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Ezekiel 32.

(2014)

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Ezekiel 32.

Topics.

- A lamentation over Egypt.
- The LORD will bring Egypt to ruin.
- Babylon will bring Pharaoh the King of Egypt and the pride of Egypt to ruin.
- Healthy pride and unhealthy pride.
- Then they will know that I am the LORD.
- A lamentation over the utter destruction of the Empire of Egypt.
- The pit and the world below, Sheol and the grave.
- Pharaoh and all-his multitude will go down to the pit.
- All Assyria and Egypt is given over to death, to the world below.

Introduction to the Book of Ezekiel: Ezekiel, a prophet and priest, was exiled to Babylon in 597 B.C. His ministry extended over at least twenty-three years. The book opens with his first dramatic vision of the “likeness” of the LORD”. Ezekiel was keenly aware of God’s presence and power in human affairs. He addressed both the exiles and the people left in Judah with messages of warning and judgment, predicting the fall of Jerusalem.

After its fall (586), Ezekiel prophesied of hope and reassurance for the people of Judah, who had then lost the focus of God’s covenant and the temple in Jerusalem. His vision of the valley of dry bones (chapter 37) is a classic picture of God’s ability to breathe new life into those who are spiritually dead. Ezekiel is prophesying about the Jews that did not go into captivity to Babylon, but remained against the word of the LORD in Jerusalem.

NOTE: Ezekiel’s message is primarily directed to the people in the land of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem (the two tribes), but often it is difficult to separate the message from Judah and Israel (the ten tribes) because much of what the LORD says can be applied to both Judah and Israel because the two are so intertwined and both nations were guilty of the same gross sins.

FOR INFORMATION: concerning people, places and the meaning of words see the title: “Map Locations and People of the Bible,” and the title: “Bible Dictionary” on Website Menu.

A LAMENTATION OVER EGYPT.

This is the final prophecy against Pharaoh the King of Egypt. The LORD will use the King of Babylon and his fierce armies against Egypt to bring all the following lamentations over Egypt to pass (v11). Though the entire lamentation is over Egypt the chapter is divided up into the following four sections, firstly (v1-16), secondly (v7-10) and thirdly (v11-16) and fourthly (v17-32).

1. Pharaoh King of Egypt is represented as a dragon in the waters that is dragged out by the net of the LORD and flung upon the land, where the fowls and beasts feed on him (Ezekiel 32:1-6).
2. The LORD will bring His sword against Egypt and the glory of Egypt will be brought to ruin and nations will tremble and stand in fear for their own lives when they see the utter destruction and fall of Egypt (Ezekiel 32:7-10).

3. The LORD uses the king of Babylon as His servant to bring about Egypt's destruction. The pride of Egypt will be brought to ruin and the overthrow of Pharaoh and his people will be complete. The land shall be desolate and then they will know that the LORD is the only Almighty and true God (in contrast to the many gods of Egypt) (Ezekiel 32:11-15).
4. A lamentation of the destruction and fall of Pharaoh King of Egypt and his Empire (v17-32).

Section One

Ezekiel 32:1-2 ----- ¹In *the twelfth year*, in the twelfth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: ²"Son of man, raise a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him: "You consider yourself a lion of the nations, but you are like a dragon in the seas; you burst forth in your rivers, trouble the waters with your feet, and foul their rivers.

It is the twelfth year (v1, 17) of Jehoiachin's captivity and about nineteen months after the destruction of Jerusalem.

A lion of the nations: a lion is the king of beasts the Pharaoh King of Egypt sees himself as the king of the nations, but the LORD views him as a dragon in the seas.

A dragon: is a symbol of a powerful but, destructive cruel and corrupting king.

Seas and rivers: are a symbol of the nations and the people.

Fouling their waters: means corrupting the nations and the people.

The LORD pictures Pharaoh as a great king amongst the nations but a king who is polluting the people of those nations.

