



Ezekiel - Lesson 29-30

Chapters 29-30

P.O. Box 702107
San Antonio, Texas, 78270
210.319.5055

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- Our study last week tackled the strange and fascinating story of Tyre
 - The city-state of Tyre was one of Israel's historical enemies which God promised Israel He would judge
 - Tyre was one of seven enemies that Ezekiel includes in this section of his book
 - We've studied Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia, Tyre, and at the very end of last week, Sidon
 - And after we conclude these prophecies about the enemies of Israel, we reach the second half of Ezekiel's prophecy
 - In the second half of this book, starting at Chapter 33, we will enter a new section of prophecy looking at the Kingdom to come
 - That will be a challenging set of prophecies to tackle
 - But before we get there, we still have the matter of one remaining enemy of Israel: Egypt
 - Ezekiel's prophecy against Egypt is divided into seven distinct messages
 - In fact, the seven messages against Egypt are equal in length to all six of the prophecies against the prior enemies
 - That reflects Egypt's unique importance in corrupting Israel
- We'll look at their influence throughout these messages, but we already know about Egypt's role in introducing Israel to idolatry
 - Earlier in this book we learned that Israel was first taken in by idolatry while they were living in the land before slavery
 - Later they brought idolatry with them as they left Egypt
 - And it has dogged them ever since
 - Egypt was the beginning of that curse, and it was because of idolatry that Israel is now facing exile and the destruction of the city and temple
 - So it makes sense that the Lord has saved His greatest judgment for this nation
 - But this section of prophecy is some of the most difficult to interpret
 - And therefore it's some of the most divisive among scholars
 - Some see these prophecies as entirely fulfilled in past events while other see some of these events as past and some as future
 - Adding to the confusion is the fact that some of these prophecies are out of order chronologically
 - Remember that Ezekiel is known for dating his prophecies precisely
 - So as we look at the dates, we will see that he presents them out of order, so we need to understand why he's doing that
- So we begin with the first of the seven messages

Ezek. 29:1 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

Ezek. 29:2 “Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt and

prophecy against him and against all Egypt.

Ezek. 29:3 “Speak and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD,
“Behold, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt,
The great monster that lies in the midst of his rivers,
That has said, ‘My Nile is mine, and I myself have made it.’

Ezek. 29:4 “I will put hooks in your jaws
And make the fish of your rivers cling to your scales.
And I will bring you up out of the midst of your rivers,
And all the fish of your rivers will cling to your scales.

Ezek. 29:5 “I will abandon you to the wilderness, you and all the fish of your
rivers;
You will fall on the open field; you will not be brought together or gathered.
I have given you for food to the beasts of the earth and to the birds of the sky.

Ezek. 29:6 “Then all the inhabitants of Egypt will know that I am the LORD,
Because they have been only a staff made of reed to the house of Israel.

Ezek. 29:7 “When they took hold of you with the hand,
You broke and tore all their hands;
And when they leaned on you,
You broke and made all their loins quake.”

- Based on the date of this prophecy, Ezekiel received this oracle in the year before the first oracle against Tyre
 - The specific date on our modern calendar would be January 7, 587 BC
 - This date is important because of how it relates to historical events of that time
 - During the time Ezekiel receives these prophecies about Israel’s enemies, the city of Jerusalem is under siege by Nebuchadnezzar
 - That siege lasts about three years, but it goes through stages
 - At about 588 BC Egypt came to Israel’s aid against Nebuchadnezzar’s army and helped break the siege against the city
 - The Egyptians had been trying to dominate Israel and take the territory away from Nebuchadnezzar
 - So when Babylon came to siege Jerusalem in their third attack, the Pharaoh saw an opportunity to defeat Babylon and take Israel
 - But after less than a year, the Babylonians had repelled the Egyptians and re-established a siege of Jerusalem
 - They re-established the siege in 587 BC as Ezekiel was receiving this prophecy concerning Egypt
 - Now we might think that God would be pleased with Egypt for helping defend Israel...*except that God sent the Babylonians*
 - Babylon was the instrument of God’s judgment against Israel
 - So ironically Egypt made themselves an enemy of God even as they tried to defend Jerusalem

