EZEKIEL 27

The Shipwreck of Tyre: The Proud Ship

“Your rowers have brought you Into great waters; The east wind has broken you In the heart of the seas.”
EZEKIEL 27:26

Where Ezekiel has brought us

1. Chapter 27 continues the oracle against Tyre that began in 26:1, dated in the eleventh year, about 587/586 BC.

2. Ezekiel pictures the proud sea-city as a magnificent merchant ship.

“I Am Perfect in Beauty”

God orders a funeral song for a city that is still boasting.

EZEKIEL 27:3

and say to Tyre, who dwells at the entrance to the sea, merchant of the peoples to many coastlands, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “O Tyre, you have said, ‘I am perfect in beauty.’

DAVID GUZIK

Block, in Guzik, notes that the verb translated “dwells” in verse 3 carries the sense of sitting enthroned — Tyre sat at the entrance to the sea like a queen on a throne and ruled the seas.

WHAT IT MEANS

A qinah was a funeral song, sung for the dead. God tells Ezekiel to sing one over Tyre while the city is still rich, proud and alive.

perfect (כָּלִיל)
KALIL · “PERFECT”

“O Tyre, you have said, 'I am perfect in beauty'” (v3). Kalil means complete, entire, whole — nothing missing.

The Glorious Ship

The best materials and the best men of the known world built and crewed her.

EZEKIEL 27:4

"Your borders are in the heart of the seas; Your builders have perfected your beauty.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik explains the central picture: Tyre as a magnificent ship, each part standing for some part of its power.

WHAT IT MEANS

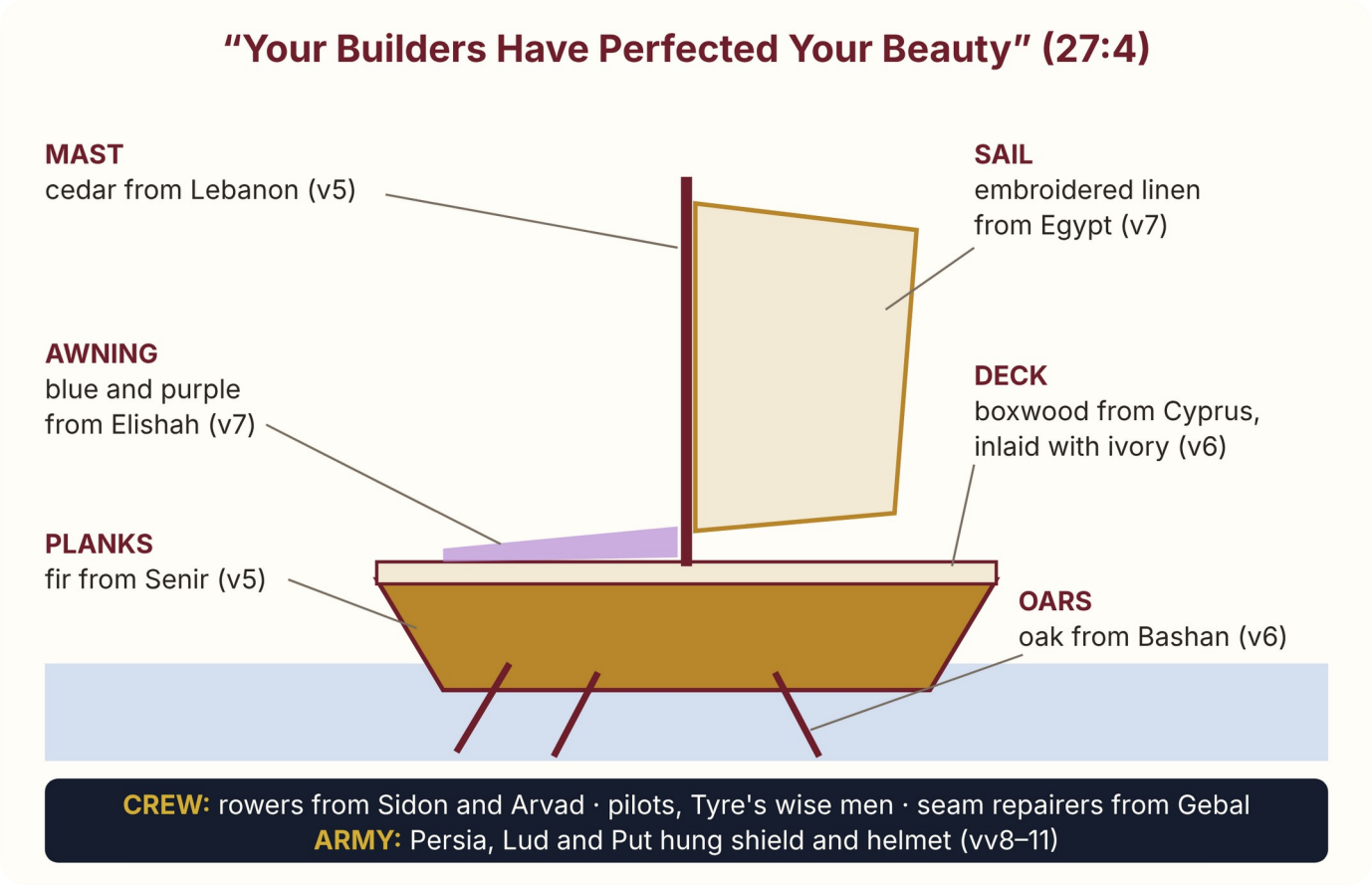
"Your builders have perfected your beauty" (v4). Verses 4–11 are a shipbuilder's dream: planks of fir, a cedar mast, oak oars, an ivory-inlaid deck, an embroidered linen sail that "became your distinguishing mark" (v7).