The LORD will Bring Egypt to Ruin.

Ezekiel 32:3-6 ----- ³Thus says the Lord GOD: I will throw my net over you (Pharaoh King of Egypt) (v2) with a host of many peoples, and they will haul you up in my dragnet. ⁴And I will cast you on the ground; on the open field I will fling you, and will cause all the birds of the heavens to settle on you, and I will gorge the beasts of the whole earth with you. ⁵I will strew your flesh upon the mountains and fill the valleys with your carcass. ⁶I will drench the land even to the mountains with your flowing blood, and the ravines will be full of you.

Pharaoh is represented as a dragon in the waters that is dragged out by the net of the LORD and flung upon the land, where all fowls and beasts feed on him. His carcass fills the land and his blood the water-courses. This is a graphic picture of the utter destruction that is about to come upon the entire kingdom of Egypt. God used Babylon as His servant to do this (v11).

Section Two

Kings and Nations will Tremble when they See the Fall of Egypt.

Ezekiel 32:7-10 ----- ⁷When I blot you (Pharaoh King of Egypt) (v2) out, I will cover the heavens and make their stars dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give its light. ⁸All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over you, and put darkness on your land, declares the Lord GOD. ⁹"I will trouble the hearts of many peoples, when I bring your destruction among the nations, into the countries that you have not known. ¹⁰I will make many peoples appalled at you (Pharaoh King of Egypt), and the hair of their kings shall bristle with horror because of you, when I brandish my sword before them. They shall tremble every moment, every one for his own life, on the day of your downfall.

The heavens, sun, moon and stars: (v7-8) refers to Pharaoh King of Egypt and the glory of Egypt, its cities its people and the nations in league with Egypt.

I will cover them with darkness: (v7-8) refers to the armies of the King of Babylon destroying and bringing to ruin Pharaoh the King of Egypt and his empire (v11).

NOTE: the heavens, the sun, the moon and the stars, is biblical lofty language to depict and highlight the glory of Egypt. The sun, the moon and the stars not giving their light figuratively means the glory of the King of Egypt and all Egypt's rulers and commanders in high positions of authority have been brought to utter ruin.

For further information see the title: -

- Lofty Language and Figurative Language of the Bible.

In, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

Many kings will be in horror because of Egypt: (v10) because Egypt was a powerful and great city it appeared invincible, so when the surrounding nations see it brought to ruin by the King of Babylon they will know that they have no chance of standing against the fierce armies of Babylon.

When I brandish my sword before them: (v10) refers to the LORD'S sword which in this context is the King of Babylon and his armies (v11).

The following verse shows that God used Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon as his servant to bring about His judgments upon the grossly wicked and rebellious people of Judah.

- Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts: Because you (Judah) have not obeyed my words, ⁹behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, declares the LORD, and for *Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my (the LORD'S) servant*, and I will bring them against this land (of Judah) and its inhabitants, and against all these surrounding nations. I will devote them to destruction, and make them a horror, a hissing, and an everlasting desolation (Jer. 25:8-9).

Now once again Ezekiel is prophesying that God is now about to once again use Babylon as His servant to bring about His judgments upon Egypt.

Section Three

Babylon will bring Pharaoh the King of Egypt and the Pride of Egypt to Ruin.

Ezekiel 32:11-15 ----- ¹¹For thus says the Lord GOD: The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you. ¹²I will cause your multitude to fall by the swords of mighty ones, all of them most ruthless of nations. "They shall bring to ruin the pride of Egypt, and all its multitude shall perish. ¹³I will destroy all its beasts from beside many waters; and no foot of man shall trouble them anymore, nor shall the hoofs of beasts trouble them. ¹⁴Then I will make their waters clear, and cause their rivers to run like oil, declares the Lord GOD. ¹⁵When I make the land of Egypt desolate, and when the land is desolate of all that fills it, when I strike down all who dwell in it, *then they will know that I am the LORD.*

Pride: it is because of the extreme pride in the heart of Pharaoh and the people of Egypt that the LORD is using Babylon to bring the empire of Egypt to ruin, but that does not mean all pride is bad, the following notes show the difference between healthy pride and destructive pride.

