

Actually, it isn't all about
the economy.

Ezekiel 26-27

Actually, it isn't all about the economy.

Introduction

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Introduction

- The catch phrase, “The economy, stupid!” dates back to Bill Clinton's 1992 campaign.
- He won.

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Introduction

- Focusing on the economy certainly wins votes.
- All of us want to do well financially.
- But there is more to life than money.

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Introduction

- The city-state of Tyre, just north of Israel, had a history that was buried in mythology.
- It was said to be the birthplace of Europa, wife of Zeus – from whom Europe gets its name.

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Introduction

- In Ezekiel's day, Tyre had a powerhouse economy.
- They had a strong military.
- They had the respect of the entire world.

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Ezekiel 26 – 27

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- Skill in trade and making money – the creation of wealth – is not a bad thing in itself.
- Neither is it a virtue.

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Ezekiel 26 – 27

- At the peak of Tyre's glory Ezekiel prophesied Tyre's end.
- This excessively proud and greedy nation had nothing to commend it to God.

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Ezekiel 26 – 27

- Ancient Tyre was destroyed in two phases.
- Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the mainland city, but the city survived as island about 1km offshore.

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Ezekiel 26 – 27

- Alexander the Great built a causeway to the island and conquered that.
- It is now known mostly for tourism.

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Ezekiel 26 – 27

There are two lessons to be learned from [Tyre].

The first is that pride carries the seed of destruction within itself.

The city that boasted, I am perfect in beauty (27:3) was destroyed and will be no more (27:36b) ...

*– Dr. Tewoldemedhin Habtu,
Ethiopian Bible Scholar*



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Ezekiel 26 – 27

The second is that the fate of the nations is in God's hand. 'In her apparent invincibility, Tyre represented the glory of human achievement. Because her successes were driven by avarice and pursued in defiance of God, however, she could not stand.' (NICOT)

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The Sermon on the Mount

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The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV)

¹⁹ “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,
²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

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The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 6:24 (ESV)

²⁴ No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.

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The Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 6:24 (ESV)

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- That is one side of the story.

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The Sermon on the Level Place

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The Sermon on the Level Place

Luke 6:38 (ESV)

[G]ive, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.

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The Sermon on the Level Place

- Jesus almost gives the impression that we should give with receiving in mind.
- At the very least, we should remember that obtaining wealth is not a purely bad thing.

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Paul to Timothy

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Paul to Timothy

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (ESV)

¹⁷ Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. ¹⁸ *Let them* do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, ¹⁹ storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

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Paul to Timothy

- Paul gives us some insight into the actual problem with ancient Tyre.

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Paul to Timothy

1 Timothy 6:17 (ESV)

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

- Paul gives us some insight into the actual problem with ancient Tyre.

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Paul to Timothy

1 Timothy 6:17 (ESV)

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

- Tyre's problem was not so much their wealth, but their pride, incurable greed, and complete lack of trust in the Lord.

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Paul to Timothy

1 Timothy 6:17 (ESV)

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

- Once our focus is firmly upon him, God expects us to enjoy what he gives us.

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Paul to Timothy

*We can't love God too much, and
we can't love sin too little.
Everything else, we can love either
too much, by idolizing it, or too
little, by not appreciating it.*

*– Peter Kreeft, in
Practical Theology*



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Babylon in Revelation 18

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Babylon in Revelation 18

- This passage reminds us that pride and covetousness are here to stay – at least until God destroys them.
- Wealth will also continue to nurture the illusion of invincibility.

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Conclusions

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- As God's people we need to remember that all that we have comes ultimately from him.
- This is a very basic lesson, but one that seems difficult for the human race to learn.

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Conclusions

Luke 16:10-11 (ESV)

¹⁰ “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. ¹¹ If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?”

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Conclusions

- What we have is a stewardship from God.
- It really all belongs to him.

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Conclusions

- In a nation obsessed by pride and consumerism, this is a countercultural lesson.
- But in eternity, it won't be about the economy.

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Conclusions



As I walked through the ruins of Tyre I heard no music or laughter. I could not see the buildings or the gold and silver. All I saw were broken pieces of pottery and the wreck ... of what had once been a great city ... There must be a message in this picture of Tyre for our day and generation.

– J. Vernon McGee (1904 – 1988)