

EZEKIEL

Chapter 30

A Lament for Egypt

The word of the LORD came to me: 2 “Son of man, prophesy, and say, Thus says the Lord GOD: “Wail, ‘Alas for the day!’ 3 For the day is near, the day of the LORD is near; it will be a day of clouds, a time of doom for the nations. 4 A sword shall come upon Egypt, and anguish shall be in Cush, when the slain fall in Egypt, and her wealth is carried away, and her foundations are torn down. 5 Cush, and Put, and Lud, and all Arabia, and Libya, and the people of the land that is in league, shall fall with them by the sword. 6 “Thus says the LORD: Those who support Egypt shall fall, and her proud might shall come down; from Migdol to Syene they shall fall within her by the sword, declares the Lord GOD. 7 And they shall be desolated in the midst of desolated countries, and their cities shall be in the midst of cities that are laid waste. 8 Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I have set fire to Egypt, and all her helpers are broken. 9 “On that day messengers shall go out from me in ships to terrify the unsuspecting people of Cush, and anguish shall come upon them on the day of Egypt's doom; for, behold, it comes! 10 “Thus says the Lord GOD: “I will put an end to the wealth of Egypt, by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. 11 He and his people with him, the most ruthless of 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 dry up the Nile and will sell the land into the hand of evildoers; I will bring desolation upon the land and everything in it, by the hand of foreigners; I am the LORD; I have spoken. 13 “Thus says the Lord GOD: “I will destroy the idols and put an end to the images in Memphis; there shall no longer be a prince from the land of Egypt; so I will put fear in the land of Egypt. 14 I will make Pathros a desolation and will set fire to Zoan and will execute judgments on Thebes. 15 And I will pour out my wrath on Pelusium, the stronghold of Egypt, and cut off the multitude of Thebes. 16 And I will set fire to Egypt; Pelusium shall be in great agony; Thebes shall be breached, and Memphis shall face enemies by day. 17 The young men of On and of Pi-beseth shall fall by the sword, and the women shall go into captivity. 18 At Tehaphnehes the day shall be dark, when I break there the yoke bars of Egypt, and her proud might shall come to an end in her; she shall be covered by a cloud, and her daughters shall go into captivity. 19 Thus I will execute judgments on Egypt. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

30:1–19 Undated oracle. (TLSB)

Content-wise, chapter 30 contains relatively little that is essentially different from chapter 29. Ezek 30:1–4, 6–8, 13–19 supplements 29:8–12, and likewise 30:10–12 may be compared with 29:17–21. The style is generally Ezekelian in tone. The Hebrew is easier than in many of the other Gentile oracles. The first oracle of the chapter is easily divided into four divisions: (1) the announcement of the Day of Yahweh on Egypt (30:1–5); (2) the reaction of Egypt's allies, who also suffer Yahweh's judgment (30:6–9); (3) the agent by which Yahweh will accomplish the judgment on Egypt (30:10–12); and (4) the comprehensive scope of the judgment (30:13–19). The second oracle, consisting of the final verses (30:20–26), functions as a sort of appendix-summary of Yahweh's impending judgment on the pharaoh. (CC)

30:1–4 Egypt's inevitable and imminent doom is described as a catastrophe precipitated by “the day of the LORD,” which will overtake not only Israel but also the nations. (TLSB)

30:1 The third oracle against Egypt. No date is given, but it was probably between January and April of 587 B.C. Compare 29:1 with 20:20. Jerusalem was under siege at this time. (CSB)

30:2–3 *the day ... the day of the LORD.* The day of God’s coming in judgment. Egypt’s judgment is announced. (CSB)

The oracle opens on a rather shrill note, reminiscent of chapter 7, which also speaks of the “day.” There the threat had been addressed to Israel; here it has been transferred to Egypt and its neighbors. (CC)

30:3 *the day is near.* Cf. Isa 13:6. (CSB)

day of clouds. Cf. Joel 2:2; Zep 1:15. (CSB)

30:4 *sword.* Nebuchadnezzar’s (see v. 10; see also note on 21:3). (CSB)

30:5–9 The destruction of Egypt’s power will have widespread and serious consequences. Those who support her will fall also. (TLSB)

30:5 *Put.* Libya, in Africa (see note on 27:10). (CSB)

Put, and Lud. Frequently mentioned together, these names seem to refer to territories situated in Africa, west of the Delta (Jer 46:9). (TLSB)

Lydia. Not in Asia Minor (see note on 27:10) but somewhere in northern Africa. (CSB)

Arabia. Hbr noun is best vocalized to be read “the mingled people,” meaning groups of mixed racial and social affinities that were associated with the Egyptian army or citizenry. *Libya.* Hbr *kub*, an unidentifiable place-name. Possibly a scribal misspelling for *lub*, Libya. (TLSB)

people of the land. Apparently Jews living in Egypt (see Jer 44). (CSB)

Unclear. Possibly a treaty partner with Egypt. *league.* Hbr *berith*, “covenant,” typically used with Israel/Judah. Judean mercenaries may be in view. All the allies are defeated with Egypt. (TLSB)

