

Ezekiel
25-31

Syllabus

1. Course Requirements: The student will be required to read the Commentary which serves as the Course Textbook. At the conclusion of the course, the student will write a 5-10 page exegesis of a passage from the book of Ezekiel of his or her choosing.
2. Course Textbook: **The Book of Ezekiel**, 2 Volumes, Daniel Block.
3. Course Methodology: The student should read the lectures of the Professor which follow in conjunction with the course textbook. That is, as the student reads Ezekiel 1:1-10 in the lectures to follow then or she should read the textbook treatment of that passage and then move on to the next segment.
4. At the conclusion of the lectures for the whole of the course, there is a select bibliography which the student should consult for further study.

Introductory Remarks: Our purpose in this study of the great prophet Ezekiel is to understand what he says. Understanding requires work sometimes; and since Paul admonishes us to “study to show ourselves approved” that is exactly what I plan to do. We are going to study Ezekiel. In depth, thoroughly and at times precisely. Yet the understanding of Scripture is always worth the effort. My procedure will be simple: we will look at a verse or verses and I will, to the best of my ability, strive to tell you what Ezekiel is talking about.

In depth study is not everyone’s cup of tea, I grant you. Some wish merely to glance while others are of such a nature that they want to squeeze every drop of meaning that they can from every fruitful verse. I fall into this second camp, unapologetically. So, I warn you in advance, we will not be glancing here. If you wish to glance there are some fine, 5 page study booklets that summarize Ezekiel at your local Christian bookstore.

And now to a bit of **background**: Ezekiel worked as a prophet after the disastrous year 597 BC. In that year the Babylonians hauled off the leading people of Jerusalem and Judah and dispersed them to various encampments in the Babylonian empire. His sermons are, therefore, “crisis sermons” in the sense that they are addressed to people in the most extreme crises of uncertainty, fear, sorrow, and regret. We will not hear him rightly if we do not understand or appreciate this simple fact. Every good speaker knows the first rule of communicating: know your audience. Ezekiel did.

**25:1 And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying,
2 Son of man, set thy face toward the children of Ammon, and prophesy against them:**

3 and say unto the children of Ammon, Hear the word of the Lord Jehovah: Thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Because thou saidst, Aha, against my sanctuary, when it was profaned; and against the land of Israel, when it was made desolate; and against the house of Judah, when they went into captivity:

4 therefore, behold, I will deliver thee to the children of the east for a possession, and they shall set their encampments in thee, and make their dwellings in thee; they shall eat thy fruit, and they shall drink thy milk.

5 And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the children of Ammon a couching-place for flocks: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah.

The prophet now address Ammon and issues a formal oracle of denunciation.

6 For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because thou hast clapped thy hands, and stamped with the feet, and rejoiced with all the despite of thy soul against the land of Israel;

7 therefore, behold, I have stretched out my hand upon thee, and will deliver thee for a spoil to the nations; and I will cut thee off from the peoples, and I will cause thee to perish out of the countries: I will destroy thee; and thou shalt know that I am Jehovah.

These verses describe Ammon's reprehensible behavior.

8 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because that Moab and Seir do say, Behold, the house of Judah is like unto all the nations;

9 therefore, behold, I will open the side of Moab from the cities, from his cities which are on his frontiers, the glory of the country, Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim,

10 unto the children of the east, [to go] against the children of Ammon; and I will give them for a possession, that the children of Ammon may not be remembered among the nations.

11 and I will execute judgments upon Moab; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

This oracle concerns Moab. Moab believes Judah has no special claim on God, and in fact denies such.

12 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them;

13 therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, I will stretch out my hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman; even unto Dedan shall they fall by the sword.

14 And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel; and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my wrath; and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord Jehovah.

Edom was vicious in siding with the Babylonians in 587 BCE. Teman is the southern region of Edom and Dedan was south of Edom's territory- but which was the object of Edom's desire.

**15 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because the Philistines have dealt by revenge, and have taken vengeance with despite of soul to destroy with perpetual enmity;
16 therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I will stretch out my hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethites, and destroy the remnant of the sea coast.**

17 And I will execute great vengeance upon them with wrathful rebukes; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall lay my vengeance upon them.

