

ISAIAH^a 20
Wail O Ships of Tarshish^b
(Isaiah 23)

Isaiah 23:1-18 Revised Standard Version (RSV)

A Warning of Destruction of Jerusalem

23 The oracle concerning Tyre^c.

Wail, O ships of Tarshish^d,
for Tyre is laid waste, without house or haven!
From the land of Cyprus^e
it is revealed to them.^f

² Be still, O inhabitants of the coast,
O merchants of Sidon^g;
your messengers passed over the sea^h

³ and were on many waters;
your revenue was the grain of Shihorⁱ,
the harvest of the Nile;
you were the merchant of the nations.^j

⁴ Be ashamed, O Sidon, for the sea has spoken,
the stronghold of the sea^k, saying:
“I have neither travailed nor given birth,
I have neither reared young men
nor brought up virgins.”^l

⁵ When the report comes to Egypt,
they will be in anguish over the report about Tyre.^m

⁶ Pass over to Tarshish,
wail, O inhabitants of the coast!ⁿ

⁷ Is this your exultant city
whose origin is from days of old,
whose feet carried her
to settle afar?^o

⁸ Who has purposed this
against Tyre, the bestower of crowns,
whose merchants were princes,
whose traders were the honored of the earth?^p

⁹ The Lord of hosts has purposed it,
to defile the pride of all glory,^q
to dishonor all the honored of the earth.

¹⁰ Overflow your land like the Nile,
O daughter of Tarshish^r;
there is no restraint any more.^s

¹¹ He has stretched out his hand over the sea,
he has shaken the kingdoms;
the Lord has given command concerning Canaan

to destroy its strongholds.^t

¹² And he said:
 “You will no more exult,
 O oppressed virgin daughter of Sidon;
 arise, pass over to Cyprus,
 even there you will have no rest.”^u

¹³ Behold the land of the Chalde’ans! This is the people; it was not Assyria. They destined Tyre for wild beasts. They erected their siege towers, they razed her palaces, they made her a ruin.^v

¹⁴ Wail, O ships of Tarshish,
 for your stronghold is laid waste.^w

¹⁵ In that day Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, like the days of one king. At the end of seventy years, it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the harlot:^x

¹⁶ “Take a harp,
 go about the city,
 O forgotten harlot!
 Make sweet melody,
 sing many songs,
 that you may be remembered.”^y

¹⁷ At the end of seventy years, the Lord will visit Tyre, and she will return to her hire, and will play the harlot with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.^z ¹⁸ Her merchandise and her hire will be dedicated to the Lord; it will not be stored or hoarded, but her merchandise will supply abundant food and fine clothing for those who dwell before the Lord.^{aa}

Revised Standard Version (RSV)

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^a The Titles of the lessons in this study are borrowed from those given by **Jhan Moskowitz** of Jews for Jesus to the chapter titles in his recorded study of Isaiah upon which much of this study is based. I owe a great debt to Jhan, my late friend and brother in the Lord, who was called Home before his time, not only for much of the work in this study, but also for giving me a whole new perspective on the Scriptures and the Jewish Messiah. Jhan’s original recordings may be downloaded from the Jews for Jesus web site. <http://jewsforjesus.org/jhan-moskowitz>

Most current translations of Isaiah into English are based on the Masoretic (Hebrew) text which was primarily copied, edited and distributed by Jews known as the Masoretes, mostly from the ben Asher family. These Jews lived in the Middle East, especially Jerusalem, Tiberias and Mesopotamia, between the 7th and 10th centuries A.D., a high point of Jewish civilization in the that region. The earliest Masoretic extant texts are from the 9th century. The Masoretic text is similar to Hebrew texts from Qumran (mostly from the first three Centuries before the Messiah) and others from the 2nd Century. However, there are other Hebrew textual traditions in circulation prior to the standardization of the Masoretic text. The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa) is a virtually complete copy of Isaiah from Qumran which has been carbon dated between 325 B.C. and 100 B.C. This history indicates that the accepted Hebrew text of Isaiah was substantially settled well before the coming of the Messiah. The Masoretic text of Isaiah has numerous differences of both greater and lesser significance when compared to the manuscripts of the Septuagint, a Koine Greek version of the Scriptures in common use in the Middle East, where this version of Greek was the *lingua franca* at the time of the Messiah. Indeed, where the Gospels and Paul’s letters quote Scripture, it is mostly quoted from the Septuagint. The Septuagint was created among diaspora Jews in Egypt beginning during the reign of Ptolemy Philadelphus (283-246 B.C.) and was completed by 132 B.C., likely from Hebrew texts which, in some cases, differed from the tradition that