- Therefore, at the same time that Babylon was repelling Egypt, the Lord was speaking to Israel through their prophet in judgment against Egypt
 - Notice in v.2 that this prophecy is against the leader of the nation but also against all the people of Egypt
 - So the punishments God pronounces are against the entire nation, not just the leadership
 - That detail helps us begin to form an opinion about what time these events take place
 - In v.3 the Lord promises that He will set Himself against the Pharaoh
 - The Lord calls the Pharaoh a great monster that lies in the midst of the rivers
 - The Hebrew word for monster is actually the ancient word for serpent (Satan)
 - So the Lord is not-so-subtly calling Pharaoh an instrument of Satan
 - Similar to what we studied with Tyre, the leader of the nation and the power behind the throne have an unholy union
 - Satan is working behind the scenes to bring down Israel
 - And he's manifesting that work in the heart of the Egyptian king by creating in him a prideful heart
 - Notice in v.3 the Pharaoh says that the Nile is his, when in fact the earth belongs to the Lord
 - Egyptians thought the Nile was a god, and the Pharaoh also claimed to be a god who created the Nile
 - So because of his prideful arrogance against Israel, the Lord says in v.4 He will pull the Pharaohs out of Egypt like fish out of water
 - They will be pulled out by hooks, which was the way Egyptians pulled crocodiles out of the water before killing them
 - The Lord explains in v.5 that this means that the king and all his people would be abandoned to the wilderness
 - The king and the people would fall on the open field and become food for birds
- Finally, in vs.6-7 the Lord gives the charge against the nation: they were like a walking staff for Israel made from a Nile reed
 - A walking staff made walking on rocky ground safe, but if your staff was not strong, it was a serious liability
 - A staff that broke at the wrong moment could lead the person to tumble down, perhaps over a cliff
 - That's the picture the Lord uses to describes Egypt's relationship to Israel
 - They portrayed themselves as a staff to support Israel in difficult times
 - As when famine hit Israel, the Jews would go to Egypt for support
 - And when Nebuchadnezzar attacked Jerusalem, the nation looked to Egypt for help
 - But Egypt was like a staff made from a thick Nile reed, that although it looked like

it could support weight, in the end it collapses

- And as it does, it causes Israel to stumble
- That's a succinct record of Israel's history with Egypt
- Israel leaned on Egypt when it shouldn't have, and in the end Egypt always caused Israel to stumble
- So for that the Lord will judge the king and the people

Ezek. 29:8 'Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will bring upon you a sword and I will cut off from you man and beast.

Ezek. 29:9 "The land of Egypt will become a desolation and waste. Then they will know that I am the LORD. Because you said, 'The Nile is mine, and I have made it,'

Ezek. 29:10 therefore, behold, I am against you and against your rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt an utter waste and desolation, from Migdol to Syene and even to the border of Ethiopia.

Ezek. 29:11 "A man's foot will not pass through it, and the foot of a beast will not pass through it, and it will not be inhabited for forty years.

Ezek. 29:12 "So I will make the land of Egypt a desolation in the midst of desolated lands. And her cities, in the midst of cities that are laid waste, will be desolate forty years; and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands."

Ezek. 29:13 '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.

Ezek. 29:14 "I will turn the fortunes of Egypt and make them return to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin, and there they will be a lowly kingdom.

Ezek. 29:15 "It will be the lowest of the kingdoms, and it will never again lift itself up above the nations. And I will make them so small that they will not rule over the nations.

Ezek. 29:16 "And it will never again be the confidence of the house of Israel, bringing to mind the iniquity of their having turned to Egypt. Then they will know that I am the Lord GOD."'"

