560

Rabbi Fisch's translation has the future, "shall be appalled at you," but the Hebrew has the qal perfect / past tense. Compare **Ezekiel 27:35**.

1561

Rabbi Fisch's translation has "you shall never be any more." See **Ezekiel 26:14**.

1562

At the close of Ezekiel's message against Sidon, there is a word of hope for Jacob--meaning all Israel, both North and South--they will be gathered back from their captivity, and live in their own land once again in safety and prosperity, no longer suffering the abuse of their neighbors!

1563

Hilmer comments that the phrase "When I gather...Israel" is "a frequent promise in **Ezekiel** and later. See **11:17; 20:34, 41-42; 29:13; 34:13; 36:24; 37:21; 38:8; 39:27**. In addition see **Nehemiah 1:9; Zechariah 10:8, 10.**" (P. 1266) See also **Psalms 105:10-11; 147:2; Isaiah 56:8; Ezekiel 28:25; Micah 2:12**.

מִן־הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר נִפְצְוּ בָּם

from the people where they were scattered,

וְנִקְדַּשְׁתִּי בָּם

and I will be set-apart / sanctified by them<sup>1564</sup>

לְעֵינֵי הַגּוֹיִם

to / in (the) eyes of the nations.

וְיָשְׁבוּ עַל־אֲדָמָתָם

And they shall dwell upon their ground,

אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לְעַבְדִּי לְיַעֲקֹב:

which I gave to My servant, to Jacob.<sup>1565</sup>

28:26 וְיָשְׁבוּ עָלֶיהָ לְבֵטַח

And they will dwell upon it for the security / securely.<sup>1566</sup>

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1564

Rabbi Fisch comments that “[YHWH’s] holiness will be recognized by all as the effect of the fulfilment of His promise to restore Israel to his land.” (P. 194)

1565

Rabbi Fisch notes that the phrase “My servant Jacob” is “an appellation of the people of Israel (compare **Ezekiel 37:25; Jeremiah 30:10**). It occurs many times in the latter section of the [Scroll] of **Isaiah**.” (P. 194)

1566

For this phrase, לְבֵטַח, **labetach**, literally “for the security,” see the following passages in the **Hebrew Bible**: **Leviticus 25:18, 19; 26:5; Deuteronomy 33:12; Judges 18:7; 1 Kings 5:5<sup>Heb</sup> / 4:25<sup>Eng</sup>; Job 11:18; 24:23; Psalms 4:9<sup>Heb</sup> / 8<sup>Eng</sup>; 16:9; 78:53; Proverbs 3:23, 29; Isaiah 14:30; 47:8; Jeremiah 23:6; 32:37; 33:16; 49:31; Ezekiel 28:26 (here); 34:25, 27, 28; 38:8, 11, 14; 39:6, 26; Hosea 2:20; Zephaniah 2:15 and Zechariah 14:11.**

See the article on בֵּטַח, **betach**, by Alfred Jepsen in **Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament II**, pp. 88-94, with its emphasis on finding security in YHWH, and not in anything or anyone else.

וּבְנוּ בָתִּים וְנָטְעוּ כְרָמִים

And they will build houses and will plant vineyards.<sup>1567</sup>

1567

Rabbi Fisch notes that “These operations [building houses, planting vineyards] are only undertaken by a people when it feels security of tenure.” (P. 195)

Hilmer states that these are the “basic necessities of the good life.” (P. 1266) Compare **Amos 9:14-15**,

14 וְשִׁבְתִּי אֶת־שְׁבוּת עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל

And I will return the captives of My people Israel!

וּבְנוּ עָרִים נְשֻׁמוֹת וַיֵּשְׁבוּ

And they will build (the) devastated cities, and they will settle down,

וְנָטְעוּ כְרָמִים וְשָׁתוּ אֶת־יַיִנָּם

and will plant vineyards, and they will drink their wine;

וַעֲשׂוּ גִנּוֹת וְאָכְלוּ אֶת־פְּרִיהֶם:

and they will make gardens, and they will eat their fruits!

15 וְנָטַעְתִּים עַל־אֲדָמָתָם

And I will plant them upon their land;

וְלֹא יִנְתָּשׁוּ עוֹד מֵעַל אֲדָמָתָם

and they will not be pulled up again from their land

אֲשֶׁר נָתַתִּי לָהֶם

which I have given them!

אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ:

—YHWH your God spoke!

**Isaiah 65:21**,

וּבְנוּ בָתִּים וַיֵּשְׁבוּ

And they will build houses, and inhabit (them);

וְנָטְעוּ כְרָמִים וְאָכְלוּ פְרִיָם:

and they will plant vineyards, and they will eat their fruit.

**Jeremiah 29:5**, where Jeremiah’s letter to the exiles in Babylon states:

בְּנוּ בָתִּים וַיֵּשְׁבוּ

Build houses, and settle down!

וְנָטְעוּ גִנּוֹת וְאָכְלוּ אֶת־פְּרִיָן:

And plant gardens and eat their fruit!

וַיֵּשְׁבוּ לְבֵטַח

And they will dwell for the security / securely,

בַּעֲשׂוֹתַי שְׁפָטִים

when I make / do judgments

בְּכָל הַשָּׂאֲטִים אֲתֵם מְסַבִּיבוֹתֵם

against all the ones despising them from (all) around them.

וַיֵּדְעוּ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיהֶם:

And they will know that I (am) YHWH their God!<sup>1568</sup>

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1568

Rabbi Fisch quotes Davidson as writing: “This oft-repeated phrase is not a mere formula. The prophet’s idea is that God does all, brings all calamities, causes all catastrophes and revolutions in states, and guides the fortunes of Israel in the sight of the nations, with one great design in view—to make Himself, the true and only God, known to all mankind.” (P. 195)

Yes...and YHWH is very careful that false ideas concerning His nature and actions are eliminated—such as He is such a God of love that He will not punish evil, or the opposite mistake, that He is so stern in His punishment that there can be no forgiveness, no restoration to newness of life. The picture of YHWH that develops in the **Scroll of Ezekiel** is that of YHWH Who dares to punish wickedness, whenever and by whoever it occurs; but He is also quick to forgive and restore the penitent, offering them newness of life, an offer that includes resurrection from death!

1.

### **The Phoenician God Melqart**

“Melqart (also Melkarth or Melicarthus) was the tutelary God of the Phoenician city-state of Tyre and a major Deity in the Phoenician and Punic pantheons. Often titled the "Lord of Tyre" (Ba'al Tūr), he was also known as the Son of Baal or El (the Ruler of the Universe), King of the Underworld, and Protector of the Universe. He symbolized the annual cycle of vegetation and was associated with the Phoenician maternal Goddess Astarte.

“Melqart was typically depicted as a bearded figure, dressed only in a rounded hat and loincloth. Reflecting his dual role as both protector of the world and ruler of the underworld, he was often shown holding an Egyptian ankh or lotus flower as a symbol of life and a fenestrated [with window-like openings] axe as a symbol of death.

“As Tyrian trade and settlement expanded, Melqart became venerated in Phoenician and Punic cultures across the Mediterranean, especially its colonies of Carthage and Cadiz. During the high point of Phoenician civilization between 1000 and 500 B.C.E., Melqart was associated with other pantheons and often venerated accordingly. Most notably, he was identified with the Greek Herakles (Hercules) since at least the sixth century B.C.E., and eventually became interchangeable with His Greek counterpart.” (Wikipedia, 7/26/2020)

## Bashan

“Bashan is a term for the northernmost region of the Transjordan, which is located in what is today known as Syria [?]. The **Hebrew Bible** first mentions it in **Numbers 21:33**, where Og the king of Bashan came out against the Israelites at the time of their entrance into the promised land, but was vanquished in battle (**Numbers 21:33–35; Deuteronomy 3:1–7**). Along with the half of Gilead it was given to the half-tribe of Manasseh (**Joshua 13:29–31**). According to the **Scroll of Joshua**, Golan, one of its cities, became a Levitical city and a city of refuge (**Joshua 21:27**).

“According to the *Torah*, the Israelites invaded Bashan and conquered it from the Amorites. **Deuteronomy 3:1–7** states:

Then we turned, and went up the way to Bashan: and Og the king of Bashan came out against us, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei. And the LORD said unto me, Fear him not: for I will deliver him, and all his people, and his land, into thy hand; and thou shalt do unto him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt at Heshbon. So YHWH our God delivered into our hands Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people: and we smote him until none was left to him remaining. And we took all his cities at that time, there was not a city which we took not from them, threescore cities, all the region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan. All these cities were fenced with high walls, gates, and bars; beside unwalled towns a great many. And we utterly destroyed them, as we did unto Sihon king of Heshbon, utterly destroying the men, women, and children, of every city. But all the cattle, and the spoil of the cities, we took for a prey to ourselves.