would later give rise to the Masoretic text. There are extant manuscripts of portions of the Septuagint from the 2nd Century B.C. and citations to the Septuagint from other sources from the early part of that Century. The Septuagint was the basis of the Old Latin and Vulgate (the authoritative Roman Catholic Latin text) translations of the Bible and for all Catholic translations until the middle of the last Century. It remains the authoritative version for Greek Orthodox Christians. In the endnotes for these outlines I frequently quote an English translation of the Septuagint version of Isaiah where it differs significantly from the translation of the Masoretic text. For this purpose I have usually quoted from the Complete Apostles Bible (2005) which is more accessible than the classic Septuagint translation by Brenton published in (1844). There is also a New English Translation from 2007. All of these versions are available on-line. The Septuagint is particularly useful for Biblical scholars seeking to interpret the Greek of the Messianic Writings (New Testament) because it is likely that the meanings attributable to words used by the Apostolic writers, who were all most familiar with the Septuagint, would be the same as the meaning of those words as used in the Septuagint. I have also, where available, cited cross-references to the Apocrypha, the books contained in the Septuagint but not in the Masoretic as those books were likely known to, and in some cases quoted by, the Apostolic writers.

We must approach our study of Isaiah from the standpoint of humility, and recognize that we study from faith and not knowing all the answers. While there are parts that seem fairly clear, there are other parts that are debated. This study will attempt to identify where the scholarship is essentially in agreement, and where there are debated passages and meanings.

There are a number of recurring images or “motifs” in Isaiah, including (1) the Holiness of God, (2) David’s City, Jerusalem, Zion or God’s Holy Mountain, (3) a restoration to the conditions of the Garden that will reverse the curse of Original Sin (Gn 3), (4) the “seed” or descendant of Abraham and David, and judgment upon the nations, and (5) faith in God. Isaiah’s overall theme appears to be that God will judge sin, but at the end of the day, He will use His Messiah to bring reconciliation and healing and establish the Messianic Kingdom.

While there is some debate among scholars regarding the date and authorship of the Book, this study will assume that Isaiah is the primary author, and that it is relatively contemporaneous with the times in which he lived. Even if others had a hand in authoring some parts of the Book, or in editing, arranging and copying the Book, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit need not be limited to those men who actually wrote the text of Scripture, or whose name appears in its title. It can extend also to those who may have edited or copied the original text, those who compiled it, and those who decided which texts were to be included within the Scriptural Canon. There is good reason to believe that Isaiah, as we now have it, may be a sort of “greatest hits”, with various writings of Isaiah throughout his ministry arranged in the final form to make a point about Judah, Jerusalem, the coming Jewish Messiah and the plan of salvation. It is also likely that much of Isaiah was first spoken, or recited, in the form of sermons or prophetic statements, and then written down and collected into the form we have today.

We cannot know whether we have, in the compiled book, the complete original sermons or poems. Nor do we know the context in which they were originally preached or recited, though in some cases we can make a good guess about that context. It is possible, even likely, that at least some of them were created in a specific context of time and place, endowing them with a specific contemporary meaning, but that when recombined into the final product we have today, the individual pieces take on a new meaning in this new context. Thus we may find multiple meanings for the same passage, including, e.g. a meaning in the original context in which it was spoken (if that can be determined), a meaning in the context of the short term history of the Judah, Assyria and Babylon, and a Messianic or eschatological meaning.