Healthy Pride.

1. Satisfaction with self: the happy satisfied feeling somebody experiences when having or achieving something special that other people admire. A person taking great pride in their work.

2. Proper sense of own value: having the correct level of respect for the importance and value of your personal character, life, efforts, or achievements as opposed to having no confidence and no sense of worth.
3. The source of personal satisfaction: such as an achievement or possession that somebody feels especially pleased and satisfied with (i.e. their grandchildren were their pride and joy).
4. To be proud of something: personal satisfaction and pleasure from a particular source, especially something accomplished or a quality possessed.

Unhealthy Pride.

1. Is having a feeling of superiority and a haughty attitude. This type of pride is shown by somebody who believes (often unjustifiably) that he or she is better than others. A person who has this kind of pride will often not mix with those they consider their social inferiors. This pride is arrogant it exalts oneself above others and even God, and will treat those it looks down to and believes are inferior to them with disdain and at its peak with cruelty and destruction. It causes quarrels, strife, arguments, fights and even wars.
2. Is having the biggest ego of all, a person at this level of pride sees themselves at the top of humanity and views themselves as always being right. They believe they are equal to God or even a god themselves and are so egotistical that they think the whole world revolves around them.

The Pharaoh of Egypt had an overgrown ego his was the biggest ego of all; he was at the top of the tree of pride that is why the LORD is rebuking him. A person at this level of pride sees themselves at the top of humanity and views themselves as always being right in all they do. They believe they are equal to God or even a god themselves and are so egotistical that they think the whole world revolves around them. One of the aspects of spiritual wisdom is, knowing that self-exalting pride can only lead to strife and destruction and in knowing this to choose to act humbly in success and fame rather than being arrogant and prideful and full of self-glory and self-exaltation.

Then they will know that I am the LORD: (v15) this expression is regularly repeated throughout the book of Ezekiel. Here is the justice of God He firstly judged and punished His people Judah and Israel because of their gross wickedness and rebellion and then turned His focus toward judging all nations that harmed Israel throughout history and who mocked and scorned Judah while they were led in chains to Babylon. The justice of the LORD is seen in God's actions of not judging Israel's enemies until He had firstly judged and punished his own people (Israel) and only then turning His judgment toward their enemies.

The absolute wonder and wisdom of God in all this is that at the final end of God's judgment on Israel and their enemies it brought about the same result in both groups. Both Israel and their enemies came to the same conclusion which was, "The God of Israel is the only true Almighty Lord God" in contrast to the many gods both Israel and the secular nations were worshipping.

Section Four

A Lamentation over the Utter Destruction of the Empire of Egypt.

Ezekiel 32:16-18 ----- ¹⁶This is a lamentation that shall be chanted; the daughters of the nations shall chant it; over Egypt, and over all her multitude, shall they chant it, declares the Lord GOD." ¹⁷In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁸"Son of man, wail over the multitude of Egypt, and send them down, her and the daughters of majestic nations, to the world below, to those who have gone down to the pit.

In verse one we are told it is the first day of the twelfth month of the twelfth year and now we are told that it is the fifteenth day of the twelfth month of the twelfth

year so fifteen days have passed since Ezekiel prophesied the previous part of this prophecy. All the nations subdued by Egypt are told to take up a lamentation and mourn over the fall of the Empire of Egypt.

NOTICE: when the LORD brings judgment and punishment on the nations that have treated Israel cruelly God never tells Israel to rejoice over their enemies' destruction, but calls them to mourn over their suffering and ruin. This is because God has no pleasure in the destruction of any human. His desire is that all would repent and be saved to eternal life, but because He is a God of justice He is forced to judge when the cup of iniquity is overflowing.

