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Ezekiel 29

(2019)

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

Ezekiel 29.

Topics.

- The LORD calls Ezekiel to prophecy against Pharaoh King of Egypt.
- The LORD will put hooks in the jaws of Egypt.
- Egypt did not give the house of Israel shelter.
- The LORD will make Egypt an utter waste for forty years.
- The LORD will gather Egypt at the end of forty years.
- God will give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar for wages for his army.
- Healthy pride and destructive pride.

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 (chpt. 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. 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 a greater overview of the entire book, visit the introduction to the book of Ezekiel in chapter one.

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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.

THE LORD IS AGAINST EGYPT

Following is a brief overview of the history of Ezekiel, Jerusalem and Israel so far.

- Ezekiel and all the people of influence have been in Babylonian captivity for about ten years.
- Jerusalem was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar's armies about a year ago (Ezekiel 24).
- Those who were at Jerusalem when it was brought to ruin have been in captivity for about one year.

This chapter is divided into two sections; the first section begins with Ezekiel's prophecy against Egypt in the tenth year Jeconiah's captivity and Zedekiah's reign. The second section begins with Ezekiel's prophecy concerning Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon in the twenty-seventh year of Jeconiah's captivity or of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar.

The LORD calls Ezekiel to Prophecy against Pharaoh King of Egypt.

- **Ezekiel 29:1-3:** In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: ²"Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt; ³speak, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: "Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lies in the midst of his streams, that says, 'My Nile is my own; I made it for myself.'"

In the tenth year of Jeconiah's captivity and Zedekiah's reign (Jerusalem had been besieged, but not taken) the LORD tells Ezekiel to prophesy against Pharaoh King of Egypt and the nation of Egypt.

The Nile River: the Nile River is the longest river in the world it courses like a living tube through the desiccated hills and deserts of NE Africa some four-thousand miles from its sources in equatorial Africa to its divided mouth which open into the Mediterranean. The White Nile is the principal stream, with multitudes of tributaries joining it and flowing across the land of Egypt. Hecateus classic statement: "Egypt is the gift of the Nile," which was echoed by Herodotus gives a reflection of actual circumstances and of the Egyptian appreciation of the great river. Its waters were used for drinking, bathing and for irrigation. Its stream was the main channel of commerce and travel, with a prevailing north wind to favour southbound sailing vessels against the current.

The pride of Egypt: the LORD is against Pharaoh King of Egypt and the nation of Egypt. Both Egypt and its king are pictured as a great dragon lying in the middle of the Nile River. Pharaoh King of Egypt says: "My Nile is my own; I made it for myself." This amazing statement gives us some insight into the arrogance and enormous pride of Egypt's king.

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For further information concerning pride, see the title:

- Healthy Pride and Destructive Pride, (at the end of this chapter).

EZEKIEL 29:4-5

The LORD will put Hooks in the Jaws of Egypt.

- **Ezekiel 29:4-5:** I will put hooks in your jaws, and make the fish of your streams stick to your scales; and I will draw you up out of the midst of your streams, with all the fish of your streams that stick to your scales. ⁵And I will cast you out into the wilderness, you and all the fish of your streams; you shall fall on the open field, and not be brought together or gathered. To the beasts of the earth and to the birds of the heavens I give you as food.

The fisherman: is the LORD.

The great fish: is Pharaoh King of Egypt and by extension the nation of Egypt.

The Nile River: is, the glory of Egypt and a symbol of the nation of Egypt.

All the fish that stick to your scales: are all nations aligned with Egypt.

I will draw you up out of the midst of your streams: means the LORD will bring Egypt to ruin.

The hook in the fishes' jaw: is Babylon (Ezekiel 29:17-21), these are fabulous verses the LORD gave Egypt to Babylon as wages for administering God's judgment on Tyre and bringing them to ruin.

God is pictured as a fisherman fishing in the River Nile: a great fish (Pharaoh King of Egypt) is seen swimming in the Nile River, it sees the bait of the fisherman (the LORD) and bites on the hook of His fishing line. The fisherman swiftly flicks the fishing rod back and the great fish and all the smaller fish (nations aligned with Egypt) that are attached to it are pulled out of the water of the Nile River and onto dry ground for the birds and wild animals to eat.