- This is the judgment God promises to bring against the nation, so let's take note of the details as we try to identify the time and nature of the judgment
 - First, the Lord said He will bring against Pharaoh a sword and cut off man and beast
 - In fact, the land will become desolate and a waste because of the pride of the nation and the king
 - The Lord says this desolation will extend from Migdol to Syene to Ethiopia, locations in the extreme north and south and west of Egypt
 - So the point is that the entire length of the nation of Egypt will be absent people and animals
 - In fact, neither a human foot nor the foot of a beast will even pass through the

land

- Such devastation has not happened to Egypt since this prophecy was given, which leads us to look to future events
 - Nevertheless, some commentaries suggest this prophecy was fulfilled in ancient time when Egypt was conquered by Babylon
 - But the only way to reach that conclusion is by overlooking these details or assuming that the Lord is exaggerating
- But the context doesn't indicate we should interpret it as anything other than a literal description
 - We have geographical markers in the description
 - We have literal descriptions of devastation and abandonment, including descriptions of the absence of animals
- And we even have a timetable for this destruction: forty years
 - The Lord says in v.11 that this period of abandonment will last forty years
 - For forty years the land will be unoccupied by man or beast
 - And in v.12 the Lord adds that the citizens of the nation will be dispersed among the other nations for that period of time
 - That degree of specificity strongly indicates that this is a description of literal events
 - And if so, then they must be future events since they are so dramatic they can't compare to anything in our past
 - That leaves the only conclusion that this is a period in the coming Kingdom
 - We've already seen prophecies concerning other enemies of Israel that referred to future destruction in the Kingdom
 - Therefore, it isn't unprecedented to conclude that these prophecies are also looking forward to the Kingdom
 - And if so, then we find further confirmation in the way this first message ends
 - In v.13 the Lord says that after 40 years, He will gather the Egyptians back to their land
 - That is strikingly similar to language the Lord uses in relationship to Israel's judgment
 - Israel is scattered outside their land for a time and then allowed to return later
 - So if we conclude that God's promises to scatter and regather Israel are to be taken literally, then we must apply the same logic to interpreting these prophecies
 - Egypt is likewise being scattered to be regathered later
 - They return to Pathros, the Lord says in v.14, to the land of their origin
 - Pathros is the southern half of Egypt near Thebes
- From this place, the newly returned Egyptians will never again be a mighty people
 - They will be a lowly nation that can never rule another nation again
 - More importantly, Egypt will never again be an attractive supporter to Israel

- Israel will never again place their confidence in Egypt instead of the Lord
- The effect of this judgment will be that the people of Egypt come to recognize the Lord is the only One
 - Now that would be a truly remarkable outcome given Egypt's history
 - Egypt has never been anything other than a pagan nation
 - The latest incarnation of false religion is Islam
- So once again, we're forced to look into the future, to the Kingdom
 - The sword that begins this judgment back in v.8 must refer to the sword of Christ at His second coming

Rev. 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

Rev. 19:12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.

Rev. 19:13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

Rev. 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

Rev. 19:15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.

Rev. 19:16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

- The sword Christ wields is His word of power, by which He destroys His enemies under the Antichrist's rule, including Egypt
- Also in Ezekiel 29:5 we read that the bodies destroyed in the judgment would become food for birds
 - And likewise, we hear that same truth repeated in the description of Jesus' return

Rev. 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God,

Rev. 19:18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great."

Rev. 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

Rev. 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had

received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

Rev. 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

- So it seems reasonable to conclude that the judgment taking place in Ezekiel is the judgment of Christ's second coming
- And at that moment, the entire nation of Egypt will be judged
- Furthermore, at the end of the battle, the nation will experience a period of forty years without any inhabitants
 - That would mean that for the first forty years of the 1,000 year Kingdom, the nation of Egypt exists but the land stands empty
 - Then after 40 years, the Lord allows the nation to be repopulated
 - But the resulting nation is not a powerful entity on earth and it certainly never challenges Israel again
- Now assuming my interpretation is correct, then that means Ezekiel started with a prophecy that looks far into the future
 - So from there he moves to a prophecy about events that were soon to happen to Egypt

Ezek. 29:17 Now in the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

Ezek. 29:18 "Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre; every head was made bald and every shoulder was rubbed bare. But he and his army had no wages from Tyre for the labor that he had performed against it."

Ezek. 29:19 Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, "Behold, I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. And he will carry off her wealth and capture her spoil and seize her plunder; and it will be wages for his army.

Ezek. 29:20 "I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor which he performed, because they acted for Me," declares the Lord GOD.