God does not delight in the destruction of the wicked: the following verses show that God does not delight in the destruction of the wicked.

- I (the LORD) wail for Moab; I cry out for all Moab; for the men of Kir-hareseth I mourn. (Jer. 48:25-31).

The LORD is about to bring utter destruction upon the cities and land of Moab because of their wickedness, yet Jeremiah pictures God mourning, weeping and crying over the people of Moab (Jer. 48:31). The following verse shows why this is.

- For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. (Psalm 5:4).

God hates wickedness because it brings harm to innocent humans, physically, financially, sexually, emotionally and spiritually, this is why wickedness cannot dwell with the LORD however the LORD is patient and longsuffering giving everyone grace and time to acknowledge God and turn from their wrong doing. But eventually mankind's wickedness reaches a depth of cruelty, pride and evil that God is forced to intervene and judge. The following verses show that though God must judge He takes no pleasure or delight in bringing suffering and sorrow to the human race.

- Have I (the LORD) *any pleasure in the death of the wicked*, declares the Lord GOD, and not rather that he should turn from his way and live? (Ezekiel 18:23).
- For I (the LORD) have *no pleasure in the death of anyone*, declares the Lord GOD; so turn, and live. (Ezekiel 18:32).
- Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, *I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked*, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 33:11).

This is the reason why it is so offensive to God when people, especially His people mock and scorn their enemies when they are defeated or harm has come to them. Justice must be done, but mocking and taunting those who have been punished, defeated and humbled and gloating over them when they are suffering comes from a heart full of pride, hatred and revenge none of which are of the Spirit of the LORD.

The daughters of majestic nations: (v18) refers to all the nations aligned to Egypt.

The following verses personify Sheol, the Grave and the Pitt.

All the Slain of Egypt will be Dragged Down to Sheol.

Ezekiel 32:19-21 ---- ¹⁹Whom do you (Egypt) surpass in beauty? Go down and be laid to rest with the uncircumcised. ²⁰They shall fall amid those who are slain by the sword. Egypt is delivered to the sword; drag her away, and all her multitudes. ²¹The mighty chiefs shall speak of them, with their helpers, out of the midst of Sheol: 'They have come down, they lie still, the uncircumcised, slain by the sword.

Sheol: is from the Hebrew word sh^eowl and means hades (the grave) and refers to the place of the dead (as if a subterranean). The LORD is basically saying to Pharaoh King of Egypt that Egypt and all her multitudes will be killed by the sword

(i.e., war) and brought to ruin and to the grave where all other great kings and nations lay buried because in the LORD'S eyes Egypt is no greater in glory or power than any other great nation that has been brought down to the grave as the following verses show.

The Graves of Assyria are set in the Pit.

Ezekiel 32:22-23 ----- ²²Assyria is there, and all her company, its graves all around it, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, ²³whose graves are set in the uttermost parts of the pit; and her company is all around her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who spread terror in the land of the living.

Notice Assyria is spoken of as spreading terror in the land. The expression "All of them slain, fallen by the sword," means killed because of war, kings and nation who rise to might and power by war will be judged accordingly.

The Graves of Elam are set in the Pit.

Ezekiel 32:24-25 ----- ²⁴Elam is there, and all her multitude around her grave; all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who went down uncircumcised into the world below, who spread their terror in the land of the living; and they bear their shame with those who go down to the pit. ²⁵They have made her a bed among the slain with all her multitude, her graves all around it, all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword; for terror of them was spread in the land of the living, and they bear their shame with those who go down to the pit; they are placed among the slain.

Notice Elam is spoken of as spreading terror in the land. The expression "Who went down with the uncircumcised" refers to those who deny God and are not only corrupt, but use others for their own advantage and gain. The kings and nation mentioned in these verses were prepared to slaughter and kill others by war for their own glory and power.

The Graves of Meshech-Tubal are set in the Pit.