The oracle against the Philistines. Yes, indeed, there were Philistines even this late in Judah's history- and no, they were not wiped out by David and Solomon. The movement of these oracles from Ammon to Edom is a clockwise circle from northeast to west. The Cherethites were people of Aegean origin who had settled on the western coast near Philistia. David drew some of his personal guard from their ranks- cf. 1 Sam 30:14, 2 Sam 8:18. Cherethite in Hebrew is כרתים and most likely indicates their origin from the island of Crete.

26:1 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first [day] of the month, that the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, because that Tyre hath said against Jerusalem, Aha, she is broken [that was] the gate of the peoples; she is turned unto me; I shall be replenished, now that she is laid waste:

3 therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah, Behold, I am against thee, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth its waves to come up.

4 And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her a bare rock.

5 She shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah; and she shall become a spoil to the nations.

6 And her daughters that are in the field shall be slain with the sword: and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

The city gate was the place where the elders met and justice was meted out. It was, to put it in modern terms, the courthouse and the barber-shop all in one in terms of conversation and legal proceedings.

7 For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will bring upon Tyre Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, king of kings, from the north, with horses, and with chariots, and with horsemen, and a company, and much people.

8 He shall slay with the sword thy daughters in the field; and he shall make forts against thee, and cast up a mound against thee, and raise up the buckler against thee.

9 And he shall set his battering engines against thy walls, and with his axes he shall break down thy towers.

10 By reason of the abundance of his horses their dust shall cover thee: thy walls shall shake at the noise of the horsemen, and of the wagons, and of the chariots, when he shall enter into thy gates, as men enter into a city wherein is made a breach.

11 With the hoofs of his horses shall he tread down all thy streets; he shall slay thy people with the sword; and the pillars of thy strength shall go down to the ground.

12 And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise; and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses; and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the waters.

13 And I will cause the noise of thy songs to cease; and the sound of thy harps shall be no more heard.

14 And I will make thee a bare rock; thou shalt be a place for the spreading of nets; thou shalt be built no more: for I Jehovah have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah.

Nebuchadnezzar was a master of siege warfare. The barrage of shields described meant that troops made something like an umbrella of their shields and advanced in close formation. Yadin has written a very useful book, *The Art of Warfare*, in which tactics and military weaponry in the Ancient Near East are fully described.

15 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah to Tyre: shall not the isles shake at the sound of thy fall, when the wounded groan, when the slaughter is made in the midst of thee?

16 Then all the princes of the sea shall come down from their thrones, and lay aside their robes, and strip off their brodered garments: they shall clothe themselves with trembling; they shall sit upon the ground, and shall tremble every moment, and be astonished at thee.

17 And they shall take up a lamentation over thee, and say to thee, How art thou destroyed, that wast inhabited by seafaring men, the renowned city, that was strong in the sea, she and her inhabitants, that caused their terror to be on all that dwelt there!

18 Now shall the isles tremble in the day of thy fall; yea, the isles that are in the sea shall be dismayed at thy departure.

These verses are a funeral lament, sung at the death of Tyre.

19 For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and the great waters shall cover thee;

20 then will I bring thee down with them that descend into the pit, to the people of old time, and will make thee to dwell in the nether parts of the earth, in the places that are desolate of old, with them that go down to the pit, that thou be not inhabited; and I will set glory in the land of the living:

21 I will make thee a terror, and thou shalt no more have any being; though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again, saith the Lord Jehovah.

Yahweh is the one who brings about the fall of Tyre, through the instrumentation of Nebuchadnezzar.

27:1 The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying,
2 And thou, son of man, take up a lamentation over Tyre;
3 and say unto Tyre, O thou that dwellest at the entry of the sea, that art the merchant of the peoples unto many isles, thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Thou, O Tyre, hast said, I am perfect in beauty.

The fate of Tyre is ordained by God; it is not fate or fiat. Tyre had two harbors, one on the north side- a natural harbor, and one on the south side which was man made.