“Argob, in Bashan, was one of Solomon's commissariat [a department for the supply of food and equipment] districts (**1 Kings 4:13**). The cities of Bashan were taken by Hazael (**2 Kings 10:33**), but were soon after reconquered by Jehoash (**2 Kings 13:25**), who overcame the Syrians in three battles, according to the prophecy of Elisha (**2 Kings 13:19**). From this time, Bashan almost disappears from history, although we read about the wild cattle of its rich pastures (**Ezekiel 39:18; Psalm 22:12**), the oaks of its forests (**Isaiah 2:13; Ezekiel 27:6; Zechariah 11:2**), the beauty of its extensive plains (**Amos 4:1; Jeremiah 50:19**), and the rugged majesty of its mountains (**Psalm 68:15**). Soon after the conquest, the name "Gilead" was given to the whole country beyond Jordan.” (**Wikipedia**, 7/27/2020)

3.

### **Lebanon**

“Lebanon, officially known as the Republic of Lebanon, is a country in Western Asia. It is bordered by Syria to the north and east and Israel to the south, while Cyprus is west across the Mediterranean Sea. Lebanon's location at the crossroads of the Mediterranean Basin and the Arabian hinterland contributed to its rich history and shaped a cultural identity of religious and ethnic diversity. It is the smallest recognized sovereign state on the mainland Asian continent.

“The earliest evidence of civilization in Lebanon dates back more than seven thousand years, predating recorded history. Lebanon was home to the Phoenicians, a maritime culture that flourished for almost three thousand years (about 3200–539 B.C.E.). In 64 B.C.E., the region came under the rule of the Roman Empire, and eventually became one of its leading centers of Christianity. The Mount Lebanon range saw the emergence of a monastic tradition known as the Maronite Church. As the Arab Muslims conquered the region, the Maronites held onto their religion and identity. However, a new religious group, the Druze, established themselves in Mount Lebanon as well, generating a religious divide that has lasted for centuries. During the Crusades, the Maronites re-established contact with the Roman Catholic Church and asserted their communion with Rome. These ties have influenced the region into the modern era.

“Lebanon was conquered by the Ottomans in the 16th century and remained under their rule for the next 400 years. Following the empire's collapse after World War I, the five provinces constituting modern Lebanon came under the French Mandate. The French expanded the borders of the Mount Lebanon Governorate, which was predominately Maronite and Druze, to include more Muslims. Upon independence in 1943, Lebanon established a unique confessionalist form of government, with the major religious sects apportioned specific political powers. President Bechara El Khoury, prime minister Riad El-Solh, and minister of defence Emir Majid Arslan II are considered the founders of modern Lebanon and national heroes for their role in independence. Lebanon initially enjoyed political and economic stability, which was shattered by the bloody Lebanese Civil War (1975–1990) between various political and sectarian factions. The war partially led to military occupations by Syria (1975 to 2005) and Israel (1985 to 2000).

“Despite its small size, Lebanese culture is renowned both in the Arab world and globally, powered by its large and influential diaspora. Prior to the civil war, the country enjoyed a diversified economy that included tourism, agriculture, commerce, and banking. Its financial power and stability through the 1950s and 1960s earned Lebanon the moniker of ‘Switzerland of the East,’ while its capital, Beirut, attracted so many tourists that it was known as ‘the Paris of the Middle East.’ Since the end of the war, there have been extensive efforts to revive the economy and rebuild national infrastructure. While still recovering from the political and economic effects of the conflict, Lebanon remains a cosmopolitan and relatively developed country, with the highest Human Development Index and GDP per capita in the Arab world outside of the oil-rich economies of the Persian Gulf.

“Lebanon was a founding member of the United Nations in 1945 and is a member of the Arab League (1945), the Non-Aligned Movement (1961), Organisation of the Islamic Cooperation (1969) and the Organisation internationale de la francophonie (1973).” (**Wikipedia**, 7/27/2020)

