

<The Nile Crocodile>

Ezekiel 29:1 – 30:26

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~ Our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God continues in the black-hole of eschatology; where we discover more remarkable, fascinating prophetic pronouncements made by Ezekiel. If you did not find our last report literally mind-boggling, then I don't know what you would find mind-boggling. If you have not read our last report, you might want to go back and do so now. These safari studies in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel are critical; but most Christians have no idea what they communicate to us. That's why I have painstakingly gone through them as we have. The Word of God – and prophecy, in particular – is like a thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle. You cannot take one hundred pieces of the puzzle, fit them together, and claim to have a complete picture. In fact, if you are missing just *ONE* piece of a thousand piece puzzle, then you still have an incomplete picture; and, if you are missing just one piece, then all you really notice when you look at that puzzle is the missing piece.

Alright, now we really need to think clearly as we come to this section of Scripture. The glory of the Lord turns from prophecies against Israel to prophecies against Egypt, and commands Ezekiel to specifically address Egypt. These next four full chapters speak of Egypt. Many conservative theologians consider this prophecy against Egypt more interesting than what we just learned about Tyre; although I, personally, do not concur in that. Our last two reports concerning Tyre were, to me, quite frankly, astounding and astonishing. Either way, Ezekiel now tells the captive children of Israel down in Babylon about the future destruction of the land of Egypt. If they rolled their eyes at Ezekiel when he told them about the destruction of Tyre, then they're just shaking their heads and covering their faces now. Ezekiel now presents as untenable and unbearable to the Jews in captivity. They despise him at this point.

Of course, Egypt had been around since before we were introduced to Abraham in Genesis, and had never been destroyed previously. This ancient nation had maintained its integrity seemingly since the dawn of time. Egypt

never had a city that was walled for defense, either; because the surrounding desert was all the protection they needed. There would have been no way to bring an army against Egypt; except to come up through the Nile River Valley. If they could put up a good defense on the Nile, then that was all that would be necessary for survival. Well, God told Ezekiel to make the announcement that Egypt was going into captivity for forty-years after being destroyed....

XXIX

1 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt:

3 Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.

~ Of course, the Pharaoh's of Egypt had cruelly enslaved the children of Israel in the brickyards centuries ago; and had been a subsequent thorn in their sides for centuries after. However, God never really punished Egypt after the exodus in Moses day. As a result, Israel had been constantly turning to Egypt and leaning on them for help. Well, their time has now come as God says He is against Egypt. The "great dragon of the river" is, apparently, the crocodile; and Pharaoh was a cold-blooded killer, too. Naturally, the Egyptians worshipped all manner of beasts and birds and bugs – and anything that moved. That's one reason the plagues that ultimately forced Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go in Moses' day involved the creatures they worshipped in Egypt. The other reason is because God has a great sense of humor. Imagine worshipping the frog, and then waking up one morning with frogs throughout your entire house – and even in your bed. You wouldn't want to kill your gods; and I think God laughed in derision at the Egyptians when that happened.

The Pharaoh mentioned here is Pharaoh Hophra; whose Greek name was Apries. He was the grandson of Pharaoh Necho; who was the Pharaoh that killed Josiah in Megiddo, you will recall. Well, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin and even Zedekiah had all turned to Pharaoh Hophra during the besiegement of Judah by Nebuchadnezzar. The Egyptians came up and helped fight against the Chaldeans – as we learned all about in the Book of Jeremiah – and Jeremiah had announced the destruction of Pharaoh Hophra during his day. Of course, this is another area where the critic attacks the legitimacy of the Bible; and, while I don't want to be tedious with secular history, I think the serious student of Scripture should be aware of certain things – this being one of those things. The critic will say this was not fulfilled at this time – and that's true – it was actually fulfilled seventeen years later. Even so, that's a non-sequitur argument; because Ezekiel makes it clear that this is a prophecy, which, by de facto, means it would happen at some later time....

4 But I will put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales, and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales.

5 And I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers: thou shalt fall upon the open fields; thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered: I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the heaven.

6 And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel.

7 When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and rend all their shoulder: and when they leaned upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand.

8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee.

9 And the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste; and they shall know that I am the LORD: because he hath said, The river is mine, and I have made it.

10 Behold, therefore I am against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia.

11 No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years.

12 And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

13 Yet thus saith the Lord GOD; At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered:

14 And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom.

15 It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.

16 And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

17 And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year, in the first month, in the first day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

18 Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it:

19 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon; and he shall take her multitude, and take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the wages for his army.

~ So, seventeen years after this prophecy was given, Nebuchadnezzar came into Egypt and took Israel into captivity. They remained in Babylonian captivity for forty years; while Israel was in captivity for seventy years. During those forty years, the Egyptians were scattered throughout the then-known world. Notice verses fourteen and fifteen, where God says they shall be *the basest kingdom*. Well, Egypt had been a ruling nation and a formidable foe to every other nation since the dawn of history. Their monuments, writing and architecture reveal they had a civilization that was far superior to any other in the ancient world at that time. Even many historians believe the Greeks got most of their understanding and information from the Egyptians.