Much of the Book is in the form of Hebrew poetry. While the translation into English causes a loss of many of the poetic elements, some of those that remain will be identified as we go along. One thing that is apparent is that poetry, in Hebrew and English, allows the use of images which can paint a powerful picture of what is going on without being a literal description. Isaiah will make liberal use of these images. When God speaks in verse, it helps to elevate the dignity of what He says. Poetry also casts a much larger shadow than prose. If an historical event is described in prose, it would normally be just a description of that event. But by putting it in verse that single historical event can have a much bigger meaning in a larger context. In addition, verse, even unaccompanied by music, is easier to remember, and recite, than is prose. These two aspects of poetry may help explain why many of the Prophets, including Isaiah, wrote in verse. It is not clear that Isaiah’s verse was ever set to music, though music was an aspect of at least some of the Prophets (1Sm 10:5; 2Ki 3:15). If any of Isaiah’s verse were set to music, none of the actual music has survived.

Isaiah himself does not appear in the Book until Chapter 6 when the beginning of his ministry is described. In verse 1:1 he tells us that his ministry began in the year King Uzziah (783-742 B.C.; 2Ki 15:1-7, 2Ch 26:1-23) died and continued through the time of Kings Jotham (742-735 B.C.; 2Ki 15:32-38, 2Ch 27:1-9), Ahaz (735-715 B.C.; 2Ki 16:1-17:41, 2Ch 28:1-27) and Hezekiah (715-687 B.C.; 2Ki 18:1-20:21, 2Ch 29:1-32:33). In 721 B.C., the Assyrian army captured the Israelite capital at Samaria and carried away the citizens of the northern kingdom into captivity. The virtual destruction of Israel left the southern kingdom, Judah, to fend for itself among warring Near Eastern kingdoms. At the time of Samaria’s fall, there existed two kings in Judah — Ahaz and his son Hezekiah — who ruled as co-regents. After the fall of the Northern Kingdom, the kings of Judah tried to extend their influence and protection to those inhabitants who had not been exiled. They also sought to extend their authority northward into areas previously controlled by the Kingdom of Israel. The latter part of the reign of Ahaz, and most of that of Hezekiah were periods of stability during which Judah was able to consolidate both politically and economically. Although Judah was a vassal of Assyria during this time and paid an annual tribute to the powerful empire, it was the most important state between Assyria and Egypt. In 715 B.C., following the death of Ahaz, Hezekiah became the sole regent of Judah and initiated widespread religious reforms, including the breaking of religious idols. During 2016 archaeological evidence of these reforms was discovered in Israel, <http://www.foxnews.com/science/2016/09/28/archaeologists-unearth-ancient-gate-shrine-in-israel.html>.

Hezekiah built Hezekiah's tunnel, still in existence today, to insure that water was available during a siege, <http://www.biblicalarchaeologytruth.com/hezekiahs-tunnel.html>. He re-captured Philistine-occupied lands in the Negev desert, formed alliances with Ashkelon and Egypt, and made a stand against Assyria by refusing to pay tribute. In response, Sennacherib attacked Judah, laying siege to Jerusalem in 701 B.C. God destroyed Sennacherib's army outside Jerusalem and the siege was broken. The records of royal Assyria state that while Sennacherib captured many cities in Judah, Jerusalem was only "besieged," not captured, thus agreeing with the Biblical account. Archaeologists have recently uncovered the ruins of Sennacherib's palace in Nineveh under the ruins of Jonah's Tomb, <http://www.foxnews.com/science/2017/03/06/biblical-kings-palace-uncovered-beneath-shrine-destroyed-by-isis.html>. Archaeologists have also discovered a royal seal of Hezekiah picturing a winged sun which may refer to the events of Is 38:8 in which the sun appeared to move backward in the sky, <http://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-sites-places/jerusalem/king-hezekiah-in-the-bible-royal-seal-of-hezekiah-comes-to-light/>. After being saved from the Assyrians, Judah survived until c. 600 B.C. when the Babylonians destroyed the City and carried the leaders into exile. The Exiles were first allowed to return to Jerusalem in 539 B.C. after Babylon fell to the Persians.