Ezek. 29:21 "On that day I will make a horn sprout for the house of Israel, and I will open your mouth in their midst. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

- This prophecy came on April 26, 571 BC, which means it came to Ezekiel seventeen years after the one we just studied
 - By the order of the seven messages, we count this as the second prophecy against Egypt
 - But based on the dates of the prophecies, this is the sixth message Ezekiel received about Egypt
 - So why does Ezekiel move this prophecy up earlier in his book?
- This message concerns events that intended to balance the first message
 - The earlier prophecy in this chapter is the ultimate judgment on the nation

- But that judgment will not happen for a long time
- So in the meantime the Lord shows the people that there will be other judgments too
- So that as these near term judgments come to pass in Ezekiel's day, they give Israel confidence to trust in Ezekiel's Kingdom prophecies too
- So Ezekiel now reveals to Israel how Nebuchadnezzar would be given Egypt as spoil in a future military battle
 - But notice that the battle begins with Tyre again
 - After Nebuchadnezzar besieged and destroyed Jerusalem for the third time, the Babylonian army moved north
 - Soon after he seized Tyre
 - If you remember I said that the siege of Jerusalem lasted 3 years, during which time Ezekiel wrote most of these prophecies
 - And then the siege of Tyre lasted 13 years beyond that
 - So Ezekiel is writing this prophecy around the time of Tyre's fall to Babylon
 - As we learned before, Tyre's fall was earth shattering news to the ancient world
 - So the captives in Babylon would have certainly heard of Tyre's fall when it happened
 - Which would have validated the earlier prophecies of Ezekiel
 - So now the Lord is speaking through Ezekiel to the exiles to tell them that now that Nebuchadnezzar had succeeded in Tyre, he would go to Egypt to get paid
 - Notice in v.18 we're told that the battle against Tyre was hard work for Babylon's army
 - Every head was bald, made so by having to wear a helmet for so many years
 - And every shoulder had been rubbed raw by the coat of armor
 - Even worse, the army hadn't been paid for their service
 - To understand that statement, you have to know how ancient armies made their living
 - Armies were paid little or nothing by their master
 - The incentive to join the army was the booty they could collect from the vanquished
 - But when you consider the army had fought for 13 years at Tyre, they didn't get near enough booty from such a small city
 - Much of the city's wealth had been consumed in the long siege or lost in the battle itself
 - In fact, there is historical evidence that Tyre and Egypt were allies against Babylon
 - So Tyre may have depleted its wealth by smuggling it out to pay Egypt for support and supplies
- So after 13 years you have an unhappy, tired army that wants to be paid

- So the Lord says His judgment over Egypt will include turning Egypt into spoil for Nebuchadnezzar's army
 - In v.19 the Lord says He gives Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar so he can carry off its wealth
 - This only make sense that the wealth of Tyre ended up in Egypt's hands
 - And because Egypt was again trying to thwart God's justice by opposing Babylon just as they did with Jerusalem (v.20)
- So the Lord's justice will prevail over both Tyre and Egypt
 - Nebuchadnezzar invaded Egypt around 568 BC
 - And as he did, the Lord says in v.21, Israel began to grow a horn, so to speak
 - A horn is a depiction of strength and power in the Bible
 - So the idea is that Israel's future immediately became stronger as Egypt was weakened
- This is the third time in Scripture that we've seen this kind of judgment against Egypt
 - You'll remember that when Abraham and Sarah went into Egypt, they left with many possessions
 - And you'll remember that when Israel left Egypt in the Exodus, the people left with many possessions from Egypt
 - And now we see the Lord taking spoil from Egypt again, which is leading Israel to have a stronger position
- Now, as we leave Chapter 29, I told you that this section of Ezekiel's prophecies is particularly hard to interpret – and it's about to get a little harder
 - We continue into the third message of seven against the nation

Ezek. 30:1 The word of the LORD came again to me saying,

Ezek. 30:2 “Son of man, prophesy and say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Wail, ‘Alas for the day!’

**Ezek. 30:3 “For the day is near,
Even the day of the LORD is near;
It will be a day of clouds,
A time of doom for the nations.**

**Ezek. 30:4 “A sword will come upon Egypt,
And anguish will be in Ethiopia;
When the slain fall in Egypt,
They take away her wealth,
And her foundations are torn down.**

Ezek. 30:5 “Ethiopia, Put, Lud, all Arabia, Libya and the people of the land that is in league will fall with them by the sword.”