4 Thy borders are in the heart of the seas; thy builders have perfected thy beauty.
5 They have made all thy planks of fir-trees from Senir; they have taken a cedar from Lebanon to make a mast for thee.
6 Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars; they have made thy benches of ivory inlaid in boxwood, from the isles of Kittim.
7 Of fine linen with brodered work from Egypt was thy sail, that it might be to thee for an ensign; blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was thine awning.
8 The inhabitants of Sidon and Arvad were thy rowers: thy wise men, O Tyre, were in thee, they were thy pilots.
9 The old men of Gebal and the wise men thereof were in thee thy calkers: all the ships of the sea with their mariners were in thee to deal in thy merchandise.
10 Persia and Lud and Put were in thine army, thy men of war: they hanged the shield and helmet in thee; they set forth thy comeliness.
11 The men of Arvad with thine army were upon thy walls round about, and valorous men were in thy towers; they hanged their shields upon thy walls round about; they have perfected thy beauty.

The city is likened to a magnificent ship. Tyre had grown rich by its trading endeavors. It was to the Ancient Near East what the British Empire was to the 17th century in terms of sailing and associated trade. Interestingly, Tyre's ships normally had a row of shields hanging around the side. Cf. ANEP 106.

12 Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded for thy wares.
13 Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy traffickers; they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass for thy merchandise.
14 They of the house of Togarmah traded for thy wares with horses and war-horses and mules.
15 The men of Dedan were thy traffickers; many isles were the mart of thy hand: they brought thee in exchange horns of ivory and ebony.
16 Syria was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of thy handiworks: they traded for thy wares with emeralds, purple, and brodered work, and fine linen, and coral, and rubies.
17 Judah, and the land of Israel, they were thy traffickers: they traded for thy merchandise wheat of Minnith, and pannag, and honey, and oil, and balm.

The meaning of פִּנְג is so uncertain that the translators of the ASV leave it alone- simply transliterating it "pannag". Some scholars associate it with the word for "figs".

18 Damascus was thy merchant for the multitude of thy handiworks, by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches, with the wine of Helbon, and white wool.

19 Vedan and Javan traded with yarn for thy wares: bright iron, cassia, and calamus, were among thy merchandise.

20 Dedan was thy trafficker in precious cloths for riding.

21 Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they were the merchants of thy hand; in lambs, and rams, and goats, in these were they thy merchants.

22 The traffickers of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy traffickers; they traded for thy wares with the chief of all spices, and with all precious stones, and gold.

23 Haran and Canneh and Eden, the traffickers of Sheba, Asshur [and] Chilmad, were thy traffickers.

24 These were thy traffickers in choice wares, in wrappings of blue and broidered work, and in chests of rich apparel, bound with cords and made of cedar, among thy merchandise.

25 The ships of Tarshish were thy caravans for thy merchandise: and thou wast replenished, and made very glorious in the heart of the seas.

The cargo of the ship (of state) is now described. Tarshish (Spain) was well known in ancient times for its metallurgical wealth. The lists varied range of goods denotes an intricate network connecting Tyre to virtually the whole of the ancient near east.

26 Thy rowers have brought thee into great waters: the east wind hath broken thee in the heart of the seas.

27 Thy riches, and thy wares, thy merchandise, thy mariners, and thy pilots, thy calkers, and the dealers in thy merchandise, and all thy men of war, that are in thee, with all thy company which is in the midst of thee, shall fall into the heart of the seas in the day of thy ruin.

28 At the sound of the cry of thy pilots the suburbs shall shake.

29 And all that handled the oar, the mariners, [and] all the pilots of the sea, shall come down from their ships; they shall stand upon the land,

30 and shall cause their voice to be heard over thee, and shall cry bitterly, and shall cast up dust upon their heads, they shall wallow themselves in the ashes:

31 and they shall make themselves bald for thee, and gird them with sackcloth, and they shall weep for thee in bitterness of soul with bitter mourning.

32 And in their wailing they shall take up a lamentation for thee, and lament over thee, [saying], Who is there like Tyre, like her that is brought to silence in the midst of the sea?

But the ship wrecks- the state is to be destroyed. Her pride is her ultimate destruction. And what destruction! The screams of the drowning can be heard far and wide.

33 When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou filledst many peoples; thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with the multitude of thy riches and of thy merchandise.