The entire Book of Isaiah is identified in 1:1 as a "vision" meaning, in a broad sense, divine revelation, 2Ch 32:32, Ob 1, Nah 1:1, Am 1:1, Mi 1:1, Hab 1:1. The visions in Isaiah are not arranged chronologically. In order to understand Isaiah, we always need to ask how the text relates to the rest of the text of the section in which it appears, how the sections of the Book are connected, and why they are arranged the way they are. The central theme of Chapters 1-39 is the "King." Chapters 40-55 have to do with the "Suffering Servant." And Chapters 56-66 have to do with a restored Jerusalem, with the key theme in those chapters being the "Conqueror."

The initial section on the "King" may also be divided into separate sections. Chapters 1-5 describe the overall background of a sinful time in Judah of greed, hypocrisy, and judgment. Even in these chapters, there were hints of a restoration. Isaiah 6 is Isaiah's call. Chapters 7-12 (the Book of Emmanuel) are all about the birth of a son, explicitly in 7-9 and 11 and implicitly in 6 and 10, who will be Emmanuel. Chapter 12 is a hymn of thanksgiving for what God has done, and has promised to do. The other sub-sections are Chapters 13-23 and 24-37.

The **first 5 chapters** could have taken place during any, or all, of the time of Isaiah's ministry and are perhaps best understood as setting the scene, or painting a picture, of the spiritual condition of Judah during Isaiah's ministry. In **Chapter 6**, Isaiah is given his ministry by God, a ministry to preach to a people who will not hear, and who will continue to be estranged from God and His law, that is, an unsuccessful ministry. Indeed, in some way, the failure to respond to Isaiah's preaching will be used to help convict the people of Judah, Rm 10:14-21. Yet even here, there is a hope of redemption for the remnant. The context for **Chapters 7 and 8** are a rebellion by Syria and Israel against their overlord Assyria. Syria and Israel wish to attack Judah, remove Ahaz of the line of David, and replace him with a King who will join them in an alliance against Assyria. Isaiah warns Ahaz against doing so, but Ahaz chooses to protect himself against Syria and Israel by making an alliance with Assyria thus becoming a vassal of Assyria. Thereafter except for brief periods, Judah will have lost its existence as an independent state. In Chapter 7, Emmanuel is referred to, but remains a mystery. We learn a little more about in in **Chapter 8**, and in **Chapters 9** and 11 we get a much fuller picture. **Chapter 11** ends with images from the Exodus which is the touchstone of the salvation history in the Hebrew Scriptures. By using that image, Isaiah calls up the story of God as redeemer of Israel, and all of its implication for salvation history.

Chapter 12 is a Psalm of thanksgiving for God's help and rescue and the conclusion of, or coda for, the Book of Emmanuel, which was introduced in Chapter 6. In some way, not clearly defined because this is poetry, the song expresses that the wrath of God is turned away and the relationship with God restored in joy and thanksgiving. This Psalm should be compared to Chapter 6, in which Isaiah himself confesses his sin to God (a man of unclean lips living among a people of unclean lips), and God brings forgiveness for Isaiah through the touch of a hot coal to his lips. Now, in Chapter 12, for the remnant, something of the same sort has happened, the sin of the remnant has been forgiven so that the relationship with God can be restored. Similar to the Passover itself, where God saw the blood on the doorposts and stayed His hand, God will recognize His people and leave a remnant. Although the details are not clear, we know from the intervening chapters that this child, Emmanuel, will be instrumental in this restoration.

