

ISAIAH: GOD'S DIRECTIVES TO THOSE TROUBLED AT GOVERNMENTAL APOSTASY

Part XIV: God's Salvation From Abuses By Powerful Financial Institutions

(Isaiah 23:1-18)

I. Introduction

- A. As individuals, we can feel very vulnerable to the whims of powerful financial institutions and abuses that top officials in them can do to harm our financial welfare. The latest mutual fund "scandal" where wealthy pension groups or other investment institutions have been served at the cost of individual investors through illegal "after hours trading" practices is a reminder of such vulnerabilities we can face.
- B. However, God offers real hope and security for His people in Isaiah 23:1-18 regarding such a need:

II. God's Salvation From Abuses By Powerful Financial Institutions, Isaiah 23:1-18.

- A. God predicted the demise of the powerful and well-established financial power in ancient Tyre at the hands of the advancing Assyrians, Isaiah 23:1-14:
 - 1. The city of ancient Tyre situated on the Mediterranean Sea coastline north of Israel was a powerful, influential trading and financial center; her "mariners were the explorers and merchants of the world (1 Kings 10:11, 22,)" cited from Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, footnote to Isaiah 23:1.
 - 2. Yet, Isaiah predicted the trading ships of Tyre would receive news of Tyre's fall while they were docking at Cyprus (Chittim), leaving them nowhere to go, Isaiah 23:1.
 - 3. The news to these ships would be that Tyre's destruction was complete: no building in the city would be left standing, and the harbor would be destroyed, Isaiah 23:1b,c.
 - 4. This fall of Tyre would produce total financial ruin for the city, Isaiah 23:2-14:
 - a. Tyre's merchants would no longer be able to sell the city's wares, Isaiah 23:2.
 - b. Indeed, even food would not be available by way of trade through the city, Isaiah 23:3.
 - c. Even Egypt which traded with Tyre would experience financial trouble and resulting anxiety due to Tyre's fall to Assyrian domination, Isaiah 23:5.
 - d. Consequently, Tyre would lack its former spirit of celebration, Isaiah 23:6-7.
 - e. The city would no longer retain its former prestige and influence with other nations, Isaiah 23:8.
 - f. Indeed, the city of Tyre would no longer be a military power in the region, Isaiah 23:14.
- B. The **reason** for Tyre's fall would be her prideful failure to humbly depend upon God, Isaiah 23:9-12a.
- C. Indeed, just as the Assyrians had put down the Babylonian uprising, they would humble Tyre, 23:13.
- D. Then, in a turn of events, God would cause Tyre's income to switch from menacing to helping His people:
 - 1. For seventy years, Isaiah predicted Tyre would be abandoned, left to a poor, scattered people, 23:15-16.
 - 2. Isaiah predicted that after this, God would let Tyre return to some level of influence, Isaiah 23:17. This prophecy was fulfilled in 630 B. C.; after 70 years of Assyrian oppression, Tyre enjoyed an increased level of commercial success following Assyria's decline, Bib. Know. Com., O.T., p. 1071.
 - 3. However, God determined Tyre would not hoard her goods, but that her income would be directed to support those who "dwell before the Lord" with ample food and fine clothing, Isa. 23:18. This word is viewed as coming to pass in part in Ezra 6:1-12 when Darius decreed that levied taxes from **oppressive** Gentiles around Israel go to support her post-exilic temple; this prediction will be fully filled in Christ's reign when the wealth of the formerly persecuting Gentiles will flow into Israel, Psa. 72:8-12.

Lesson: *God is sovereign over the large and powerful financial institutions that seek to corner the world's wealth for themselves. Consequently, we who believe in Christ need not fret what harm these institutions might do to our livelihood's welfare. We merely must trust God to meet the needs we have like He predicted He would use the income of a revived, post-judged trading power in ancient Tyre to be the means of providing for the living needs His people (versus being used to harm them, Ezra 6:1-12).*

Application: *(1) If we are in material need and find we are vulnerable to material harm by powerful financial institutions, (a) we should focus on doing God's will and (b) let GOD take responsibility for handling these institutions. (2) If God has blessed us with material gain, instead of becoming smugly self-sufficient due to what we possess, we must humbly manage these resources for Him, 1 Timothy 6:17-19. Failure here can only bring God's discipline as surely as it did for ancient Tyre!*