pilots (חֹבֵל)

CHOBEL · "PILOTS"

"Your wise men, O Tyre, were aboard; they were your pilots" (v8). A chobel is a sailor or ship's helmsman, a word that comes from the word for rope — the man who handles the lines and steers.

Tyre the Ship



Ezekiel 27:4–11 builds Tyre as a merchant ship from the finest materials and crew of the known world.

The Manifest: The Whole World's Goods

Silver, horses, spices, gold — and the lives of men. God is nowhere on the list.

EZEKIEL 27:12

"Tarshish was your customer because of the abundance of all kinds of wealth; with silver, iron, tin and lead they paid for your wares.

DAVID GUZIK

Clarke, in Guzik, says the trade records are as orderly 'as they could have been in a European custom-house.'

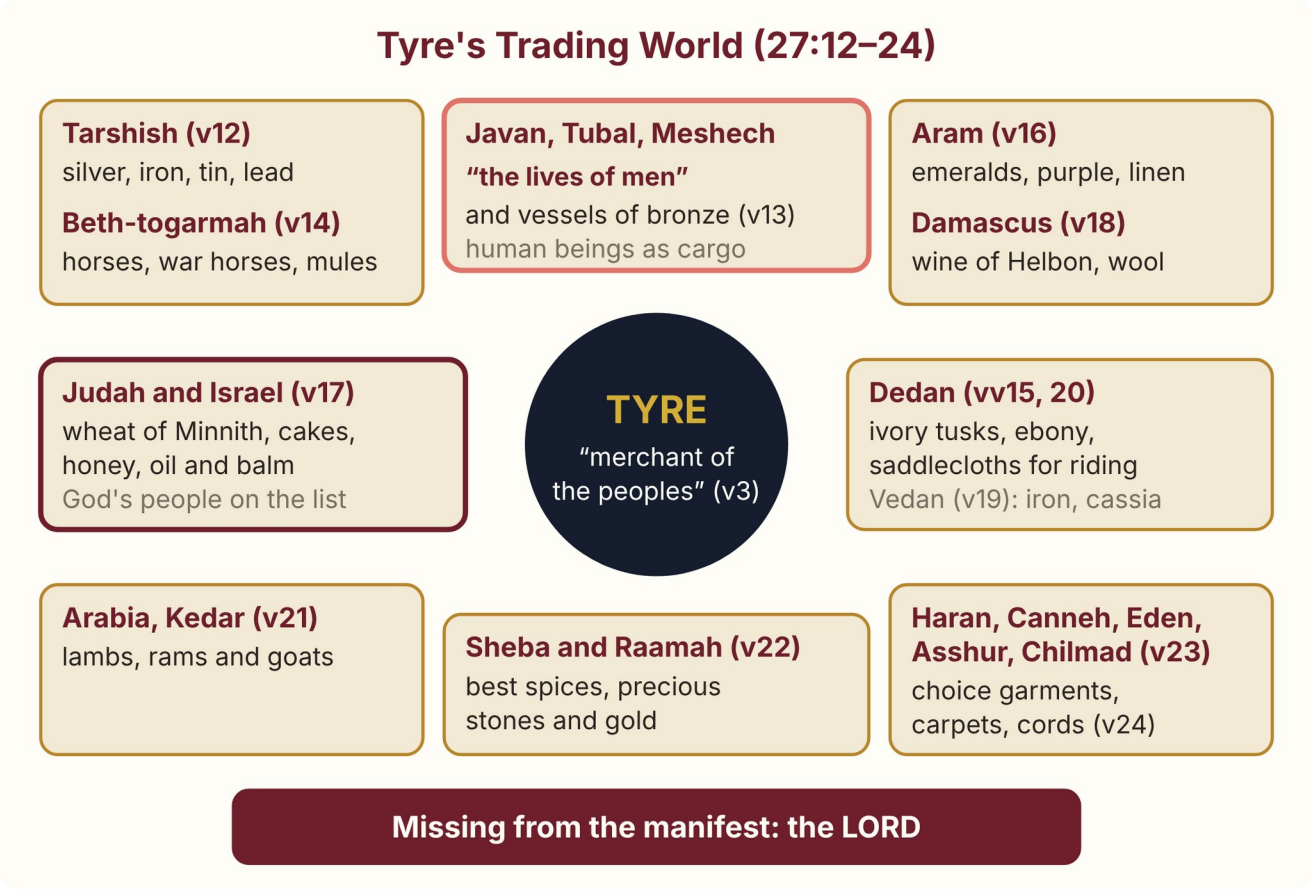
WHAT IT MEANS

The trade list reaches from Tarshish (likely southern Spain) to Asia Minor, Armenia, Syria, Arabia and Mesopotamia — much of the world of Genesis 10.

traders (סָחַר)
SACHAR · "TRADERS"

Sachar means to travel about as a merchant, to trade. With rakal (H7402, merchant) and maʿarab (H4627, merchandise, wares), it fills almost every verse from 12 to 24: "customer," "traders," "paid for your wares."

The Ship's Manifest



Ezekiel 27:12–24 lists Tyre's trading partners and their goods — and never once mentions God.

The East Wind

Fully loaded and far out at sea, the ship is broken by one wind and goes down with everything.

EZEKIEL 27:25

"The ships of Tarshish were the carriers for your merchandise. And you were filled and were very glorious In the heart of the seas.

DAVID GUZIK

God is not named in the shipwreck, but Guzik points to Psalm 48:7, where God breaks the ships of Tarshish with an east wind — the wind belongs to Him.

WHAT IT MEANS

"You were filled and were very glorious In the heart of the seas" (v25). The ship is loaded to the waterline and sailing proud.

east wind (קָדִים)
QADIM · "EAST WIND"

"The east wind has broken you In the heart of the seas" (v26). Qadim means the east, and then the scorching desert wind that blew from it — hot, violent and dry.

The World Mourns on the Shore

Sailors weep, shave their heads and sing — "Who is like Tyre?" — and the kings are horribly afraid.

EZEKIEL 27:29

"All who handle the oar, The sailors and all the pilots of the sea Will come down from their ships; They will stand on the land,

DAVID GUZIK

Feinberg, in Guzik, notes that shaving the head for the dead (v31) was forbidden to Israel (Deut 14:1). Block, in Guzik, likens Tyre's sinking to a 'Titanic' of the seas.