Chapter 13 begins a new subsection of the "King" section of the Book which will run through Chapter 24. The theme of this section is the goyim, or the Nations, including Judah, and contains prophecies of destruction for the various nations surrounding Judah. Isaiah uses these stories of judgment against these nations as illustrations of what God will do in the Eschaton. In this subsection judgment upon individual nations are linked with scenes of universal and cosmic Doom and assurances of better times for God's people. The link with 8th Century Judah is not broken altogether, but the historical horizon is extended far into the future. The first nation, in **Chapters 13 and 14**, is Babylon. Isaiah in Chapter 13 prophesies the conquest and eventual destruction and abandonment of Babylon, an event, over a century in the future, in 539 BC, with several specific details about that event including that the destruction will be at the hands of the Medes. During Isaiah's time, the Medes were allied with Babylon against Assyria. The Chapter consists of two poems, vs. 2-16, which do not mention Babylon, and vs. 17-22 which makes specific reference to conquest by the Medes. There is debate about whether the first poem is about Babylon specifically, or has a more general application. Both poems share, however, the fact that they describe the coming Day of the Lord. The end of Chapter 14 (vs. 24-32) and **Chapters 15 and 16** are, on their face, prophecies against Assyria, Philistia and Moab, ancient neighbors and adversaries of Israel. In **Chapter 16**, the exiles of Moab will seek shelter in Judah but be denied because of their arrogance, in this case the refusal to reject Moab's own gods and submit to the God of Abraham. As a result of

that refusal, they are destroyed. **Chapters 17 & 18** contain oracles ostensibly about Damascus (Syria) and Cush (Ethiopia), respectively. The first three verses of **Chapter 17** are about Damascus, but verses 4-11 are a poem about the fall of Israel due to the failure of Israel's alliance with Syria. Verses 12-14 are about the Assyrian attack on Jerusalem that failed suddenly. Taken together they are yet another lesson about trusting God rather than trusting in the devices of men.

In **Chapter 18-20**, Cush/Egypt is ostensibly the target. The historical setting is Cush/Egypt seeking an alliance with Judah which is rejected in part because of Isaiah's advice. Unlike Damascus, however, Cush will be preserved and even serve as an ambassador for God to the gentiles. Egypt serve here as an archetype of the gentiles generally who will suffer and be chastened by the Lord, but to whom God will send a savior. At least some of them will come to the Lord and worship with the Jewish people. These passages contain much Messianic and eschatological language.

Chapter 21 contains three prophecies, a longer one about Babylon, and two shorter poems about Edom and Arabia. The interpretation of the first oracle, about Babylon, is particularly difficult. In the standard interpretation it is about the Fall of Babylon to the Medes and Persians which will result in freedom for the exiled Jews and the ultimate return to Jerusalem. In the alternate interpretation, the lesson of this oracle is similar to that of Chapters 18-20, "don't trust in foreign alliances for salvation, trust only in the Lord."

Just like all the nations surrounding it, Jerusalem is the subject of a dark oracle, or *mashal*, (למשל) in **Chapter 22**. Isaiah tells the people of Judah and Jerusalem not to trust in strong walls or good leaders, but to trust in the Lord alone for their salvation.

Jhan reminds us that the meaning of most stories is found in its end. We know the end of the story is Jesus, which allows us to interpret Isaiah in light of that ending. The central theme of Isaiah, and indeed all of Scripture, is that, after the Fall, God still desired to live with mankind, but could not do so because of Sin. Scripture discloses that Jesus the Messiah is that plan by which God will bring us back from corruption and sin, and His anger will turn to comfort.

^b **Chapter 23** is the last of the oracles against specific nations in the region, in this case the cities of the Phoenician coast, particularly Tyre. (see map of Judah and the surrounding nations most of whom were the subject to oracles in this section of Isaiah, <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/564x/e8/9f/b2/e89fb26981de9c9fb10c79900e7f94f7.jpg>). Chapters 21-23 contain oracles about cities moving from East to West, and ending on the Mediterranean coast. Tyre will be brought down because of her arrogance.

^c 1Ki 10:11. **Tyre** is an ancient Phoenician port whose name means "rock" (see regional overview, <http://www.free-online-bible-study.org/images/Map-Ancient-Near-East.gif>). It was known as the birthplace of Europa and Dido of Carthage who gave aid to, and fell in love with, Aeneas of Troy on his way to the founding of Rome. Tyre was very ancient, founded c. 2750 B.C. according to Herodotus. Historically, the primary port centers were located on an Island just off the coast, one on the north and one on the south side of the Island. (<https://thelonghaulwithisaiah.files.wordpress.com/2017/05/tyre-09.jpg>) The port on the north is currently silted over, but the one on the south, in its day the best port in the eastern Mediterranean, is still in use. The Island center was heavily fortified since the wealthy trading city was the target of envy and greed by the powerful empires that surrounded it. It was never taken by siege until Alexander the Great conquered it in 332 B.C. Along with Sidon, they were the two greatest cities of Phoenicia. The Phoenicians were known as traders and colonizers, including colonies in Cyprus (Citium or Kittum), North Africa (Carthage) and Iberia (Tarshish). (see map of Phoenician trade routes and colonies, <http://www.ancient.eu/uploads/images/display-116.jpg?v=1485680399>) They were also known for extremely expensive purple dye made from the local Murex shellfish. Tyre, while mentioned several times in the Scriptures, and unlike Babylon, is viewed in different places sometimes as good and sometimes as evil. During the time of David, Israel made an alliance with Tyre which sent David wood from the fabled cedars of Lebanon. This practice continued under King Hiram during the time of Solomon with the wood being used to build the First Temple (1Ki 5:1-12; 2Ch 2:1-16). Long dominated by and tributary to the Assyrian Empire, it is known that Ashurnasirpal II (883-859 B.C.) restored Assyrian dominance over the rebellious cities of Phoenicia demanding tribute and humiliating them in battle. Although Tyre, safe on its island, could not be conquered, it was forced to pay tribute with the rest of the coastal cities. Tyre's King during much of this period was likely Ithoba'al the father of Jezebel the wife of King Ahab of Israel (1Ki 16:31). Tyre remained tributary to Assyria and during the reign of Sennacherib, who would also besiege Jerusalem in 701 B.C., was deprived of both its colony on Cyprus and several of its nearby coastal territories. Tyre was punished again after rebelling in 671 B.C. before Assyria again attacked Egypt. In 612 B.C. the Babylonians and Medes attacked and conquered Nineveh after which Tyre again, though only briefly, recovered much of its power and independence. King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon besieged Tyre in 598/597 B.C., the year Babylon first conquered Jerusalem and appointed Zedekiah as his regent. The siege lasted 13 years until Tyre finally agreed to Babylonian dominance in 595/584 B.C. As a result of this, Tyre lost its overseas colonies which would now be dominated by Carthage [the subsequent wars between Carthage and its colonies and Rome were called the Punic Wars because of Carthage's Phoenician origins]. When Babylon fell to the Medes and Persians in 539 B.C., the Persians succeeded to the Babylonian Empire, including Tyre and Jerusalem. Tyre again supplied the wood for the building of the Second Temple when the Exiles first returned to Jerusalem during the time of Zerubbabel, governor of Jerusalem and an ancestor of Jesus in the line of David (2Ch 36:22-23; Ezra 3). See, Ezk 26-28 for a description of the impending fall of Tyre though the specific historical context is not specified. The Messiah visited Tyre healing a gentile woman (Mt 15:21; Mk 7:24).

^d **Tarshish** is likely a colony of Tyre, in Iberia (modern day Spain and Portugal) where the largest ships of the time were constructed. 1Ki 10:22; Is 2:12-16. It is also suggested that it might refer to Tarsus, a strategic city located on about 5 miles up the navigable River Cadnos in Cilicia. Tarsus was an important export center for the mineral wealth of the mountains of Cilicia. Tarsus is not, however, known for shipbuilding which would make this interpretation less likely.

^e **Cyprus** is a large Island located in the Mediterranean south of present day Turkey and west of the coast of the Levant. At the time it was an important source of copper. The word translated Cyprus here and in verse 12 is Kittim (כִּיִּם) in the Hebrew, Citium in Latin. It was established as a colony of Tyre. Kittim was the son of Javan, the grandson of Japheth, and Noah's great-grandson, Gn 10:4.