34 In the time that thou wast broken by the seas in the depths of the waters, thy merchandise and all thy company did fall in the midst of thee.

35 All the inhabitants of the isles are astonished at thee, and their kings are horribly afraid; they are troubled in their countenance.

36 The merchants among the peoples hiss at thee; thou art become a terror, and thou shalt nevermore have any being.

Shock and horror are the only reasonable responses to such a disaster.

28:1 The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyre, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because thy heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, I am a god, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art man, and not God, though thou didst set thy heart as the heart of God;--

The target of this judgment oracle is the ruler of Tyre, Ethbaal II.

Excursus: Tyrian Monarchs

969 BC Hiram I becomes king of Tyre and rules for 34 years

935 BC Hiram I dies and is succeeded by his son Beleazarus, who rules for 7 years

928 BC Beleazarus dies and is succeeded by his son Abdastartus, who rules for 9 years.

919 BC Abdastartus is slain in a coup led by his 4 sons and their nurse, eldest son Deleastartus becomes king.

907 BC Deleastartus dies and his son Astartus becomes king, who rules for 12 years.

895 BC Asermymus the brother of Astartus becomes king, who rules for 9 years.

887 BC +/- Asermymus is killed by his brother Pheles, who rules for only 8 months.

887 BC +/- Ethbaal, priest of Melqart, overthrows Pheles and becomes King of Tyre, who rules for 32 years.

Note: In 868 BC, Ashurnasirpal II of Assyria makes Tyre a vassal state and demands tribute.

Between 925 BC to 842 BC, Israel's King Ahab married Jezebel the daughter of the Tyrian king Ethbaal who introduced the cult of the Phoenician god Baal to Israel

855 BC Ethbaal dies and is succeeded by his son Badezorus, who rules for 6 years.

849 BC Baal-azzor (Matgenus) succeeds his father, who rules for 9 years.

A gap in our information exists between Baal-azzor and Ethbaal II. All we know for sure is:

Before 820 BC ??? King Mutto of Tyre (based on legend of founding of Carthage).

Pygmalion was king of Tyre between 820 BC and 774 BC.

Ethbaal II was king of Tyre between 744 BC and 727 BC.

In 738 BC, Ethbaal II (king of Tyre) is recorded to have paid tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III of Syria. In 724 BC the Assyrians under Shamaneser V arranged with the other Phoenician cities for three score ships and eight hundred men to take Tyre, but they were defeated by 12 Tyrian ships (the Tyrians captured 500 men). Shamaneser V then besieged the city putting guards at all the rivers and

aqueducts to stop the Tyrians from getting water, however the Tyrians had water from their wells. The siege was lifted in 720 BC, after Tyre surrendered the mainland city to Sargon II of Assyria and agreed to pay tribute. The Assyrians took Israel in 721 BC and Egypt in 720 BC. In 705 BC, Tyre stopped paying tribute to the Assyrians and were again besieged by Sennacherib of Assyria for 5 years and again they lost the mainland city. The king of Tyre escaped to Cyprus and was replaced by a loyal vassal of Assyria. By 701 BC, the Assyrians had taken all the cities of Phoenicia except the island stronghold of Tyre. In 672 BC, Tyre is again besieged by Esarshaddon, but is not taken. Tyre withstood yet another siege by Ashurbanipal in 668/667 BC and finally surrenders to Ashurbanipal in 663 BC. Despite all the battles for control, Tyre generally benefited from trade relations with the Assyrian Empire.

**3 behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that is hidden from thee;
4 by thy wisdom and by thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures;
5 by thy great wisdom [and] by thy traffic hast thou increased thy riches, and thy heart is lifted up because of thy riches;--**

His excessive pride drives him to make claims that are unreal and unrealistic.

**6 therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Because thou hast set thy heart as the heart of God,
7 therefore, behold, I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.
8 They shall bring thee down to the pit; and thou shalt die the death of them that are slain, in the heart of the seas.
9 Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou art man, and not God, in the hand of him that woundeth thee.
10 Thou shalt die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord Jehovah.**

Yahweh's punishment disproves Ethbaal's divine claims.