30:6 *From Migdol to Syene.* It is unusual to have a short verse both introduced by the citation formula (here, “thus says Yahweh”) and concluded by the signatory formula (“says the Lord Yahweh”). Otherwise 30:6 follows naturally from 30:4 and flows easily into 30:7. The two formulas simply highlight Yahweh’s determination. Perhaps this is why the Tetragrammaton stands alone in the messenger formula here (rather than “the Lord Yahweh”), something which happens only twice otherwise in Ezekiel (11:5; 21:3). (CC)

30:8 *set fire to.* Make war on. (CSB)

30:9 *messengers ... in ships.* See Isa 18 for a similar oracle on Cush, involving ships on the Nile. (CSB)

Angelic servants to administer God’s judgment (cf ch 9). (TLSB)

from Me. Lit, “from before Me,” referring to God’s court. (TLSB)

30:10 *wealth.* Same Hbr word is translated “multitude” in 31:2. (TLSB)

30:11 *most ruthless of nations.* A common phrase for the Babylonians, who were known for their cruelty (see 2Ki 25:7). (CSB)

30:13–19 No area of Egypt will be spared. On city after city, in every part of the land, God will execute judgment. Located in the region of the Delta are Zoan, Pelusium, Pi-beseth, and Tehaphnehes; up the Nile lie Memphis and On (Heliopolis); and in southern Egypt is the area called Pathros, in which was the city of Thebes (Karnak). (TLSB)

30:13 *Memphis*. Located 15 miles south of Cairo, Memphis was a former capital of Egypt and one of her largest cities. The list of towns reveals no discernible pattern but is a literary device used to underscore the scope of the destruction (cf. Isa 10:9–11, 27–32; Mic 1:10–15; Zep 2:4). (CSB)

An important religious and political center, often the home of the pharaohs. (TLSB)

prince. King. (CSB)

30:14 *Zoan*. A city in northeast Egypt in the delta region; also called Rameses (see Ex 1:11), Avaris and Tanis (see Isa 19:11, 13; 30:4). (CSB)

Thebes. Capital of Upper Egypt; present-day Luxor and Karnak. (CSB)

30:15 *Pelusium*. A fortress in the eastern delta region of the Nile. (CSB)

Pelusium was a fort on Egypt's northeastern frontier, near Philistia. (TLSB)

30:17 *Heliopolis*. Greek name (meaning "city of the sun"), located six miles northeast of Cairo. (CSB)

Bubastis. At one time the capital of Lower (northern) Egypt; located 40 miles northeast of Cairo. (CSB)

30:18 *Dark*. A common Biblical metaphor describing ruin, destruction or death. (CSB)

Tahpanhes. In extreme northeast Egypt. Johanan son of Kareah and his men fled there after the murder of Gedaliah (see Jer 43:4–7). (CSB)

30:1–19 Egypt's influence over the Mediterranean area comes to an end. God sends Babylon, the most ruthless of nations (v 11), as the executioner of His divine plan of justice. God's wrath will destroy the idols worshiped by Egypt (v 13; cf Jsh 24:14). Mercenary faith lusts after material possessions and lacks sincere devotion. Today, repent of self-interested religion and call upon the Lord with sincere devotion. He is no idol and gives you real faith through Christ. • Lord, in awe we watch You sweep away the plans of men to implement Your plan of salvation. Forgive us our sins. Amen. (TLSB)

Egypt Shall Fall to Babylon

20 In the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me: **21** "Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and behold, it has not been bound up, to heal it by binding it with a bandage, so that it may become strong to wield the sword. **22** Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt and will break his arms, both the strong arm and the one that was broken, and I will make the sword fall from his hand. **23** I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and 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 will groan before him like a man mortally wounded. **25** I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh shall fall. Then they shall 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. **26** And I will scatter the Egyptians

among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. Then they will know that I am the LORD.”

30:20 The fourth oracle against Egypt. (CSB)

eleventh year ... first month ... seventh day. Apr. 29, 587 B.C.; the eighth date in Ezekiel (see 1:2; 8:1; 20:1; 24:1; 26:1; 29:1, 17). (CSB)

Apr 587 BC, before the fall of Jerusalem. (TLSB)

30:21 *broken the arm.* Refers to Pharaoh Hophra’s defeat by Nebuchadnezzar the previous year. (CSB)

Pharaoh. Hophra, the reed on which Israel leaned in vain for support (Is 36:6; cf Jer 37:5–10; 2Ki 24:7). (TLSB)

30:22 *break his arms.* His land would lie defenseless before the king of Babylon. (TLSB)

30:24 *put my sword in his hand.* God’s judgment, like a weapon, decides the fate of nations. (TLSB)

30:20–26 God speaks a fourth prophecy of judgment against Egypt. Just as the strength or weakness of Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar were a matter for God’s judgment, your life and future are in God’s hands. Pray that He would bless and guide the work of your hands today. Do not regret your weakness. Note that, through the trembling arms and nail-pierced hands of Jesus, the Lord accomplished His greatest work of salvation. • Heavenly Father, thank You for Your tender mercy. Uphold the hands of Your servant in the cause of righteousness. Amen. (TLSB)