^f (1) Jsh 19:28-30; 1Ki 5:1-18; Is 13:1; Jr 47:3-4, 25:15-38, 27:2-3; Ezk 26:1-28:24; Jl 3:4-8; Am 1:9-10; Zec 9:2-4; 1Ki 22:48; Is 2:12-16, 24:10; Jr 2:10; 1Ki 10:22; Is 23:12. During this historical time, the ships of Tarshish were known as the largest trading vessels in the world, and thus able to carry the most cargo the farthest. In this poetry, it is not literally the ships who cry, but rather, using personification, those who master and sail them, the merchants and people of Tyre and her colonies. The Phoenicians had colonized Kittim on Cyprus. Those on the ships returning to Tyre from Cyprus are being warned that things have not gone well in their home city. The Septuagint reads, "The word concerning Tyre. Howl, you ships of Carthage; for she has perished, and men no longer arrive from the land of the Citians; she is led captive."

^g **Sidon** was a coastal city in Phoenicia about 23 miles north of Tyre, likely ruled for much of its existence by the same ruling family as Tyre. Sidon is sometimes used as a synonym for all of Phoenicia, 1Ki 16:31. According to Gn 10:15 it is considered the "first born of Canaan".

^h (2) Is 47:5; Gn 10:15; Jsh 19:28; Jr 25:22, 27:2-3; Ezk 27:8, 32:30; Jl 3:4; Zec 9:2. The image in this verse is of a large port city which has been abandoned. All the hustle and bustle of economic activity, which is what made the place great, is gone. The Septuagint for vs. 2-3 reads, "To whom have the inhabitants of the island become like, the merchants of Phoenice, passing over the sea 3 in great waters, a generation of merchants? As when the harvest is gathered in, so are these traders with the nations."

ⁱ **Shihor** is a river or body of water in the northeast Nile Delta region close to where invaders from Assyria or Babylon would first arrive, though its precise location is uncertain.

^j (3) Is 19:7-9; Jsh 13:3; 1Ch 13:5; Jr 2:18; Ezk 27:3-23. The Hebrew word for coast or coastlands sometimes refers to the coastal areas of the entire known world. The coastal, trading, areas of the known, Mediterranean, world are being told that the trade which had been carried on by Tyre, which is the source of their wealth, is going away. The source of Egypt's wealth is the grain grown in the Nile valley which the merchants of Tyre traded for other goods, so Egypt would lose the markets for its goods.

^k **Citadel of the Sea** corresponds to the island fortress of Tyre, not to Sidon, though both Tyre and Sidon had overseas colonies.

^l (4) Gn 10:15-19; Jsh 11:8; Jdg 10:6; Jr 25:22, 27:3, 47:4; Ezk 28:21-22. The children of the merchants have been killed, and those who have survived are running away.

^m (5) Ex 15:14-16; Jsh 2:9-11. The strong relationship between Tyre and Egypt goes back at least until 1600 B.C. Tyre carried the grain of Egypt throughout the Mediterranean region trading it for valuable commodities from around the region and become rich in the process. King Ethba'al of Tyre (c. 940-908 B.C.) built the southern port in Tyre named the Egyptian Port. Not only will this valuable trade go away, but the same people who did this to Tyre will be coming to Egypt as well.

ⁿ (6) 1Ki 10:22; Ps 48:7. Tyre had formed colonies around the Mediterranean, and now its merchants are being told to flee to these colonies. Perhaps also it is an indication of the center of the Mediterranean trade moving from Tyre to some of those colonies such as Carthage. The annals of Sennacherib of Assyria speak of King Luli of Tyre and Sidon fleeing to Cyprus in 701 B.C. in advance of the Assyrians. The Septuagint reads, "Depart to Carthage. Howl, you that dwell in this island."

^o (7) Gn 10:15; Is 22:2, 32:13. Tyre settled many colonies around the Mediterranean, see note on Tyre above. The Septuagint reads, "Was not this your pride from the beginning, before she was given up?"

^p (8) Ezk 28:2; Rv 18:23. The wealth and power of Tyre, and its crucial status as the trading nation of the time, allowed it great political influence. It would also likely have named the rulers of its various colonies around the region. The Septuagint reads, "Who has devised this counsel against Tyre. Is she inferior? Or has she no strength? Her merchants were the glorious princes of the earth."

^q (9) Is 2:11, 13:11; Jb 40:11-12; Dn 4:37; Ezk 28:7; Lk 1:52; Is 5:13, 9:15. The destruction of Tyre comes at the hand of the Lord because of its pride and arrogance.

