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Andrew M. Davis

Sermon Notes

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The Merchants of Tyre Stripped of their Glory

Isaiah 23:1-18

Every year, various large ports vie for the honor of being called the “busiest port in the world”; since 2005, Shanghai, China has claimed the title based on cargo tonnage: over 500,000 tons of cargo flow through Shanghai by sea every year!!

A different claim is made by Singapore, number one based on total shipping tonnage; as a matter of fact, half of the world’s supply of crude oil is shipped through Singapore... Singapore is connected to over 600 ports in 123 countries over six continents

The flow of materials through such massive and frantically busy ports like Shanghai and Singapore, Hong Kong and Rotterdam is essential to our international economy... the sea has always been the easiest and most inexpensive way to transport goods

For this reason, large cities have almost with only a few exceptions been built by large bodies of water or large rivers...

This phenomenon is ancient... it goes back millennia, and is the focus of this morning’s prophecy against the Port City of Tyre

Tyre represents human striving after wealth... after the GOODS OF THE EARTH... the material possessions that will make its people comfortable and happy, prosperous and satisfied

It also represents human PRIDE... the great enemy of God

In Isaiah 23, God speaks through His prophet Isaiah a word of destruction against the busiest seaport of Isaiah’s time... the city of Tyre

I. Tyre Described: A Wealthy Merchant City

A. Two Patterns of World Dominance: Military and Economic

1. Assyria and Babylon represent MILITARY DOMINANCE

a. Conquest achieved by violence and military strength

b. The “Four Beasts” of Daniel are mighty empires... represented as beasts because they rip their enemies to shreds

Daniel 7:5 And there before me was a second beast, which looked like a bear. It was raised up on one of its sides, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and eat your fill of flesh!'

Daniel 7:7 After that, in my vision at night I looked, and there before me was a fourth beast-- terrifying and frightening and very powerful. It had large iron teeth; it crushed and devoured its victims and trampled underfoot whatever was left. It was different from all the former beasts, and it had ten horns.

- c. These world conquerors build up their military strength and skill... they stockpile weapons and train vast armies, all to satisfy the lust for conquest that flames the heart of their ambitious king
- d. When the time is right, they sweep over their borders and invade the peaceful dwelling places of their neighbors and plunder them... as Ezekiel the prophet described:

Ezekiel 38:11-12 You will say, "I will invade a land of unwalled villages; I will attack a peaceful and unsuspecting people-- all of them living without walls and without gates and bars. ¹² I will plunder and loot and turn my hand against the resettled ruins and the people gathered from the nations, rich in livestock and goods, living at the center of the land."

- e. So, the empires of Assyria and Babylon, and later the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans, represent this kind of human dominance... dominance of the world BY CONQUEST
- 2. Tyre represents economic dominance... it is a MERCHANT CITY; through friendly relations with their neighbors, they build relationships and establish networks with all for TRADE

B. What was Tyre?

1. Tyre was a port city on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, in modern-day Lebanon
2. It was established approximately 28 centuries before the birth of Christ by the sea-faring Phoenicians
3. Originally, it consisted of two distinct urban centers—one on the mainland, and one on a pair of rocky islands just off the coast... like Alcatraz in the San Francisco bay
4. King Hiram of Tyre had connected these two islands by means of an embankment, and had also brought drinking water to the island port city

5. The island port city had two harbors, one on the north side, and the other on the south; the northern harbor was acclaimed to be one of the best harbors in the eastern Mediterranean
6. It was from this base that the ships of Tyre began sailing out into the waters of the Mediterranean to seek trading partners... and they FOUND THEM!!! Ezekiel lists the trading partners of Tyre in detail, likening Tyre itself to a trading vessel made of materials from all over that part of the world:

