

**Ezek. 30:1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,
Ezek. 30:2 Son of man, prophesy and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Howl ye,
Woe worth the day!**

**Ezek. 30:3 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 receives another message from the Lord. God wants him to declare this message with wailing and grief (from the Hebrew). “The day of the Lord” is near. This phrase is always associated with God’s judgment. It is often associated with the specific judgment that we know as the tribulation period, the 70th week of Daniel. In context in this scripture, the judgment is associated with His prophesied judgment to come upon Egypt through Nebuchadnezzar. It is described as a cloudy day, a picture of the thunderclouds of an oncoming storm. It is also described as a “time of the heathen,” a time that will affect the heathen nations, which identifies all nations except Israel. In this regard it is a type of the time of God’s wrath against the heathen during the seven years preceding Christ’s return as King to set up His earthly kingdom.

Ezek. 30:4 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.

Ezek. 30:5 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.

The judgment that God declared against Egypt in the previous chapter will affect some of the surrounding nations that are recognized as her allies as well. Biblical Ethiopia is also known as Cush and encompassed much of what we know today as black Africa. Libya could also be a reference to Somalia (cf note at 38:5). Lydia was a nation in Asia Minor in the land today known as Turkey. Research for the land of Chub produced nothing definitive; it is generally accepted as being part of the African continent. The Hebrew for “mingled people” made reference to a dusky sundown and to be darkened. This must be a general reference to some other dark skinned peoples from different nations that allied themselves to Egypt; JFB identified them as mercenaries in league with the Egyptians. Some of the translations identify the “mingled people” as from Arabia. All these people identified with Egypt would also “fall with them by the sword.” JFB also identifies “men of the land that is in league” as those from Israel who had sought refuge in Egypt, including the captive prophet Jeremiah.

Ezek. 30:6 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.

Again, the prophet states that all the allies of Egypt will fall. Egypt will be humbled when her land is destroyed from the north to the south (cf note at 29:10 re “tower of Syene). Point is again made that they will fall to the sword—to the armies of another nation.

Ezek. 30:7 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.

Ezek. 30:8 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.

These verses are declaring that Egypt will be only one of many countries around her that will face or had already faced desolation; the cities of Egypt will be wasted in the same way as many cities surrounding her. The Complete Jewish Bible indicates that the desolation and waste of Egypt and her cities will be worse when compared to other nations around her.

“They will be desolate even when compared with other desolate countries, likewise her cities in comparison with other ruined cities.”

Again the declaration—“They shall know that I am the LORD.” Sadly, the next word is “when.” It is so sad that men often have to experience the judgment of God before they will recognize Him as God. God has sovereignly given man the ability to make choices; he can choose to reject God or accept Him in faith as Lord, but he will be made to recognize or acknowledge God as LORD.

Again emphasis is made that the fire that is set in Egypt will spread to destroy all her allies.

Ezek. 30:9 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.

I can't help but want to make a connection with this verse and Isaiah 18. If that connection is valid, it would seem that the messengers from God that go to Ethiopia with a message that causes fear would be coming from Egypt. Adam Clarke's commentary indicates that these messengers are the mighty ships of Babylon's military.

The clear truth is that Ethiopia will suffer great pain in the same way that Egypt is made to suffer. This would indicate that Egypt was conquered first and, in my mind, would support the idea of the messengers coming from Egypt—escapees seeking refuge.

Ezek. 30:10 Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also make the multitude of Egypt to cease by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon.

Ezek. 30:11 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.

These verses identify Nebuchadnezzar as the leader of the forces that will destroy Egypt and her allies. The numbers of people who will die will “fill the land.”

Ezek. 30:12 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*.

The rivers were the main source for Egypt's prosperity. God is declaring that He will dry up her rivers and sell or surrender (from the Hebrew) the land and its merchandise to the “wicked.” That was interesting phrasing to me. Even though Nebuchadnezzar is the vessel that God is choosing to use to accomplish His will in this judgment, he is still identified as *wicked*. God can use a dishonorable

vessel to accomplish His purposes just as surely as an honorable vessel; history is full of examples of this truth—from Pharaoh (whom He used to exhibit His power and glory through His deliverance of the Israelites) to Hitler (whom He used to bring about the rebirth of the nation of Israel after almost 2000 years of no Jewish homeland).

Ezek. 30:13 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.

This verse begins a further description of the destruction to come upon Egypt. God is going to destroy her idols. Noph, also known as Memphis, was the capital of Upper Egypt (in the south—that always confuses me) or Middle Egypt according to JFB; it was located near today's city of Cairo. No prince or successor to the crown will survive the destruction. God is going to cause the whole land to fear for their future.

Ezek. 30:14 And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in Zoan, and will execute judgments in No.

Ezek. 30:15 And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt; and I will cut off the multitude of No.

Ezek. 30:16 And I will set fire in Egypt: Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have distresses daily.