^r The reference to a “**daughter of Tarshish**” is difficult to explain. Daughter of Tyre would make more sense in parallel to “daughter of Sidon” in verse 12.

^s **(10)** The Nile famously flooded its banks annually depositing fresh soil and moisture in the Nile Valley. This extremely reliable annual flood was the source of Egypt’s wealth as the granary for the region, the grain that Tyre would trade. These floods were thus the source of wealth for both Egypt and Tyre. The conquest of Tyre and Sidon would allow their colonies such as Tarshish to assert their independence. The competition would decrease the importance of Tyre and Sidon as trading centers. The Septuagint reads, “Till your land; for ships no more come out of Carthage.”

^t **(11)** Ex 14:21; Is 14:26, 19:25, 50:2, 13:13, 25:2; Zec 9:3-4; Jb 12:24. Canaan here likely refers to Phoenicia as a whole since the south had long since been conquered by the Israelites. The Septuagint reads, “And your hand prevails no more by sea, which troubled kings; the Lord of hosts has given a command concerning Canaan, to destroy the strength thereof.”

^u **(12)** Ezk 26:13-14, 28:21; Rv 18:22; Is 23:1. The Septuagint reads, “And men shall say, You shall no longer at all continue to insult and injure the daughter of Sidon; and if you depart to the Citians, neither there shall you have rest.”

^v **(13)** Is 10:5-7, 13:21, 18:6, 47:1, 48:14; 2Ki 25:1. The Hebrew here is very difficult and the translation uncertain. Chaldeans almost certainly refers to the Babylonians and is so rendered in some translations. It is perhaps a warning that Babylon rebelled against Assyria and was defeated, so Tyre should fear the same fate. The Septuagint reads, “And if you depart to the land of the Chaldeans, this also is laid waste by the Assyrians, for her wall is fallen.”

^w **(14)** Is 2:16; Ezk 27:25-26. The Septuagint reads, “And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be left seventy years, as the time of a king, as the time of a man; and it shall come to pass after seventy years, that Tyre shall be as the song of a harlot.”

^x **(15)** Jr 25:11-22; Pr 7:11-13. Seventy years is often a round figure referring to a lifetime (Ps 90:10) and could refer to the period between the surrender to Sennacherib in 701 B.C. and the fall of Nineveh, primary city of Assyria, in 612 B.C. This would be contemporaneous with Isaiah and fit the narrative, though other interpretations are possible including the time between the surrender to Nebuchadnezzar in 597 B.C. and the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C. after which Tyre regained some of its power and wealth until the conquest by Alexander in 332 B.C. The image of Tyre as a prostitute likely refers to her role as a center of commerce and that she is given over to the pursuit of wealth. As stated in the note to verse 10, Tyre’s former colonies are now her competitors and she must struggle to regain her former wealth and influence.

^y **(16)** The forgotten prostitute must sing alluring songs to attract the attention of men, things she might not have needed to do in the days of her youth.

^z **(17)** Jr 25:11-22; Rv 17:1-2; Eze 16:26; Ezk 16:25-29; Nah 3:4. A visit from God can mean a number of things, and be a good or bad event for the people visited, but in this case it perhaps means that Tyre will be restored. The Septuagint reads, “And it shall come to pass after the seventy years, that God will visit Tyre, and she shall be again restored to her primitive state, and she shall be a mart for all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth.”

^{aa} **(18)** Ps 72:10-11; Is 60:5-9; Mi 4:13; Ex 28:36; Zec 14:20. The trees of Lebanon will be used to build the Second Temple. See note on Tyre above. There is a sense here that after being restored Tyre will use its wealth and restored influence for the Lord. That may refer to the use of the trees to build the Second Temple or to something else. Tyre may have some function in rebuilding the Temple again when the Messiah returns. The Septuagint reads, “And her trade and her gain shall be holiness to the Lord; it shall not be gathered for them, but for those that dwell before the Lord, even all her trade, to eat and drink and be filled, and for a covenant and a memorial before the Lord.”