Ezekiel 27:3-25 Say to Tyre, situated at the gateway to the sea, merchant of peoples on many coasts, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "'You say, O Tyre, "I am perfect in beauty." ⁴ Your domain was on the high seas; your builders brought your beauty to perfection. ⁵ They made all your timbers of pine trees from Senir; they took a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for you. ⁶ Of oaks from Bashan they made your oars; of cypress wood from the coasts of Cyprus they made your deck, inlaid with ivory. ⁷ Fine embroidered linen from Egypt was your sail and served as your banner; your awnings were of blue and purple from the coasts of Elishah.... ¹² "'Tarshish did business with you because of your great wealth of goods; they exchanged silver, iron, tin and lead for your merchandise. ¹³ "'Greece, Tubal and Meshech traded with you; they exchanged slaves and articles of bronze for your wares. ¹⁴ "'Men of Beth Togarmah exchanged work horses, war horses and mules for your merchandise. ¹⁵ "'The men of Rhodes traded with you, and many coastlands were your customers; they paid you with ivory tusks and ebony. ¹⁶ "'Aram did business with you because of your many products; they exchanged turquoise, purple fabric, embroidered work, fine linen, coral and rubies for your merchandise. ¹⁷ "'Judah and Israel traded with you; they exchanged wheat from Minnith and confections, honey, oil and balm for your wares. ¹⁸ "'Damascus, because of your many products and great wealth of goods, did business with you in wine from Helbon and wool from Zahar. ¹⁹ "'Danites and Greeks from Uzal bought your merchandise; they exchanged wrought iron, cassia and calamus for your wares. ²⁰ "'Dedan traded in saddle blankets with you. ²¹ "'Arabia and all the princes of Kedar were your customers; they did business with you in lambs, rams and goats. ²² "'The merchants of Sheba and Raamah traded with you; for your merchandise they exchanged the finest of all kinds of spices and precious stones, and gold. ²³ "'Haran, Canneh and Eden and merchants of Sheba, Asshur and Kilmad traded with you. ²⁴ In your marketplace they traded with you beautiful garments, blue fabric, embroidered work and multicolored rugs with cords twisted and tightly knotted. ²⁵ "'The ships of Tarshish serve as carriers for your wares. You are filled with heavy cargo in the heart of the sea.

7. They established trading colonies all along the coastline of the eastern Mediterranean and made a network of trading relationships with all those peoples... they in effect established a TRADE MONOPOLY in the Mediterranean Sea

8. Tyre established Carthage right across from Sicily and Carthage eventually rose to challenge Rome for supremacy in the ancient world... Hannibal, the Carthaginian general, actually crossed the Alps and invaded northern Italy with elephants and a well-trained army and came very close to conquering Rome and would have prevented the rise of the Roman Empire, thus changing the course of history in an incalculable way
9. But that was CARTHAGE, not Tyre... Tyre stuck with trade, and became fabulously wealthy and influential because of it
10. Our text makes these facts clear:

Isaiah 23:2-3 Be still, O inhabitants of the coast; the merchants of Sidon, who cross the sea, have filled you. ³ And on many waters your revenue was the grain of Shihor, the harvest of the Nile; you were the merchant of the nations.

Isaiah 23:8 Who has purposed this against Tyre, the bestower of crowns, whose merchants were princes, whose traders were the honored of the earth?

Isaiah 23:7 Is this your city of revelry, the old, old city, whose feet have taken her to settle in far-off lands?

- C. Tyre a Fortress (vs. 11 speaks of her “fortresses”.. referring to the land-based city AND the island city)
 1. Tyre, in order to protect all its silver and gold and merchandise, built up mighty walls and localized military strength
 2. In many places in scripture, Tyre is called a “fortress”... very hard to capture, very hard to attack
 3. In fact, the island city’s walls went right up to the sea... how do you attack a seafaring nation whose walls prevent any access whatsoever, and which can be constantly resupplied by sea?? If you try to besiege them, they can get food and water and military supplies by sea at night... if all you have is a land-based army, you have NO CHANCE of destroying the island fortress
- D. Initially a Good Relationship with Israel
 1. Tyre sought to have good relationships with EVERYONE...
 2. If you’re in sales, and your make your living by trade, it behooves you to have a good relationship with anyone you might do business with
 3. That included Israel in the days of David and Solomon
 - a. Hiram, King of Tyre, provided materials for David to build his palace

2 Samuel 5:11 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar logs and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built a palace for David.