**Ezek. 30:6 ‘Thus says the LORD,
“Indeed, those who support Egypt will fall
And the pride of her power will come down;
From Migdol to Syene**

**They will fall within her by the sword,”
Declares the Lord GOD.**

Ezek. 30:7 “They will be desolate

In the midst of the desolated lands;

And her cities will be

In the midst of the devastated cities.

Ezek. 30:8 “And they will know that I am the LORD,

When I set a fire in Egypt

And all her helpers are broken.

**Ezek. 30:9 “On that day messengers will go forth from Me in ships to frighten
secure Ethiopia; and anguish will be on them as on the day of Egypt; for
behold, it comes!”**

- This prophecy is undated, and therefore it makes it a little hard to place among the list of seven messages
 - It comes third in sequence of Ezekiel’s book, but was it a later prophecy moved up like the previous message?
 - Looking at the content, it seems to join up with the first message, because it’s evidently looking at end times
 - The phrase “day of the Lord” is a key marker
 - That phrase generally means the seven-year period of Tribulation on earth
 - Secondly, notice the opening descriptions of the promise of judgment
 - It’s a day of doom and gloom for all the nations, not just one
 - And it includes the slain in Ethiopia, Put, Lud and Libya
 - These are Egypt’s neighbors and they are likewise destroyed in the great doom
 - Many of these surrounding nations contributed soldiers to Egypt’s army, which is why they are included in this judgment
 - And again the Lord mentions the cities being left desolate
 - So it would seem this is also a prophecy of far, distant events
 - But now it’s speaking about the Tribulation, which immediately precedes the judgment of Christ’s second coming
 - So the land is devastated in the judgments of Tribulation even before the ultimate judgment inflicted by Christ
 - In v.9 we see reference to ships sent by the Lord that are so mighty they frighten even secure Ethiopia
 - This is an obscure reference, and it’s one reason some believe this is talking about events of the past instead of the future
 - But too much of the rest of the prophecy won’t fit a historical view
- Interestingly, based on my interpretation we start to see a pattern in the messages
 - Ezekiel’s first message was about distant destruction at Christ’s Second Coming

- Then we had a prophecy of near-term destruction of the nation by Nebuchadnezzar
- Clearly, the destruction at Christ's return is much greater than what Nebuchadnezzar accomplished
- Then we seem to return to the first theme with a prophecy about the ultimate destruction of the nation in the time of Tribulation
 - And if the pattern is to hold, then the next prophecy we would expect to see would be of a near-term event
 - Sure enough, that's what we find

Ezek. 30:10 'Thus says the Lord GOD,

**"I will also make the hordes of Egypt cease
By the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.**

Ezek. 30:11 **"He and his people with him,
The most ruthless of the nations,
Will be brought in to destroy the land;
And they will draw their swords against Egypt
And fill the land with the slain.**

Ezek. 30:12 **"Moreover, I will make the Nile canals dry
And sell the land into the hands of evil men.
And I will make the land desolate
And all that is in it,
By the hand of strangers; I the LORD have spoken."**

Ezek. 30:13 **'Thus says the Lord GOD,
"I will also destroy the idols
And make the images cease from Memphis.
And there will no longer be a prince in the land of Egypt;
And I will put fear in the land of Egypt.**

Ezek. 30:14 **"I will make Pathros desolate,
Set a fire in Zoan
And execute judgments on Thebes.**

Ezek. 30:15 **"I will pour out My wrath on Sin,
The stronghold of Egypt;
I will also cut off the hordes of Thebes.**

Ezek. 30:16 **"I will set a fire in Egypt;
Sin will writhe in anguish,
Thebes will be breached
And Memphis will have distresses daily.**

Ezek. 30:17 **"The young men of On and of Pi-beseth
Will fall by the sword,
And the women will go into captivity.**

Ezek. 30:18 **"In Tehaphnehes the day will be dark
When I break there the yoke bars of Egypt.
Then the pride of her power will cease in her;
A cloud will cover her,**

And her daughters will go into captivity.