EZEKIEL 29:6-9

Egypt did Not Give the House of Israel Shelter.

- **Ezekiel 29:6-9:** *Then all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD.* "Because you (Egypt) have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel; ⁷when they grasped you with the hand, you broke and tore all their shoulders; and when they leaned on you, you broke and made all their loins to shake. ⁸Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will bring a sword upon you, and will cut off from you man and beast, ⁹and the land of Egypt shall be a desolation and a waste. *Then they will know that I am the LORD.* "Because you said, 'The Nile is mine, and I made it.'

You have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel: means Egypt has been a useless shelter and protector to Israel.

The symbolism: Israel is pictured as a small child reaching out his hand to the much bigger and stronger nation of Egypt, seeking for shelter and protection from his enemies, but instead of Egypt acting like a big brother and gently taking the small child's hand and giving him the shelter he is seeking, Egypt is pictured as ripping the Child's arm out of its shoulder socket and almost breaking the child's back. The LORD is going to bring Egypt to ruin for the following two reasons:

1. Because Egypt acted cruelly toward Israel.
2. Because of Egypt's arrogant and enormous pride evidenced in their statement, "The Nile is mine, and I made it."

NOTICE: the expression, "Then they will know that I am the LORD" (v6, 9). This expression is constantly repeated throughout Ezekiel. Naturally God being a God of justice had to discipline and punish His own people first, but now after having done that He is going to show all the nations who belittled, mocked and scorned His people during their suffering and loss that He is the true Almighty God the Lord God of Israel as opposed to the many gods they believed in.

Egypt's Religion: in general Egypt's religion may be described as a complex polytheism, with many local deities of varying importance. Some of their more commonly known gods were:

- Osiris, Isis and their son Horus (a Sun-god).
- Amon-Re (who became the god of the Egyptian empire).
- Pta (the god of Memphis).
- Khnum (the god of Elephantine).

EZEKIEL 29:10-12

The LORD will make Egypt an Utter Waste for Forty Years.

- **Ezekiel 29:10-12:** therefore, behold, I am against you and against your streams, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Cush. ¹¹No foot of man shall pass through it, and no foot of beast shall pass through it; it shall be uninhabited forty years. ¹²And I will make the land of Egypt

a desolation in the midst of desolated countries, and her cities shall be a desolation forty years among cities that are laid waste. I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them through the countries.

Migdol: is at the north east extremity of Egypt.

Syene: is an Egyptian city on the east bank of the River Nile.

Cush: is a country along the Nile River immediately south of Egypt.

The LORD will bring the cities and land of Egypt and the nations aligned to Egypt to desolation and ruin and for forty years scatter the people throughout various countries.

EZEKIEL 29:13-16

The LORD will Gather Egypt at the End of Forty Years.

- **Ezekiel 29:13-16:** For thus says the Lord GOD: At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered, ¹⁴and I will restore the fortunes of Egypt and bring them back to the land of Pathros, the land of their origin, and there they shall be a lowly kingdom. ¹⁵It shall be the most lowly of the kingdoms, and never again exalt itself above the nations. And I will make them so small that they will never again rule over the nations. ¹⁶And it shall never again be the reliance of the house of Israel, recalling their iniquity, when they turn to them for aid. *Then they will know that I am the Lord GOD.*

Pathros: was upper Egypt.

At the end of forty years the LORD will:

- Gather the Egyptians from the nations they have been scattered into and bring them back to their own land.
- Restore Egypt's wealth.
- Make them a lowly nation that will never again exalt itself above the nations or rule over them.
- Make them so small that Israel will never again rely on them or turn to them for aid.

The following verses are amazing since they show that the LORD payed wages to Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon.

THE SECOND SECTION

EZEKIEL 29:17-21

God will give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar for Wages for his Army.