- b. After the death of David, Hiram provided materials for Solomon to build the temple

1 Kings 5:1 Now Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants to Solomon when he heard that they had anointed him king in place of his father, for Hiram always loved David.

- 4. Even in the days of Ezra, it was the people of Tyre and Sidon (the neighboring port city) that supplied the materials for the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 3:7)

E. BUT Evidence of the Decaying Relationship as Well

- 1. Tyre began to be mentioned as an enemy of the people of God
- 2. Everything they did was self-serving; they weren't truly allies but merely trading partners
- 3. When God's judgment came down on His people for their failure to keep His laws, they joined the other pagan neighbors in mocking and celebrating it
- 4. They especially celebrated the misfortune of Jerusalem because it meant better economic prospects for itself

Ezekiel 26:2-3 "Son of man, because Tyre has said of Jerusalem, 'Aha! The gate to the nations is broken, and its doors have swung open to me; now that she lies in ruins I will prosper,'³ therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring many nations against you, like the sea casting up its waves.

II. Tyre Exposed: A Satanic Stronghold

A. Ezekiel 26-27 Major Sections of Prophecy Against Tyre

B. Ezekiel 28: A Lamentation Against the "King of Tyre"

- 1. The language soars beyond that of ordinary prophecy
- 2. It seems like God is speaking to someone far more significant than the mere King of a Port City like Tyre
- 3. Many commentators believe that the true "King of Tyre" is unmasked in Ezekiel 28: Satan himself

Ezekiel 28:12-18 "Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "'You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. ¹³ You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: ruby, topaz and emerald, chrysolite, onyx and jasper, sapphire, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. ¹⁴ You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. ¹⁵ You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. ¹⁶ Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. ¹⁷ Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings. ¹⁸ By your many sins and dishonest trade you have desecrated your sanctuaries.

- C. Satan is the “God of this Age”... therefore, the God of commerce, of money, of material greed and idolatrous pursuit of the sparkly things of this age
- D. Two Prophecies About Satan in the Old Testament
 - 1. Lament Against the King of Babylon in Isaiah 14
 - 2. Lament Against the King of Tyre in Ezekiel 28
 - 3. In both cases... Satan is the power behind the throne... the god of this age who loves to conceal himself
- E. God is Not Deceived... He Knows How Satan is Manipulating Human Greed to Craft a Worldwide System of Military Conquest and Economic Prosperity
- F. Judgment from God Will Fall on All of It

III. Tyre Destroyed: A Divine Punishment

A. The Punishment Declared by Isaiah the Prophet

- 1. In our text

Isaiah 23:1 An oracle concerning Tyre: Wail, O ships of Tarshish! For Tyre is destroyed and left without house or harbor. From the land of Cyprus word has come to them.

- 2. The reaction from trading partners detailed: Isaiah’s prophecy is mostly from the perspective of Tyre’s trading partners

Isaiah 23:1-6 *Wail, O ships of Tarshish! For Tyre is destroyed and left without house or harbor. From the land of Cyprus word has come to them. ² Be silent, you people of the island and you merchants of Sidon, whom the seafarers have enriched. ³ On the great waters came the grain of the Shihor; the harvest of the Nile was the revenue of Tyre, and she became the marketplace of the nations. ⁴ Be ashamed, O Sidon, and you, O fortress of the sea, for the sea has spoken: "I have neither been in labor nor given birth; I have neither reared sons nor brought up daughters." ⁵ When word comes to Egypt, they will be in anguish at the report from Tyre. ⁶ Cross over to Tarshish; wail, you people of the island.*

Isaiah 23:10 *Till your land as along the Nile, O Daughter of Tarshish, for you no longer have a harbor.*