**Ezek. 30:19 “Thus I will execute judgments on Egypt,
And they will know that I am the LORD.””**

- Technically, we’re still in the third message, but clearly we’ve come back to the period of Ezekiel’s day
 - The Lord says He will also make the hordes of Egypt cease by the king of Babylon
 - The word “also” is important because it reflects that this is a separate judgment from the one just discussed above
 - In addition to bringing judgment against Egypt in the Tribulation, the Lord will also bring judgment by Babylon
 - This description is another retelling of the way Babylon invaded Egypt after destroying Tyre
 - He mentions that the canals of the Nile would dry up
 - These were manmade canals that diverted river water into fields for irrigating crops
 - They required constant maintenance to remove blowing sand
 - But when the nation went to war, the men had to leave the fields to fight
 - That caused the canals to go unmaintained, they dried up and the crop land went to rot
 - And the land was taken over (“sold” by God) to the Babylonians
 - History records that Egypt had invented around 1,200 gods that they worshipped
 - Truly, Egypt was the mothership of idolatry in the ancient world
 - The chief god was the sun and Pharaoh was the incarnation of the sun god
 - But God says in v.13 that their gods would be no more after Babylon’s invasion
 - And the royal line of Pharaohs ended after the Babylonian invasion
- In vs.14-19 the Lord gives details of how this invasion would impact the land
 - The southern area of Pathros would be desolate, rather than rich farm land
 - Zoan would be burned, which is modern Tanis
 - He would also judge Thebes, which is Luxor today
 - In v.15 the Lord says He will judge Sin – except that this means a place name, not iniquity
 - Sin was a northernmost stronghold of Egypt
 - Thebes, mentioned again, will be breached and Memphis attacked daily
 - In v.17 two more major cities will fall and women taken into captivity
 - It would be a dark day for Tehaphnehes, which was a fortress home to Pharaohs
 - So we know that place was especially targeted by Nebuchadnezzar
 - In the that day, Egypt’s power is broken

- A cloud settles over her as her pride is broken
 - So once more these judgments show that the Lord is God alone
- Before we look at the final prophecy, notice the pattern again...
 - Kingdom judgment for Egypt followed by a lesser judgment brought by Nebuchadnezzar
 - Then again, an end times judgment followed by lesser judgment carried out by Nebuchadnezzar
 - The pattern creates the suggestion that there is something about Nebuchadnezzar's rule that suggests what's coming at the end
 - And sure enough, that's the message we get from one of Ezekiel's contemporaries – Daniel
 - In the visions Daniel receives in his book he tells of a long period of history that begins with Nebuchadnezzar and ends with Christ's return
 - And at the beginning of that period, Daniel says Nebuchadnezzar is given complete rule of the world

Dan. 2:37 “You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory;

Dan. 2:38 and wherever the sons of men dwell, or the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has given them into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold.

- Another contemporary of Ezekiel and Daniel, Jeremiah, says the same thing

Jer. 27:5 “I have made the earth, the men and the beasts which are on the face of the earth by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and I will give it to the one who is pleasing in My sight.

Jer. 27:6 “Now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and I have given him also the wild animals of the field to serve him.

Jer. 27:7 “All the nations shall serve him and his son and his grandson until the time of his own land comes; then many nations and great kings will make him their servant.

- So though Nebuchadnezzar's rule did not extend outside western Asia, the Bible says God gave him rule of the whole earth
 - No ruler since has had the same unchallenged world power as Nebuchadnezzar did
 - But the Bible says that a future ruler will one day equal Nebuchadnezzar's power, at least for a while

Dan. 7:23 “Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole

earth and tread it down and crush it.

Dan. 7:24 ‘As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.

Dan. 7:25 ‘He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

- In end times terminology, the “beast” is a reference to a man who obtains power to rule the entire world – as did Nebuchadnezzar
 - Shortly before this man rises to power, the world has already been placed under the control of ten kings
 - These men then yield to the power of the beast
- In Revelation, we hear something similar

Rev. 17:12 “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have not yet received a kingdom, but they receive authority as kings with the beast for one hour.

Rev. 17:13 “These have one purpose, and they give their power and authority to the beast.

