

Bible Geography

The City of Tyre

- I. The City of Tyre
- A. The cities of Sidon and Tyre were established by the Phoenicians on the Mediterranean coast north of Mount Carmel.
 - 1. These two cities are often mentioned together.
 - 2. Sidon was the first to be established about 20 miles north of Tyre.
 - 3. Eventually, Tyre grew to greater prominence and wealth.
 - B. Herodotus wrote of the city of Tyre and its Temple of Hercules as existing 2,300 years before his time – meaning the city was founded before 2,700 BC.
 - C. Tyre is described as a “strong city” because of its formidable defenses (Josh. 19:29).
 - 1. The city was made up of two parts, one on an island and the other on the mainland.
 - 2. “The island city had two harbors, connected by a canal, one looking North and the other South.”
 - 3. “The island was rocky and the city was fortified on the land side by a wall 150 ft. high, the wall being of less elevation on the other sides” (ISBE).
 - 4. Within these walls dwelt some 40,000 inhabitants.
 - 5. There were two harbors on the island, connected by a canal – one faced north and the other faced south.
 - D. Sailors from Tyre established colonies in North Africa and Spain and extended trade as far as West Africa and Britain.
 - E. During the reign of David, Israel began to trade with Tyre (2 Samuel 5:11).
 - 1. They were known for purple dye that was extracted from murex (sea snail) shells found along their coast. {*The name “Phoenicia” means “the land of purple.”*}
 - 2. They were also known for their great cedar trees (1 Kin. 5:6; Psa. 92:12).
 - F. When Solomon became King of Israel, Hiram, King of Tyre, supplied him with cedars for the building of the Temple in Jerusalem (1 Kings 5:1).
 - G. Trees from Lebanon were used for rebuilding the Temple after the Babylonian captivity (Ezra 3:7).
- II. The Prophecy of Tyre
- A. Isaiah prophesied the capture and captivity of Tyre by the Babylonians (Isa. 23).
 - B. Joel prophesied the punishment of Tyre for their evil treatment of God’s people (Joel 3:4-6).
 - C. Jeremiah also prophesied the captivity of Tyre by Babylon (Jer. 25, 27).
 - D. Ezekiel gave a detailed prophecy of the destruction of Tyre (Ezekiel 26).
 - 1. Many nations would attack Tyre (vs. 1-3).
 - 2. Babylon would attack and subdue Tyre (vs. 7-11).
 - 3. The city would be scraped away and the land left barren as the ruins were deposited in the water (vs. 4-6, 12-14).
 - 4. Many nations would weep and fear when Tyre fell (vs. 15-21).
 - 5. This began with Babylon but was completed by Alexander the Great.

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III. The Savior in Tyre

- A. Jesus traveled into the region of Tyre and Sidon where He healed the daughter of a Canaanite woman (Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30).
 - 1. She was a Greek, meaning that she was a Gentile, not a Jew.
 - 2. She was born in the Phoenician part of Syria, making her a Canaanite.
 - 3. Yet, she demonstrated great faith in Jesus.
 - 4. Her faith served as a powerful lesson to Jesus' disciples.
- B. There is an interesting connection between this event and Elijah's raising from the dead a widow's son in nearby Zarephath (1 Kings 17:8-24; cf. Luke 4:24-30).
- C. Jesus was followed by people from Tyre (Mark 3:7-8; Luke 6:17-18).
- D. After the Gospel was preached, there were Christians in Tyre (Acts 21:3-4).
- E. On the Day of Judgment, it will be more tolerable for those of Tyre and Sidon than for those who reject Jesus and refuse to repent (Matt. 11:20-22; Luke 10:13-14).