**11 Moreover the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying,
12 Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.
13 Thou wast in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was in thee; in the day that thou wast created they were prepared.
14 Thou wast the anointed cherub that covereth: and I set thee, [so that] thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.
15 Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee.**

16 By the abundance of thy traffic they filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore have I cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; and I have destroyed thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

17 Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty; thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I have cast thee to the ground; I have laid thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

18 By the multitude of thine iniquities, in the unrighteousness of thy traffic, thou hast profaned thy sanctuaries; therefore have I brought forth a fire from the midst of thee; it hath devoured thee, and I have turned thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.

19 All they that know thee among the peoples shall be astonished at thee: thou art become a terror, and thou shalt nevermore have any being.

Vv 11-19 seem to show Ethbaal as a devilish character- in a sense almost the embodiment of the Devil, as the description here shows. This comparison intends to show the wickedness of the king.

20 And the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying,

21 Son of man, set thy face toward Sidon, and prophesy against it,

22 and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against thee, O Sidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be sanctified in her.

23 For I will send pestilence into her, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall fall in the midst of her, with the sword upon her on every side; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

24 And there shall be no more a pricking brier unto the house of Israel, nor a hurting thorn of any that are round about them, that did despite unto them; and they shall know that I am the Lord Jehovah.

Sidon was a coastal city 25 miles north of Tyre. Cf. Jer 27:3. They will be punished for harassing Judea when the Babylonians arrived.

25 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: When I shall have gathered the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and shall be sanctified in them in the sight of the nations, then shall they dwell in their own land which I gave to my servant Jacob.

26 And they shall dwell securely therein; yea, they shall build houses, and plant vineyards, and shall dwell securely, when I have executed judgments upon all those that do them despite round about them; and they shall know that I am Jehovah their God.

These verses look forward to the restoration of the Judeans to their own land. They are pointed beyond themselves to the reality of God's covenant.

29:1 In the tenth year, in the tenth [month], in the twelfth [day] of the month, the word of Jehovah 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 Jehovah: Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great monster that lieth in the midst of his rivers, that hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself.

4 And 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, with all the fish of thy rivers which stick unto thy scales.

5 And I will cast thee forth into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers: thou shalt fall upon the open field; thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered; I have given thee for food to the beasts of the earth and to the birds of the heavens.

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

The third block of oracles against foreign powers begins in this chapter. The oracle here is dated 7 January, 587 BCE, half a year before the fall of Jerusalem. Hophra became involved in attempts to rebel against Babylon. Yahweh, however, is more than his equal.

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

8 Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and will cut off from thee man and beast.

9 And the land of Egypt shall be a desolation and a waste; and they shall know that I am Jehovah. Because he hath said, The river is mine, and I have made it;

God would requite the Egyptian Pharaoh and his land.

10 therefore, behold, I am against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from the tower of Seveneh 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 a desolation in the midst of the countries that are desolate; and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be a desolation forty years; and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries.

13 For thus saith the Lord Jehovah: At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the peoples whither they were scattered;

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

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

Forty years in biblical parlance is simply “a generation”. A generation would serve the divine sentence here imposed.

16 And it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing iniquity to remembrance, when they turn to look after them: and they shall know that I am the Lord Jehovah.

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 Jehovah came unto me, saying,

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

This segment dates to April 26, 571 BCE which was the 13th year of the siege of Tyre (586-573) and is the last dated oracle of Ezekiel.

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

20 I have given him the land of Egypt as his recompense for which he served, because they wrought for me, saith the Lord Jehovah.

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

Judah and the prophet would both benefit from God's action in dealing with Egypt.

30:1 The word of Jehovah came again unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Wail ye, Alas for the day!

3 For the day is near, even the day of Jehovah is near; it shall be a day of clouds, a time of the nations.

4 And a sword shall come upon Egypt, and anguish 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 Put, and Lud, and all the mingled people, and Cub, and the children of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword.

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

The Day of the Lord is frequently used as an image of judgement against the enemies of Israel; as here. But it is also turned on it's head on occasion and used against Israel and Judah as well.

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 at I am Jehovah, when I have set a fire in Egypt, and all her helpers are destroyed.