In the previous chapter we learned that Pathros was the designation for what is generally called Upper Egypt. Zoan is identified as the ancient capital of Egypt. According to the Bible Dictionary at www.christiananswers.net, Zoan was the capital of the Hyksos or shepherd kings who ruled in Egypt for 500 years; they identify it with the city of Goshen. No is also known as Thebes and according to Strong's Concordance was the capital of Upper Egypt. (I sure wish these historians would get their facts together; whatever, we know that these are all important cities in Egypt.) According to Easton's Bible Dictionary, the grandeur and extent of No was comparable to that of Nineveh. Burton Coffman makes note that "No was famous as a residential city for the Pharaohs between 1380 and 930 B.C.; and many of the greatest of the Pharaohs were buried there." JFB describes Sin as "Pelusium, the frontier fortress on the northeast, therefore called 'the strength (that is, the key) of Egypt.'" It stands in antithesis to No or Thebes at the opposite end of Egypt; that is, I will afflict Egypt from one end to the other."

Point is again made that it is God who is going to set the fire of judgment in Egypt.

Ezek. 30:17 The young men of Aven and of Pibeseth shall fall by the sword: and these *cities* shall go into captivity.

The Hebrew for Aven is a word that describes exertion that produces no results, vanity. Most translators and commentators make identification with On or Heliopolis, the city of the sun, home to the temple to the sun gods. Vanity is a good word in association with idol worship; these idols would be totally impotent in stopping the hand of God's judgment. Pibeseth is also known as Bubastis, in honor of the feline goddess Bubastis; she was worshipped in Greece as Artemis, the goddess of the hunt, according to Wikipedia.

Ezek. 30:18 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.

I couldn't really find much about this city other than that it was a city close to the border that at one point was home to some Jews. There must have been some significance for its being singled out. Maybe it was because it was home to some Jews during the time of Jeremiah who thought that they would find security there rather than in the Almighty God of Israel. In doing a word search on Tehaphnehes I found the following passage in Jeremiah that supports this thought and applies to other places mentioned as well.

Jer. 44:1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country of Pathros, saying,

Jer. 44:12 And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, *and* fall in the land of Egypt; they shall *even* be consumed by the sword *and* by the famine: they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, *and* an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach.

Jer. 44:13 For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence:

Jer. 44:14 So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape.

This city, as well as all the others in Egypt, would experience a very dark day when Egypt fell. Not only does the thundercloud represent the oncoming storm of Nebuchadnezzar's troops, it also pictures the gloom and despair that the people will experience as the mighty land of Egypt falls and her children are taken captive.

Ezek. 30:19 Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt: and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Again the declaration—"they shall KNOW that I am the LORD."

I am reminded that scripture states that it is God's goodness and longsuffering that leads us to faith and repentance.

Rom. 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

If, however, we choose to harden our hearts and reject His call, we will be made to acknowledge that He is LORD.

Ezek. 30:20 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, This message is dated as having come a couple of months after the first message in chapter 29.

Ezek. 30:21 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.

Ezek. 30:22 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.

Ezek. 30:23 And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

The first thing that stands out to me in this verse is the past tense—"I have broken..." God's judgment once purposed is as good as done. The prophet Isaiah states this truth clearly.

Is. 14:24 The LORD of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:

The arm is a symbol of strength in the scripture.

Ex. 15:16 Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be *as* still as a stone;

Deut. 5:15 And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm:

Is. 40:10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong *hand*, and his arm shall rule for him:

Is. 62:8 The LORD hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength,

Once judgment falls, the Pharaoh will never again experience the power that he has enjoyed among the nations until that time. God declares boldly that He will break the arms of Pharaoh (remove him from power) and will cause the sword to fall from his hand (make his military strength ineffective and weak). Burton Coffman's Commentary was more specific regarding the application of this wording to Egypt.

"The flexed arm was a common symbol for the strength of Pharaoh. Statues and images of Pharaoh showed the flexed arm, wielding a sword in battle. A king with a great biceps was a popular conception during the Saites Dynasty in the times of Ezekiel. Also another title taken by Pharaoh-Hophra was, 'The Strong armed.' Thus the defeat of Pharaoh-Hophra was most appropriately described by the expression 'breaking his arm.'"

Verse 23 declares that the people of Egypt will be dispersed among the nations just as surely as the Jews had been.

Ezek. 30:24 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*.

Ezek. 30:25 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.

Ezek. 30:26 And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries; and they shall know that I *am* the LORD.

Point is again made that Nebuchadnezzar is but the tool in the hand of the Lord to accomplish His purposes. God is the One empowering Neb and his armies. He is the one that is removing Egypt from a position of power among the nations. God is unwavering in His purpose to have the Egyptians recognize that He is the LORD.

The purpose of prophecy is to testify to just that—not only among the Jewish people but among the nations. Prophecy is a unique attribute of God.

Is. 42:8 I *am* the LORD: that *is* my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Is. 42:9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.

The prophecy along with its fulfillment is an undeniable proof of the hand of God at work according to His word.