

A Prophecy Against Tzor (Tyre) ~ Part 1a Yesha'yahu 23:1-10

In my last post, we completed our examination of **A Prophecy Against the Valley of Vision ~ Part 2** in **Yesha'yahu 22:12-25**. In this post, we begin to examine the last of the prophecies that **Yesha'yahu** had received from **Adonai** against the nations surrounding **Isra'el** and **Y'hudah: A Prophecy Against Tzor (Tyre) ~ Yesha'yahu 23:1-10**.

¹ *A prophecy about Tzor:*

Howl, you "Tarshish" ships, because the harbor is destroyed! On returning from Kittim, they discover they cannot enter it.

Yesha'yahu begins his prophecy against **Tzor's** destruction by mentioning the merchant ships of "**Tarshish**" (why the quotation marks?). The exact location of **Tarshish** is apparently unknown, though many scholars place it in **Spain** at **Tartessus**. The more I looked at this verse, the more I wanted to know where **Tarshish** was located, so:



Let's go down a rabbit trail first.

Tarshish is first mentioned in Genesis 10:4, but that is the name of one of the sons of **Yavan**. The **ships of Tarshish** are first mentioned in 1 Kings 10:22 and again in 1 King 22:48. **Yesha'yahu** first mentions the ships in Yesha'yahu 2:16 and I completely ran right by that in [The Coming Day of the Lord ~ Part 2](#). He mentions four times in this chapter alone and again in 60:9 and 66:19. **Tarshish** is mention by **Jeremiah** once (10:19); **Ezekiel** three times (27:12, 25, 38:13); and **Jonah** twice (1:3 and 4:2). **Jonah** tried to run away from **Adonai** by catching a ship headed to Tarshish (1:3). **Tarshish** is also mentioned in Psalm 48:7 and 72:10; Esther 1:14; 2 Chronicles 9:21; 20:26,27. By my count that makes the place, or the ships mentioned a total of twenty-two times in the **Tanakh**. One would think that someplace with that many citations would be readily located. But, by the time of the writing of the **Brit Hadashah**, **Tarshish** either no longer existed or was just not part of the Gospel message.

According to the *New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, **Tarshish** is a Phoenician word from the Akkadian meaning smelting plant or refinery. The name is employed in the OT in connection with ships, merchants, and trade. The "navy," or "fleet of Tarshish" that Solomon's ally Hiram I of Tyre built for the Hebrew monarch at Ezion-geber on the Persian Gulf has been illuminated from ancient oriental sources. A better rendering of Solomon's merchant marine in the light of increased knowledge of early Phoenician trading activities in the Mediterranean would be "smeltery" or "refining fleet," which brought smelted metal home from the colonial mines. Phoenician boats used to ply the sea regularly, transporting smelted ores from the mining towns in Sardinia and Spain. **Tarshish** ships developed from the original idea of material-carrying boats to all ships of first-rate magnitude to whatever place the voyage may have taken them.

BibleAtlas.org provides this interesting map image:



So my rabbit trail didn't lead us anywhere. In my next post, we will actually look at **A Prophecy Against Tzor (Tyre) ~ Part 1b** in **Yesha'yahu 23:1-10**.