Isaiah 23:14 *Wail, you ships of Tarshish; your fortress is destroyed!*

- a. Tarshish is a distant port that traded with Tyre... possibly as far as Spain
- b. Cyprus is a large island in the eastern Mediterranean... a vigorous trading partner with Tyre
- c. Egypt is mentioned prominently: the grain of the Nile was carried to Tyre and traded there
- d. But now, all these trading partners get the devastating news that Tyre has been destroyed

B. The Punishment Described in Greater Detail in Ezekiel 26

Ezekiel 26:3-14 *this is what the Sovereign LORD says: I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring many nations against you, like the sea casting up its waves. ⁴ They will destroy the walls of Tyre and pull down her towers; I will scrape away her rubble and make her a bare rock. ⁵ Out in the sea she will become a place to spread fishnets, for I have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD. She will become plunder for the nations, ⁶ and her settlements on the mainland will be ravaged by the sword. Then they will know that I am the LORD. ⁷ "For this is what the Sovereign LORD says: From the north I am going to bring against Tyre Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, with horses and chariots, with horsemen and a great army. ⁸ He will ravage your settlements on the mainland with the sword; he will set up siege works against you, build a ramp up to your walls and raise his shields against you. ⁹ He will direct the blows of his battering rams against your walls and demolish your towers with his weapons. ¹⁰ His horses will be so many that they will cover you with dust. Your walls will tremble at the noise of the war horses, wagons and chariots when he enters your gates as men enter a city whose walls have been broken through. ¹¹ The hoofs of his horses will trample all your streets; he will kill your people with the sword, and your strong pillars will fall to the ground. ¹² They will plunder your wealth and loot your merchandise; they will break down your walls and demolish your fine houses and throw your stones, timber and rubble*

into the sea. ¹³ I will put an end to your noisy songs, and the music of your harps will be heard no more. ¹⁴ I will make you a bare rock, and you will become a place to spread fishnets. You will never be rebuilt, for I the LORD have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD.

1. Summary:

- a. Nebuchadnezzar will destroy the mainland city of Tyre (Ezekiel 26:8)
- b. He will make it a bare rock, flat like the top of a rock (Ezekiel 26:4)
- c. Fishermen will spread nets over the site (Ezekiel 26:5)
- d. The debris will be thrown into the water (Ezekiel 26:12)
- e. It will never be rebuilt (Ezekiel 26:14)

C. The Punishment Decreed by Almighty God

Isaiah 23:8-9 Who planned this against Tyre, the bestower of crowns, whose merchants are princes, whose traders are renowned in the earth? ⁹ The LORD Almighty planned it, to bring low the pride of all glory and to humble all who are renowned on the earth.

Isaiah 23:11-12 The LORD has stretched out his hand over the sea and made its kingdoms tremble. He has given an order concerning Phoenicia that her fortresses be destroyed. ¹² He said, "No more of your reveling, O Virgin Daughter of Sidon, now crushed!" "Up, cross over to Cyprus; even there you will find no rest."

D. The Reason for the Decree: The Humbling of All Human Pride

1. Tyre is called the “bestower of crowns”... the “kingmaker” in effect
2. Tyre’s merchants were princes and renowned on the earth
3. SO... God did this to lay human pride down

Isaiah 23:8-9 Who planned this against Tyre, the bestower of crowns, whose merchants are princes, whose traders are renowned in the earth? ⁹ The LORD Almighty planned it, to bring low the pride of all glory and to humble all who are renowned on the earth.

E. The Punishment Executed by Invading Armies... Ezekiel Tells Us It Will Be Nebuchadnezzar

Isaiah 23:13 Look at the land of the Babylonians, this people that is now of no account! The Assyrians have made it a place for desert creatures; they raised up their siege towers, they stripped its fortresses bare and turned it into a ruin.

