

Israelites of the time of Isaiah thought that any city possessing these advantages deserved to be destroyed.

The chapter divides naturally into four sections:

1. Tyre's catastrophe, verses 1-7.
2. The source of Tyre's catastrophe, verses 8-14.
3. Her restoration, verses 15-17.
4. Her eventual usefulness, verse 18.

We should observe the perspective of the first seven verses. The manner of presentation is most interesting. First, however, we must note the meaning of a few terms.

Verse 1 speaks of "ships of Tarshish." This term originally described the great Phoenician ships which sailed to Tartessus in Spain. When Jonah tried to flee from the presence of the Lord, he took passage in one of them (Jonah 1:3).

Another name in verse 1 is Chittim. This name designates the people who inhabited Cyprus and other islands or coastlands of the eastern Mediterranean.

Zidon (an archaic English spelling of Sidon) is mentioned in Verses 2, 4, and 12. Verse 12 suggests that Tyre is a daughter of Sidon.

Sihor, in verse 3, is a name for the river of Egypt. The word translated "river" in this verse is not the common word for river, but one which usually refers to the Nile.

Now let us note the perspective of this section. Verse 1 is addressed to the ships of Tarshish; "from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them."

The situation is plain. Great ships are returning to their homeland from distant Spain. They are imagined to have come as far as Cyprus. Here a terrible piece of news awaits them: "Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in." A frightful calamity has befallen their homeland.

Some commentators think of verse 2 and verse 6 as addressed to Tyre itself, since at least part of it was on an island. A preferable explanation is to consider that they are addressed to the island where the returning ships hear the bad news. This fits better with the statement that the one addressed has been replenished by the merchants of Sidon, who pass over the sea. Sidon is probably thought of here as