9 In that day shall messengers go forth from before me in ships to make the careless Ethiopians afraid; and there shall be anguish upon them, as in the day of Egypt; for, lo, it cometh.

The thrust of these verses is that a sense of dread and fear might befall those who hear of judgement.

10 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: 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 in 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 will sell the land into the hand of evil men; and I will make the land desolate, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I, Jehovah, have spoken it.

These verses once were independent but have been melded into their present context by the final redactor of the work. It interrupts the flow of the passage as a whole. Its meaning is clear- Egypt is weak and powerless in Yahweh's presence.

13 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause the images to cease from Memphis; and there shall be no more a prince from 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 a fire in Zoan, and will execute judgments upon No.

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

16 And I will set a fire in Egypt: Sin shall be in great anguish, and No shall be broken up; and Memphis [shall have] adversaries in the day-time.

17 The young men of Aven and of Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword; and these [cities] shall go into captivity.

18 At Tehaphnehes also the day shall withdraw itself, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt, and the pride of her power 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 upon Egypt; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

These cities are a catalog of Egypt's most important military and governmental centers. Even these powerhouses are subject to destruction.

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 Jehovah came unto me, saying,

21 Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, lo, it hath not been bound up, to apply [healing] medicines, to put a bandage to bind it, that it be strong to hold the sword.

This oracle dates to 29 April, 587 BCE- three months before the Babylonians managed to break through Jerusalem's walls.

22 Therefore thus saith the Lord Jehovah: Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will break his arms, the strong [arm], 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 the arms of Pharaoh, and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded man.

25 And I will hold up the arms of the king of Babylon; and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; and they shall know that I am Jehovah, 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 through the countries; and they shall know that I am Jehovah.

Yahweh will use the Babylonian king to do his will in Egypt just as he had in Judah and Tyre. The nations are in the hand of God to use as he wishes.

31:1 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the third [month], in the first [day] of the month, that the word of Jehovah came unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, say unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude: Whom art thou like in thy greatness?

This oracle is dated June 21, 587 and the siege of Jerusalem was continuing. Unfortunately the Judeans thought Egypt would still ride to their rescue.

3 Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a forest-like shade, and of high stature; and its top was among the thick boughs.

4 The waters nourished it, the deep made it to grow: the rivers thereof ran round about its plantation; and it sent out its channels unto all the trees of the field.

The "cosmic tree" is a well known literary device of ancient Near Eastern mythology.

5 Therefore its stature was exalted above all the trees of the field; and its boughs were multiplied, and its branches became long by reason of many waters, when it shot [them] forth.

6 All the birds of the heavens made their nests in its boughs; and under its branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young; and under its shadow dwelt all great nations.

7 Thus was it fair in its greatness, in the length of its branches; for its root was by many waters.

8 The cedars in the garden of God could not hide it; the fir-trees were not like its boughs, and the plane-trees were not as its branches; nor was any tree in the garden of God like unto it in its beauty.

9 I made it fair by the multitude of its branches, so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied it.

The tree, for all the good things said of it, is not made by itself nor can it maintain itself.

10 Therefore thus said the Lord Jehovah: Because thou art exalted in stature, and he hath set his top among the thick boughs, and his heart is lifted up in his height;

11 I will even deliver him into the hand of the mighty one of the nations; he shall surely deal with him; I have driven him out for his wickedness.

12 And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the watercourses of the land; and all the peoples of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him.

13 Upon his ruin all the birds of the heavens shall dwell, and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches;

14 to the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves in their stature, neither set their top among the thick boughs, nor that their mighty ones stand up on their height, [even] all that drink water: for they are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit.

The tree's former glory and power are replaced as it has become the haunt of beasts.

15 Thus saith the Lord Jehovah: In the day when he went down to Sheol I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the rivers thereof; and the great waters were stayed; and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him.

16 I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to Sheol with them that descend into the pit; and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, were comforted in the nether parts of the earth.

17 They also went down into Sheol with him unto them that are slain by the sword; yea, they that were his arm, [that] dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the nations.

18 To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised, with them that are slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord Jehovah.

There seems to have been an Israelite custom that infants who died before they were circumcised were buried separately from other people, and that this gave rise to the notion that they also experienced Sheol differently as well.