

nothing in common with our English word "visit." It does not mean to make a call or spend an hour gossiping. No English word exactly represents this Hebrew word. It has the idea of a superior power coming in and making a forceful change in the situation. It may be a change either for the better or for the worse (Cf. Numbers 14:18; Ruth 1:6; 1 Samuel 2:21; Amos 3:14). The idea is not contained in the modern English word "visit," but we have derived from it the word "visitation," which retains one portion of its meaning. We speak of a visitation of God, as indicating a terrible calamity, but this Hebrew word may point to a great change in either direction -- to something better or to something worse. Verse 17 says that the reestablishment of Tyre will come because the Lord will "visit" Tyre. It is God who will change the condition of the city from one that is forgotten to one whose greatness is again established.

Tyre "shall return to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. This is probably not so much a figure for wicked acts as for a promiscuity of relationships; she will enter into all kind of relations with all kinds of nations without regard to their character or viewpoint. She will have commercial relations with all the nations on the face of the earth. Tyre is again to be as great and powerful as before.

Her Eventual Usefulness

Verse 18 is one of those verses in which Isaiah's individuality stands out most strongly. We see here that he has not simply been denouncing Tyre because it was a foreign city which was often hostile to the Jews. He was not simply denouncing it because it was a merchant city, nor was he attacking mercantile life in itself. He was depicting the fate of a city which had been living in its own pride and for purposes contrary to the will of God. In verse 18 he states that eventually the merchandise and the hire of Tyre is going to be "holiness to the Lord." Eventually a time is coming when all this greatness is not to be destroyed, but to be made useful. It will not be treasured or laid up; it will be for those who dwell before the Lord, "to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing."