

Glorify Ye the Lord in the Fires

Isaiah 23:1 – 24:15

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~ Our Spiritual Safari has spent several reports considering the burdens – or judgments – of the eleven nations that surrounded Israel in Isaiah’s day. Each one of these nations sets before us certain great earthly principles, presenting different world philosophies, and exposing varying systems of mankind that God must – and will – judge. While most of these nations that are mentioned have long since disappeared, the spiritual messages they leave behind can be interpreted according to earthly systems, translated, and transferred — right into the lap of modern daily life; where we live, as I type this report and you read it. If you have not read our previous five safari reports, I suggest you go back and do so now; in fact, I suggest you go all the way back, and read all twenty-one previous safari reports from Isaiah – but that would take a very long time – about ten hours, for the average reader reading straight through.

In our five previous reports, we considered Babylon – the first judgment; which represents false religion, and the false hope of covetousness through idolatry. The natural man of the world has an overbearing desire to always have more stuff; and he always gives himself over to the accumulation of the material things of this world. Then, we considered the second judgment, Palestine; and Palestine represents true religion — but that which has become apostate. We have an onslaught of churches springing up everywhere today; churches that present nothing in the world except the dead ritualistic monotony of a vain and empty religion ceremony. They’ll recite the Apostles Creed, and they’ll say the so-called Lord’s Prayer while taking communion – and you will think they are resting on the Word of God and trusting the Lord Jesus Christ – but, after talking to them for less than fifteen minutes, you’ll discover they really deny everything the Bible stands for and teaches, and that they have totally abandoned everything they may have once believed. Trust me – the Palestinian is *ALL OVER* religious circles. Then, we examined the third judgment of Moab; which represents a formal religion – that is, a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof – that’s Moab. Frankly, I would estimate that a full ninety-

nine point six, six, six percent of all self-professing believers can be directly identified with one of these first three nations we have already considered.

The fourth judgment we examined was that of Damascus; which represents *compromise*. Compromise encompasses all of the attributes of the first three nations, and is the spiritual position of almost all of the correlating churches thereof. Unfortunately, even most so-called fundamental Bible-believing churches would have to be classified as compromisers today. I can only thank God for the few that still stand true in the faith today.

Fifthly, we saw Ethiopia; whose judgment was more of a rebuke and an admonishment. Well, they represent the state of missionary work today. Again, I thank God for missionary work; but, unfortunately, most of what passes as missionary work today is simply making merchandise of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's face it: they just don't do anything – nothing – nada – zilch! When they do actually do something, it is almost always misguided, misdirected, self-serving, and self-righteous blah that God does not use. You can disagree if you want to; you have a right to be wrong.

Next, we moved along to the sixth judgment of Egypt; and Egypt represents the worldly man, and the sin that a worldly man loves so passionately. We're told to love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. Israel was told very specifically and directly to stay out of Egypt. If Abraham had obeyed God, and stayed out of Egypt, there never would have been a Hagar. If there had been no Hagar, there never would have been an Ishmael. If there never would have been an Ishmael, there would never have come the filthy, dirty Arab — Muslim. That's just a fact, friends. That one little sin of Abraham, and the resulting Islamic consequence, plagues Israel — and the entire world — to this day. Because of them, most believers have serious troubles in the world, too. We also examined the seventh judgment of Persia; and Persia represents luxury and unbridled self-indulgence and personal opulence. Again, a whole lot of people love luxury in this affluent contemporary society we live in.

The eighth nation we considered was Edom; which speaks of the flesh. Many people tell me they love this safari – but they never support it. They never support it because they are too busy satisfying their flesh with every

nickel they can hoard. Naturally, most people are heavily indebted by credit and overspending; and it's all a direct result of incessantly needing to satisfy that flesh of theirs. Let's move on. Ninth, we saw Arabia; and that spoke spiritually of warfare. Today, we have two groups of people: the hawks and the doves. The only difference I can see between these two wholly worldly groups is that the peace-loving group is always willing to resort to violence when opposed. The tenth judgment was in the valley of vision — and that is Jerusalem; but that doesn't speak of religion — no, it speaks of politics. So many people think politics are going to be the solution to the problems of this world. How tragically mistaken they are.