WHAT IT MEANS

The sailors of every other ship come ashore and grieve with every sign of mourning — dust on the head, wallowing in ashes, shaved heads, sackcloth (vv30–31).

lamentation (קִינָה)
QINAH · "LAMENTATION"

The chapter began with God ordering a qinah (v2); it ends with the sailors singing one (v32). A qinah is a dirge, a funeral song, often with a limping rhythm — a long line followed by a short one, like a sob.

What to carry from this chapter

1

A funeral for the living.

God orders a qinah over Tyre while it is still at its height — His word makes the end certain (v2).

2

Pride sounds like satisfaction.

“I am perfect in beauty” (v3) — kalil, complete, nothing missing.

3

Enthroned on the sea.

Block: the verb “dwells” (v3) carries the sense of sitting enthroned.

4

A goodly ship.

Trapp: Tyre is ‘fitly here compared to a goodly ship, and her desolation to a dismal shipwreck.’

More to carry

5

People are not cargo.

Javan, Tubal and Meshech paid “with the lives of men” (v13) — a violation of God's image in man.

6

God left off the list.

Thirteen verses of trade (vv12–24), and the LORD is never mentioned.

7

One east wind.

Qadim, the scorching desert wind, breaks the finest ship afloat (v26).

8

History's last word.

Block: ‘The Lord of history always has the last word.’

Talk it through

1. Tyre said, “I am perfect in beauty” (v3). What have I built that I quietly take credit for instead of thanking God?

2. The ship had the best wood, crew and soldiers (vv5–11). What “best materials” have I been counting on to keep my life afloat?

3. Tyre traded “the lives of men” (v13). Where do people get treated as cargo today — and where have I used people to get what I wanted?

4. “The east wind has broken you” (v26). Describe a storm that sank something in your life. What was God showing you through it?

5. The kings mourned their lost profits more than Tyre (vv33–35). What does my grief over losses reveal about what I really loved?

CLOSING

Tyre had the best wood, the best crew, the best soldiers and the richest customers, and one wind broke it all. The same God who sent the east wind is the One Jesus showed Himself to be on the Sea of Galilee, rebuking the wind and the waves. As Meyer, in Guzik, put it: 'See to it that Christ is on board.'

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides and reflection journal: see the Ezekiel study page.