Ezekiel 32:26-27 ----- ²⁶Meshech-Tubal is there, and all her multitude, her graves all around it, all of them uncircumcised, slain by the sword; for they spread their terror in the land of the living. ²⁷And they do not lie with the mighty, the fallen from among the uncircumcised, who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, whose swords were laid under their heads, and whose iniquities are upon their bones; for the terror of the mighty men was in the land of the living.

Notice Meshech-Tubal is spoken of as spreading terror in the land. It is interesting to that these men are spoken of, "Mighty men." When men go to war and conquer nations for their own gain and power they are seen by the world as great men, but before God they are seen as men only fit for the grave.

Alexander the Great and his armies conquered a great majority of the known world and history records him as one of the greatest of men of that era, yet he slaughtered hundreds of thousands to attain to such fame. God does not judge us as our history books do (i.e., according to how famous, great or powerful we are), but according to the goodness in our hearts or the lack of it.

The Grave of Pharaoh King of Egypt will be set in the Pit.

Ezekiel 32:28 ----- ²⁸But as for you, (Pharaoh King of Egypt) you shall be broken and lie among the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword.

The lamentation over Egypt continues with Pharaoh King of Egypt being told he will be killed and lie in his grave in the same way as all the other wicked kings who have been killed by war. It is almost certain Pharaoh King of Egypt had a glorious tomb built ready for his burial and he and the people of Egypt most likely believed he was going to ascend to heaven as a mighty god, how insulting it would be for them to hear these s prophetic words of Ezekiel.

The Graves of Edom and her Princes are set in the Pit.

Ezekiel 32:29 -----²⁹Edom is there, her kings and all her princes, who for all their might are laid with those who are killed by the sword; they lie with the uncircumcised, with those who go down to the pit.

These verses show that being a king or a prince and having power and fame or riches and wealth counts for nothing before God if those who have them are corrupt and use others for their own advantage and gain whether it be by war or oppression.

The Graves of the Princes of the North and the Sidonians are set in the Pit.

Ezekiel 32:30 -----³⁰The princes of the north are there, all of them, and all the Sidonians, who have gone down in shame with the slain, for all the terror that they caused by their might; they lie uncircumcised with those who are slain by the sword, and bear their shame with those who go down to the pit.

Notice the princes of the north and the Sidonians are spoken of as spreading terror in the land. No king no matter how mighty and powerful will escape the judgment of God and should they be found as prideful and corrupt as these kings were they will be cast down to the darkness of the grave.

The Pit and the World below, Sheol and the Grave.

The graves of these nations are spoken of as being, all around the walls of the pit. The pit in this context is a massive single hole in the ground in which multitudes of uncircumcised (meaning without God) dead bodies are buried. Whereas the grave carries the idea of a single hole in the ground in which an individual is buried in. The picture painted in these verses is a massive single pit with multitudes of graves within it. Verse twenty-two and twenty-three say that All of Assyria, the kings and all their armies are: -

- Slain, fallen by the sword, whose graves are set in the uttermost parts of the pit; and her company is all around her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, who spread terror in the land of the living (Ezekiel 32:22-23).

Then in verse twenty-seven we read that they are: -

- Laying with their weapons of war and their swords under their heads (i.e., as pillows) (Ezekiel 32:27).

Those who have been slain in battle are pictured as making their beds all around the walls of the pit and using their weapons of war for pillows, no one believes those who die in war actually lay with their weapons of war under their heads. This is very figurative language to depict the following three things: -

1. The utter destruction of these nations.
2. Just because they were considered mighty men on earth does not mean that God considers them mighty men.
3. Though they might have had great glory in this world it counts for nothing in the next world. They like all corrupt kings will go down to the darkness of the grave in the same way that the lowliest of those who live a lifestyle of wickedness and deny God do.