In this report, we reach the eleventh and final judgment; and it is that of Tyre. Tyre represents commercialism, free trade, and capitalism — big business — and friends, I don't care what you say, this is the immediate and current great sin of the United States of America. Now, don't get me wrong; I believe in capitalism. The problem is not the capitalistic system, but the greedy, lying, cheating, fraudulent, deceptive, and grossly self-absorbed hearts of the men that deal in said system. We tend to erroneously believe that the almighty dollar can solve any problem anywhere at any time and under any circumstances that can possibly creep up. When we have a problem today, congress votes to spend more money; but the intended recipients never receive the money, of course. There is not *O-N-E* single poverty program in the world that has ever done anything except hurt the poor — they never *EVER* help the poor and needy. See, godless rich men cannot help anyone; because that would be impossible. Unfortunately, most of the poor haven't learned that, either; because their hearts are also very far from God. They usually look to those men to help them. The two most difficult groups of people to reach with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ are the ultra-rich and the dirt poor. Only Christ has love for the poor man. Only God knows how to help the rich man. Both groups typically reject Him wholesale. So, with that recapitulation let's take a visit to Tyre....

XXIII

1 The burden of Tyre. Howl, ye ships of Tarshish; for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in: from the land of Chittim it is revealed to them.

2 Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished.

3 And by great waters the seed of Sihor, the harvest of the river, is her revenue; and she is a mart of nations.

4 Be thou ashamed, O Zidon: for the sea hath spoken, even the strength of the sea, saying, I travail not, nor bring forth children, neither do I nourish up young men, nor bring up virgins.

5 As at the report concerning Egypt, so shall they be sorely pained at the report of Tyre.

~ Tyre and Sidon were the two great Phoenician civilizations. Zidon, or Sidon, was actually the mother-city, and was located some thirty miles up the coast. Her proud and rich daughter, Tyre, soon outgrew and surpassed her. Tyre and Sidon go together like Jezebel and Athaliah, by the way. That Phoenician fleet dominated the Mediterranean ports and penetrated the furthest reaches of the uncharted ocean. They sailed well beyond the Pillars of Hercules; and their vessels brought tin from Great Britain. In fact, “*Britannia*” means the “*land of tin.*” The Phoenicians were extremely aggressive, and they considered themselves progressives. Carthage of North Africa — the great enemy of the Roman Empire — was settled by the Phoenicians. Cyprus in Italy owes everything they have to early trading with Tyre. The list goes on and on.

Remember, Jonah went the wrong way and sailed to Tarshish. Tarshish was on the southern coast of Spain. That was a Phoenician city, too. The Phoenician also invented the alphabet. Hiram, king of Tyre, was one of King David’s great friends; and Hiram is the one who gave David all of the building materials for the temple – and most of the laborers, too. When we get to Ezekiel, we’re going to learn all about Tyre, her king, and her prince. Candidly, Ezekiel chapters twenty-six, twenty-seven and twenty-eight all concern Tyre, and comprise one of the most startling and remarkable prophecies in the entire Word of God. God said Tyre would be destroyed by Babylon and taken into captivity. The inhabitants of Tyre returned after

their captivity and rebuilt the city on an island at that time. Further, God said the ruins of the city would be scraped; and Alexander the Great scraped it to the bedrock. All of that prophecy was literally fulfilled *EXACTLY* as Isaiah said it would be!

Interestingly, Alexander wasn't about to engage the Phoenicians with naval warfare; because the Phoenicians were a hundred times superior. So, Alexander built an isthmus out to the island city of Tyre with the ruins of the ancient mainland city of Tyre – and he promptly destroyed them once again. In verse one of this chapter, the returning fleet can see the smoke on the horizon, and they know what has happened. You can walk out on that isthmus today and it is beyond heavily-littered with broken pottery and other debris. In fact, Alexander scraped the original city so thoroughly and dumped it all into the ocean that archeologists cannot determine where it had once existed. So, that is yet another prophecy that was literally fulfilled *EXACTLY* as God said it would be fulfilled!