This refers to the earlier fall of Babylon to Assyria, before the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar returned the favor and destroyed Assyria

The bottom line is plain... it is by the conquest of armies like the Assyrians and the Babylonians that this prophecy against Tyre will be carried out

F. The Time Span of the Decree: Carefully Measured Out

Isaiah 23:15-17 At that time Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, the span of a king's life. But at the end of these seventy years, it will happen to Tyre as in the song of the prostitute: ¹⁶ "Take up a harp, walk through the city, O prostitute forgotten; play the harp well, sing many a song, so that you will be remembered." ¹⁷ At the end of seventy years, the LORD will deal with Tyre. She will return to her hire as a prostitute and will ply her trade with all the kingdoms on the face of the earth.

1. Seventy years... the same length of time as the Babylonian exile
2. Seventy years... the end of the Babylonian Empire; the Persians took it over

G. Tyre to Be Rebuilt... Only to Fall Again and Again

1. Babylon and Nebuchadnezzar:
 - a. Nebuchadnezzar did destroy the LAND-BASED city of Tyre... after a very difficult siege
 - b. BUT the majority of the city and its wealth escaped by sea to the island fortress and to other distant ports
 - c. So, Nebuchadnezzar got very little for his troubles

Ezekiel 29:18-20 Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon drove his army in a hard campaign against Tyre; every head was rubbed bare and every shoulder made raw. Yet he and his army got no reward from the campaign he led against Tyre.

- d. Because of this, God gave Nebuchadnezzar and his hard-working army a reward: the treasures of Egypt...

Ezekiel 29:20 I have given him Egypt as a reward for his efforts because he and his army did it for me, declares the Sovereign LORD.

- e. However, an aspect of the prophecy was not fulfilled

Ezekiel 26:14 You will never be rebuilt, for I the LORD have spoken, declares the Sovereign LORD.

Tyre WAS rebuilt... just as Isaiah said it would be... rebuilt to return to ply her trade as the prostitute of the nations

2. After the Babylonian conquest, Alexander the Great came three centuries later
 - a. Alexander was determined to conquer BOTH cities of Tyre... the land-based and the island fortress
 - b. He easily demolished the land-based city and reduced it to rubble
 - c. He then considered how he might assault the island fortress
 - d. As Ezekiel's prophecy foretold, he scraped the land-based city bare like a rock, and put her rubble into the sea
 - e. He did it to build a causeway 200 feet wide from the mainland out to the island... filling the harbor with rubble from the destroyed city
 - f. The Tyrians fought back from the security of their walls island fortress... Alexander was not to be denied... but he had something to learn; he came to realize that he could not destroy Tyre without a navy; so he began recruiting ships from the people he'd conquered:

H. The Profits of Tyre Will Ultimately Go to the Godly

Isaiah 23:18 Yet her profit and her earnings will be set apart for the LORD; they will not be stored up or hoarded. Her profits will go to those who live before the LORD, for abundant food and fine clothes.

Matthew 5:5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Romans 4:13 It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith.

I. The Final Fall of Tyre: Revelation 18

1. Tyre as a port city has fallen forever... but the spirit of Tyre lives on
2. As Ezekiel 27 makes plain, Satan is the true force behind the materialism and greed that drove Tyre on to its illustrious heights
3. Materialism and greed are merely IDOLATRY, and Satan has been selling idolatry to human hearts throughout history
4. Tyre of Isaiah 23 = Babylon of Revelation 18

5. At the end of the world, the City of Babylon will fall... and just like Isaiah 23, her trading partners will stand afar off and lament her destruction because they can't keep trading with her and enjoying her cargoes and goods and wares

Revelation 18:11-13 *"The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her because no one buys their cargoes any more-- ¹² cargoes of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls; fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet cloth; every sort of citron wood, and articles of every kind made of ivory, costly wood, bronze, iron and marble; ¹³ cargoes of cinnamon and spice, of incense, myrrh and frankincense, of wine and olive oil, of fine flour and wheat; cattle and sheep; horses and carriages; and bodies and souls of men.*

Revelation 18:17-19 *"Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off. ¹⁸ When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, 'Was there ever a city like this great city?' ¹⁹ They will throw dust on their heads, and with weeping and mourning cry out: "'Woe! Woe, O great city, where all who had ships on the sea became rich through her wealth! In one hour she has been brought to ruin!*