- These ten world rulers to come are brought to power explicitly so that they can facilitate the Antichrist’s rise
- It’s a lot easier for one man to grab power from among ten world rulers than from among 100+ as it is today
- This antichrist rules the world for a short time (an “hour”) before his reign comes to an end at the second coming of Christ
 - Also at Christ’s return, the judgments against Egypt that we’ve heard about earlier will take place
 - So Ezekiel seems to be connecting these events for us
 - The near term judgments against Egypt are carried out by God through the agency of an all-powerful world leader, Nebuchadnezzar
 - And the longterm prophecies of judgment are carried out by God through the agency of the Antichrist, an all-powerful world leader
 - And ultimately through Christ, THE all-all-powerful world leader
 - So as each leader gets more powerful through history, the associated judgment on Egypt likewise grows stronger
 - The judgements under Nebuchadnezzar produce a degree of destruction
 - The judgments created during the Tribulation by the Antichrist’s rise to power will create even greater calamity for Egypt
 - And Christ’s Second Coming produces ultimate devastation
 - The Lord is showing His people the great extents He was prepared to go to avenge

Egypt's undermining of God's people

- Some of that satisfaction would come in Ezekiel's day
- Some await the ultimate days of justice
- So let's finish the chapter with the fourth message of judgment

Ezek. 30:20 In the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh of the month, the word of the LORD came to me saying,

Ezek. 30:21 "Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, behold, it has not been bound up for healing or wrapped with a bandage, that it may be strong to hold the sword.

Ezek. 30:22 "Therefore thus says the Lord GOD, 'Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt and will break his arms, both the strong and the broken; and I will make the sword fall from his hand.

Ezek. 30:23 'I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands.

Ezek. 30:24 'For I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put My sword in his hand; and I will break the arms of Pharaoh, so that he will groan before him with the groanings of a wounded man.

Ezek. 30:25 'Thus I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh will fall. Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I put My sword into the hand of the king of Babylon and he stretches it out against the land of Egypt.

Ezek. 30:26 'When I scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands, then they will know that I am the LORD.'"

- This is the fourth message by count, but according to date this is the second prophecy Ezekiel received
 - The date is April 29, 587 BC, which is less than four months since the first message against Egypt
 - The prophecy begins speaking about Pharaoh having a broken arm
 - We don't know whether this is metaphor or literal
 - It's possible that the Lord is speaking literally about Pharaoh having a broken arm because of a battle against Nebuchadnezzar
 - During the time Nebuchadnezzar had Jerusalem under siege, the Egyptians attacked the Babylonians to support Israel
 - They succeeded in pushing Babylon back only for a few months
 - Those months may have coincided with the four months between Ezekiel's first and second messages
 - If so, then perhaps the Lord is telling us what happened to the king of Egypt in that battle
 - Some wonder if perhaps the Pharaoh suffered a broken arm in the battle
 - And as a result, the king could not hold a sword in battle, v.21 says

- So the Lord uses that condition to personify the future state of the nation
 - At the time of this prophecy, Babylon had not yet defeated Tyre much less traveled down to defeat Egypt
 - So this prophecy is speaking about the coming destruction of the nation under Babylon's army
 - But that is still a decade and a half away
- So this message ends with the Lord promising that what happened to the king in battle was a sign of what would happen to the entire nation in a day to come
 - Their strong arm, which they welded over Israel, would be broken
 - Egypt would no longer be a super power
 - Their king couldn't hold a sword and the nation wouldn't be able to fight either
 - As you contemplate this prophecy, try to remember how dominant Egypt had been for so long
 - For over 2,000 years Egypt had been a world power virtually unchallenged
 - They were building the pyramids thousands of years prior to Babylon's rise
 - And now the Lord was telling Israel that this chief enemy, the unchallenged power on earth, would soon be nothing
 - And in a day to come, it would be completely empty
 - It's important to remember Egypt's fate when you hear Daniel's and Revelation's prophesy about a coming 10-king world government
 - We hear that prophecy and we imagine it must be far in the future
 - After all, the U.S. and other world nations are too strong to be displaced by anything or anyone else, right?
 - Ask Egypt how quickly God can bring a world power down to the ground
 - The connections between Egypt and the Antichrist seem designed to remind the powerful nations of that future day that God can move nations as He desires
 - Which is why we want to remember that our country is not of this earth