Now, my atheistic friends: if you want to disprove that the Bible is the Word of God, then don't hide in an internet discussion group posting ignorant memes and blabbing about not believing in God. Nothing is proven or disproven that way. No, why don't you get busy rebuilding Tyre – or Babylon, for that matter – or even Petra. Petra is even a ready-made city; all you'll need to do is get people to move in. God said those cities would never be rebuilt or inhabited again – so, here is your opportunity to prove God a liar, and that the Bible is not the Word of God. Send me a letter and let me know how it works out for you. As soon as you get just one of those cities rebuilt, I am fully prepared to publicly renounce my Christianity! I should inform you, though, that it has all been tried myriad times in recent history. Even so - ready? GO! Further, if you are one of those prophecy mongers, God said Tyre will be rebuilt in the last days. So, if you want to know exactly where we are on the prophecy clock all you have to do is wait until Tyre is rebuilt and you'll know the eleventh hour has arrived. Candidly, I wouldn't hold my breath.

Sihor, in verse three, means "*black*" – and refers to the upper Nile River silt that flooded Egypt and made it fertile. All the wealth of Egypt flowed through the port of Tyre. This is where God says, in effect, "*those days are*

over.” A true depression hit the Egyptian economy at that time. The destruction of Tyre absolutely crippled Egyptian commerce and completely destroyed all trade. This brought universal mourning to colonies as far away as the southern coast of Africa; and myriad people fled in ships when Nebuchadnezzar’s army came through. Of course, the Babylonians were ruthless murderers who killed every man, woman, child, and animal that moved. Some escaped – but they only fled to a destitute sorrow and a depressing lifetime of perpetual sadness – all according to prophecy....

6 Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle.

7 Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days? her own feet shall carry her afar off to sojourn.

8 Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth?

9 The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth.

10 Pass through thy land as a river, O daughter of Tarshish: there is no more strength.

11 He stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook the kingdoms: the LORD hath given a commandment against the merchant city, to destroy the strong holds thereof.

12 And he said, Thou shalt no more rejoice, O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon: arise, pass over to Chittim; there also shalt thou have no rest.

13 Behold the land of the Chaldeans; this people was not, till the Assyrian founded it for them that dwell in the wilderness: they set up the towers thereof, they raised up the palaces thereof; and he brought it to ruin.

14 Howl, ye ships of Tarshish: for your strength is laid waste.

15 And it shall come to pass in that day, that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, according to the days of one king: after the end of seventy years shall Tyre sing as an harlot.

16 Take an harp, go about the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten; make sweet melody, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.

17 And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth.

18 And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing.

XXIV

1 Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.

~ So, with the judgments of God on the nations round about Israel being complete, Isaiah moves on to speak of the Great Tribulation period. Here, the church is removed from the earth, and the end of the age of grace is ushered in. Well, Isaiah chapters one through where we are at now have been all judgment - and those burdens will continue to snowball as our Spiritual Safari continues forward from here. From chapter twenty-four through chapter thirty-five, we have a purely eschatological section of Scripture; but still all judgment. This section is entirely future; and we could call it the little apocalypse of revelation. The Great Tribulation will be a world-wide judgment from God, and it includes the land of Israel. Read the remainder of this chapter after praying for wisdom, judgment and discernment. We'll proceed in our expedition through the entire Word of God, picking right up here in our next report; I hope you choose to go along with us....

2 And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with

the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him.

3 The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.

4 The earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world languisheth and fadeth away, the haughty people of the earth do languish.

5 The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.

6 Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left.

7 The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merryhearted do sigh.

8 The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, the noise of them that rejoice endeth, the joy of the harp ceaseth.

9 They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.

10 The city of confusion is broken down: every house is shut up, that no man may come in.

11 There is a crying for wine in the streets; all joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone.

12 In the city is left desolation, and the gate is smitten with destruction.

13 When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done.

14 They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the LORD, they shall cry aloud from the sea.

15 Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires, even the name of the LORD God of Israel in the isles of the sea ~

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