In this lamentation the graves are spoken of as being set in the pit and all around the uttermost parts of the pit (v22-23). The picture here is not of literal individual graves, but of multitudes of graves being all in the pit. Nevertheless when speaking of an individual person or group they are spoken of as being buried in graves, whereas when speaking of multitudes of graves in a massive single hole it is referred to as a pit.

The expression, "the world below" is simply a title that embraces every aspect of the pit and the grave. It refers to the world of the dead in contrast to the world of the living. It does not mean that there are dead people living in the grave and the pit mingling around and talking with each other.

Pharaoh and all-his multitude will go down to the Pit.

Ezekiel 32: 31-32 ----- ³¹When Pharaoh sees them, he will be comforted for all his multitude, Pharaoh and all his army, slain by the sword, declares the Lord GOD. ³²For I spread terror in the land of the living; and he shall be laid to rest among the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword, Pharaoh and all his multitude, declares the Lord GOD."

The LORD will spread terror in the land of the living: refers to the king of Babylon invading and conquering all the nations of Egypt.

The King of Egypt will be comforted: Pharaoh King of Egypt will be comforted when he is killed and arrives in the pit and sees that all other great nations that went before him are already there. This is not teaching that they are alive and have a world of their own under the surface of the earth, it is poetic language that is telling the king of Egypt that he will be defeated and killed in battle and go to where all others who used violence and terror to achieve their own glory and their own selfish goals have gone.

NOTICE.

It is because these nations and kings spread terror and violence upon the people of the earth that they have been brought down to the pit. Violence in the days of Noah was one of the major reasons God flooded the earth. God hates violence simply because it brings harm to innocent people.

FOOTNOTE.

All Assyria and Egypt is Given over to Death, to the World Below.

Ezekiel in chapter thirty-one uses similar language when speaking of Assyria and Egypt.

- For they (Assyria) (Ezek. 31:3) are all given over to death, *to the world below*, among the children of man, with those *who go down to the pit*. (Ezekiel 31:14).
- Whom are you (Pharaoh of Egypt) thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? You shall be brought down with the trees of Eden *to the world below*. You shall lie among the uncircumcised, with those who are slain by the sword. "This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, declares the Lord GOD. (Ezekiel 31:18).

Both Assyria and Egypt were

- A great and majestic, that towered above all nations and gave multitudes of people shelter.
- So financially successful and prosperous that they caused the land and people of the surrounding nations to flourish.
- Mighty nations whose kingdom grew and spread out across the land of many nations.
- Nations so mighty that all other great nations lived under their dominion and kingship.
- Strong and glorious with an abundance of wealth and power.

But both nations became proud, and puffed up in pride and self-glory thinking they were invincible, so God gave them over to death, to the world below, among the children of man, with those who go down to the pit (Ezekiel 31:14, 18). The words, "The world below," are used in some circles of Christianity to support the horrific theory that those who are judged unworthy of eternal life go to a place of fiery flames called hell where they are not only cruelly and brutally tortured by evil eternal creatures called demons, but their bodies are also burned by fiery flames so that they suffer the worst of all agonies for all eternity.

This doctrine is not only a gross misunderstanding of Scripture but is also a gross misrepresentation of God's character, since it portrays Him as an extremely sadistic God since not even the secular world would inflict such brutal and cruel torture on a human for their entire life let alone for all eternity. Added to this John tells us that God is love (1 John 4:8) (1 John 4:16). This horrific doctrine of hell was no-doubt perpetuated in the early years of the church by religious leaders to scare the naïve into the church and has been adopted and perpetuated by their followers from generation to generation through tradition and religious institutions and organisations. The words "The world below" do not refer to a place called hell it is a personification of the dead and the grave.

Lesson for today: no matter how poor or lowly your circumstances if you do right by God your eternal end will be exalted far above the most noble, the most glorious, the most rich and wealthy and the most powerful king who died without God in this world.

For further information see the titles: -

- Hell or the Grave (Final destination of Humans).
- The Lake of Fire.
- Both titles are in, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

End.