

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, November 27, 2022

Passage: Isaiah 23:1-18

Memory Passage: Isaiah 23:17-18

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Is. 23:1-18.** Tarshish's location is unknown but widely thought to be on the SW coast of Spain. It was also thought to be the end of the known world. Tyre was a bustling seaport known for its ships and its sea trade. As all of Phoenicia, it was hemmed in by the Lebanon Mountains on the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the west. Sidon is 25 miles north of Tyre, also a strong seaport with much commerce. Both were known for their economic rather than military prowess. Cypress is an island NE of Sidon and the first stop on Paul's 1st missionary journey. Shihor's exact location is also unknown, but it is mentioned alongside the Nile in each of its four appearances in Scripture (Josh. 13:3; Isa. 23:3; Jer. 2:18; 1 Chron. 13:5)

(b) This chapter divides into two main sections: 1-14 and 15-18. Do you agree with this? Why or why not? In other words, give your reasons for the major subdivisions in this chapter as you see them. Also, subdivide your main sections.

(c) Explain the poetic language (each description tells a mini story) used to describe how the news of Tyre's being "laid waste" is received in Tarshish/Cypress, Sidon, Shihor, & Egypt in vs. 1-7.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Is. 23:1-18.** Verses 1 and 14 form an inclusio (bookends). Explain why the ships of Tarshish wail and how this helps us understand the overall meaning of vs. 1-14.

(b) If verses 1-7 describe the reception of Tyre's demise, what do verses 8-14 convey?

(c) Who has purposed Tyre's demise, and for what reason (v. 9)?

(d) In what way does v. 9 connect this oracle with the other nine in chapters 13-23?

(e) Why does Yahweh of Hosts stretch out his hand "over the sea," and what does this tell us about God?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Is. 23:1-18.** The second major section begins with "in that day." To what day is referred?

(b) Are the seventy years mentioned in v. 15 literal or metaphorical? Explain your answer.

(c) Explain how the “song of the prostitute” (vs. 15b-16) explains Yahweh’s “visit” to Tyre “at the end of seventy years.”

(d) Is Tyre actually involved in prostitution, or is this used as a metaphor for something else? How do you know?

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Is. 23:1-18.** What will Tyre actually do when “she will return to her wages and will prostitute herself with all the kingdoms of the world on the face of the earth” (v. 17)?

(b) In what ways will Tyre’s “merchandise and her wages” be “holy to Yahweh,” and why will this be so (v. 18)?

(c) Explain the contrast being made in v. 18b and what this contrast says about the motives of the merchants of Tyre.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read Is. 23:1-18.** Tyre was known for its wealth, but that wealth led to a prideful self-sufficiency that God judged. In what ways are you tempted to indulge in prideful thinking and actions because you have wealth?

(b) Are you more likely to “store and hoard” your wealth or use it to “supply abundant” resources for others (v. 18)? Write down at least four ways you will use your wealth that better honor and reflect your worship of Christ.

(c) In what ways must your motives change regarding your use of wealth?

(d) What does this oracle teach you about materialism and its dangers?

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Oracle Concerning Tyre