So, God allowed Egypt, Tyre and Israel to be taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar; but Egypt returned forty years later. However, when Egypt returned from captivity, they became a third-rate nation; and they would never rule other nations again. Today, if you go to Egypt, you cannot deny that the modern world doesn't go any lower than Egyptian society. The poverty in Cairo is sickening – and it rivals anything you will find in the slums of India. The low-level of existence that constitutes the Egyptian's present state is absolutely startling when compared to the ancient artifacts and historical relics that reveal a former glory. What the Egyptians live with today is the judgment of God Almighty, friends – just as Ezekiel had said would happen in the Word of God....

20 I have given him the land of Egypt for his labour wherewith he served against it, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord GOD.

21 In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth, and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

XXX

1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Howl ye, Woe worth the day!

3 For the day is near, even the day of the LORD is near, a cloudy day; it shall be the time of the heathen.

~ Ezekiel is once again insisting that this is the Word of the Lord. I am sure he has used this expression in verse one more than fifty times thus far in this prophecy. I don't think Ezekiel wants us to miss that fact. Chapter thirty is another lamentation of God against Egypt by Ezekiel. The total and complete desolation of the land is outlined in no uncertain terms; and the entire geographical area surrounding Egypt is positively dismal today. It is a land of mourning. The Day of the Lord will be a cloudy day for them; which is unusual in a land that gets less than an inch of rainfall annually. They depend entirely on the Nile River for water – and they still worship the crocodile, too. Every beast, bird and bug is still a god over there. They have learned absolutely nothing from the judgment of God; and that's why they are over-run by the Arab Muslim.

As we read on in this chapter, we see Ethiopia mentioned. Keep verse four in the back of your mind, because we'll come back to this. It's not typically considered when studying the Bible, but there was great enmity and warfare between Egypt and Ethiopia. Most conservative theological scholars believe that Moses, when he was still living in the house of Pharaoh, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and would have been the next Pharaoh, led a military campaign against Ethiopia. Later, at the time in which we are studying, Egypt and Ethiopia – and almost all of the other nations contiguous to Egypt – made an alliance against Nebuchadnezzar – and they all fell together as a result. There was no stopping Nebuchadnezzar at this time, friends. Nebuchadnezzar was absolutely an indomitable world ruler....

4 And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia, when the slain shall fall in Egypt, and they shall take away her multitude, and her foundations shall be broken down.

5 Ethiopia, and Libya, and Lydia, and all the mingled people, and Chub, and the men of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.

6 Thus saith the LORD; They also that uphold Egypt shall fall; and the pride of her power shall come down: from the tower of Syene shall they fall in it by the sword, saith the Lord GOD.

7 And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.

8 And they shall know that I am the LORD, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and when all her helpers shall be destroyed.

9 In that day shall messengers go forth from me in ships to make the careless Ethiopians afraid, and great pain shall come upon them, as in the day of Egypt: for, lo, it cometh.

10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also make the multitude of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon.

11 He and his people with him, the terrible of the nations, shall be brought to destroy the land: and they shall draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with the slain.

12 And I will make the rivers dry, and sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the LORD have spoken it.

~ So, our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God ends this leg with the phrase “in that day” in verse nine. As we have learned before, “in that day” is a term the prophets use to denote the time period

in the future, beginning with the Great Tribulation period, and running into the Millennial Kingdom. So, while much of this has been fulfilled, we're seeing the future of Egypt in this chapter. They are in a downward spiral today. They still have idolatry in Egypt – although it's not as prevalent as it was at the time in which we are studying; but it's not going to last forever. They still have the ruins of the statue of Raamses, the pyramids and the temples – but they don't worship them as they once did. Further there is no prince in Egypt; in fact, there is no royal-line at all. The Egyptian government swings from one abjectly corrupt political ruler to another; and they are heavily dependant on foreign countries – exactly the opposite from the time in Ezekiel's day. The greatness is now gone. Most of their great cities have literally disappeared. This entire world just happens to be working out exactly the way the Bible says it will, friends....

13 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt.

14 And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in Zoan, and will execute judgments in No.

15 And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No.

16 And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily.

17 The young men of Aven and of Pibeseth shall fall by the sword: and these cities shall go into captivity.

18 At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt: and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her: as for her, a cloud shall cover her, and her daughters shall go into captivity.

19 Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt: and they shall know that I am the LORD.

20 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first month, in the seventh day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

21 Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, lo, it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it, to make it strong to hold the sword.

22 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken; and I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand.

23 And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

24 And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand: but I will break Pharaoh's arms, and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded man.

25 But I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out upon the land of Egypt.

26 And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries; and they shall know that I am the LORD ~

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