- **Ezekiel 29:17-21:** In *the twenty-seventh year*, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: ¹⁸Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre. Every head was made bald, and every shoulder was rubbed bare, yet neither he nor his army got anything from Tyre to pay for the labor that he had performed against her. ¹⁹Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and he shall carry off its wealth and despoil it and plunder it; and it shall be the wages for his army. ²⁰I have given him the land of Egypt as his payment for which he labored, because they worked for me, declares the Lord GOD. ²¹"On that day I will cause a horn to spring up for the house of Israel, and I will open your lips among them. *Then they will know that I am the LORD.*"

In regard to foreign nations the prophecies of Ezekiel are not placed according to the order of time in which they were delivered by the prophet, but according to the distance of the nations from Judea, beginning with those which were closest to it. Though this prophecy against Egypt and the three following chapters are prophecies spoken at very different periods of time they are joined together, because they speak of same subject. And it came to pass in the twenty-seventh year, of Jeconiah's captivity; or of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, but it was actually in the thirty-fifth year of Nebuchadnezzar reign that Tyre was taken by him; and after that Egypt was given to him. This prophecy is not placed in its proper place, as to order of time, but is placed here, because it relates to the same subject as the previous section of the chapter (i.e., the destruction of Egypt). The departure from the chronological order occurs here only, among the prophecies as to foreign nations, this is most likely in order to secure greater unity of the subjects in focus. In verse one we are told it is the tenth year, now we are told that it is the twenty-seventh year. This prophecy is sixteen to seventeen years after the prophecy in the first section of this chapter, and almost as long after the prophecies which follow in the next chapters. This prophecy which begins here in verse seventeen appears to continue to the twentieth verse of the next chapter. It is the last prophecy of Ezekiel, and should have been placed last in the book of Ezekiel, but is most likely laid here so that all the prophecies against Egypt would be together. God used Babylon as his army to administer His judgment on the king and nation of Tyre for the following three reasons:

1. Because of the kings' great ego pride and self-exaltation in believing he was a god.
2. The nation's arrogance was so great they looked down on all other nations as being inferior to them.
3. They used violence, murder, lying and deceit to become an enormously powerful wealthy and prosperous nation.

The history: after the destruction of Jerusalem Nebuchadnezzar spent two or three campaigns in the conquest of the Ammonites and Moabites and making himself master of their countries. Then he spent thirteen years in the siege of Tyre. During all that time the Egyptians were embroiled in war with the Cyrenians and one with another, by these wars they were very much weakened and impoverished; and just at the end of the siege of Tyre God delivers this prophecy to Ezekiel, to signify to him that that utter destruction of Egypt which he had foretold fifteen or sixteen years before, but had only partly been accomplished, would now be completed by Nebuchadnezzar.

God pays Nebuchadnezzar King of Babylon wages: God is concerned that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his army laboured really hard doing the work of the LORD when they went to war against Tyre and brought it to ruin. God is aware that neither Nebuchadnezzar nor his army got any payment for their labour in administer His judgment against Tyre. Therefore, the LORD is going to give the land of Egypt and its wealth to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon for payment and for the wages of his army because they worked so hard for the LORD against Tyre and received nothing for their labour (Ezekiel 29:17-21). These verses truly show the truth of the following Scriptures.

- He (the LORD) makes nations great, and he destroys them; he enlarges nations, and leads them away. (Job 12:23).
- The LORD is king forever and ever; the nations perish from his land (Psalm 10:16).
- For kingship belongs to the LORD, and he rules over the nations (Psalm 22:28).
- The LORD brings the counsel of nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples (Psalm 33:10).

- God reigns over the nations; God sits on his holy throne (Psalm 47:8).
- The LORD rules by his might forever, whose eyes keep watch on the nations. (Psalm 66:7).

History evidences the truth contained in these verses. God's vision is eternal, He purposed a plan for earth before it even came into existence, we may not always fully understand what is happening around us, but the faithful who endure the troubles and hardships of life can be confident that whatever happens in their mortal lives it will work to their eternal glory.

The wisdom of God: The expression, "*Then they will know that I am the LORD God,*" is regularly repeated throughout Ezekiel. It is applied to all the nations that mocked, scorned and harmed Israel, and also to the people of Israel. The LORD; by judging and bringing to ruin the surrounding nation's results in them recognising that the God of Israel is the Almighty Lord God and at the same time results in Israel making the same declaration.

Healthy pride and destructive pride: not all pride is evil pride 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.

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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.

As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.