BUT... heaven will REJOICE and DELIGHT in the destruction of this idolatrous system, idolatrous TRADING CITY:

Revelation 18:20 *Rejoice over her, O heaven! Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets! God has judged her for the way she treated you.*

IV. Tyre Evangelized: A Triumph for Christ

A. Tyre More Bearable on the Day of Judgment Than Capernaum

Matthew 11:21-22 *Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. ²² But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you.*

B. Tyre Visited by Christ... and Won an Early Gentile Trophy: The Syro-Phoenician Woman

Mark 7:24-30 *Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. ²⁵ In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an evil spirit came and fell at his feet. ²⁶ The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ "First let the children eat all they want," he told her, "for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to their dogs." ²⁸ "Yes, Lord," she replied, "but even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs." ²⁹ Then he told her, "For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter." ³⁰ She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.*

C. He Preaches and Some People from Tyre Come to Hear, and Be Healed

Luke 6:17-20 He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coast of Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸ ¶ who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by evil spirits were cured, ¹⁹ and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all. ²⁰ ¶ Looking at his disciples, he said: "Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

D. Christ Moves Through the Wreckage of Human Lusts and Greed and Picks Our His Sheep to Follow Him

E. Tyre in Acts

1. Acts 12: Still seeking worldly goods and worshiping false gods
 - a. King Herod had been quarrelling with the people of Tyre
 - b. They secured an audience with the wicked King because they depended on King Herod for their food supply
 - c. On the appointed day, the people of Tyre met together and listened to King Herod speak while he was dressed in his splendid, radiant robes
 - d. After he spoke, they flattered him crying out

Acts 12:22-23 "This is the voice of a god, not of a man." ²³ Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.

F. The Last Mention of Tyre: Acts 21

1. The last mention of Tyre, however, shows a remnant of people from that famous city who were true disciples of Jesus Christ
2. They met Paul as he was on his way to Jerusalem

Acts 21:3-6 We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. ⁴ Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. ⁵ But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. ⁶ After saying good-bye to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home.

G. There Will Be People from Tyre in Heaven!!! Trophies of Christ's Grace to Them... Rescued by His Blood from a Life of Serving Gold and Silver and Sea-Borne Cargoes!!

V. Applications

A. Come to Christ!!

1. Allow Christ to rescue you from living for goods than can be carried on the sea
2. Allow Christ's blood to cleanse you from idolatry
3. Allow Christ to give you hope of a far more exalted city... the New Jerusalem that will be resplendent with the glory of the nations, carried in its gates

Revelation 21:23-26 The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. ²⁴ The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. ²⁵ On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there. ²⁶ The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

B. Marvel at the Awesome Sovereignty of God Over the Nations

1. The most powerful nations on earth—both military conquerors (like Babylon) and economic powers (like Tyre)—are totally under the control of God and will be judged by God for their sins
2. God rules over the commercial shipping as He rules also over the armed services of the nations
3. Any power on earth set up in defiance of God, for the glory of man and the idolatrous pursuit of the world will be crushed by His wrath

C. Do Not Love the World

1. The people of the world lamented at the fall of Tyre because it hindered their enjoyment of goods and cargoes and wares
2. So also at the end of the world, the people of that time will lament at the fall of Babylon the Great
3. John warns us about worldliness

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For everything in the world-- the lust of the flesh, the lust of his eyes and the boastful pride of life-- comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷ The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

4. So does James

James 4:4 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

5. So use the things of this world as needed, but do not become engrossed by them

1 Corinthians 7:29-31 What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who ... use the things of the world, [should do so] as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

D. Understand Satan's Dark Power Behind All of this

1. Satan is the hidden King of Babylon... moving its armies to conquer the earth
2. Satan is the hidden King of Tyre... moving its traders to sell the cargoes of the earth
3. God has lifted the veil for all true believers to understand that Satan is the god of this age who blinds the minds of unbelievers... we can see through his schemes and not be allured by his wares