**Faith Foundations 2023-2024**

**The Book of Ezekiel**

**Session 18—Ezekiel 29-30**

**In the two chapters of Ezekiel that we will be reading in this session, God continues His oracles against the nations surrounding Israel, in which He promises to punish them for their idolatry and their sins against His people. Up to this point, God has targeted some of the smaller nations surrounding Israel, especially the prosperous city-state of Tyre. Now, however, God has a bigger fish to fry: the nation of Egypt, which was His people’s oldest enemy. Israel and Egypt had had a troubled relationship throughout their history, and those dynamics were beginning to assert themselves again. Thus, God reserved some of His harshest words for Egypt and its rulers.**

**1.) Read Ezekiel 29:1-6a. When does God tell Ezekiel to deliver this oracle? Where does that place the oracle in the timeline of events in Israel’s history?**

**2.) What metaphor does God use to describe Pharaoh? Why is this metaphor appropriate?**

**3.) How does God use this metaphor to describe what He will do to Pharaoh?**

**4.) Read Ezekiel 29:6b-9a. What does it mean that Egypt was a “staff of reed” to Israel? How effective would reed be as a staff?**

**5.) To what does the “staff of reed” metaphor refer in the actual history between Israel and Egypt?**

**6.) What will God do to Egypt because of its failure to support Israel?**

**7.) Read Ezekiel 29:9b-12. What did Egypt claim about the Nile River? Why would God be displeased with this?**

**8.) What will God do to Egypt and the Egyptians as punishment for their sin?**

**9.) Read Ezekiel 29:13-16. What does God promise to do for Egypt after its punishment?**

**10.) Will the restored Egypt ever regain its former glory? Why or why not?**

**11.) Read Ezekiel 29:17-21. When did this next oracle come to Ezekiel? When does this fall in the timeline of Israel’s history?**

**12.) What had Nebuchadnezzar done to Tyre? Had he received great benefits from this?**

**13.) What will God give Nebuchadnezzar instead, and why?**

**14.) What is the “horn” that will spring up for Israel? What does this symbolize?**

**15.) Read Ezekiel 30:1-9. What is “the day of the Lord?” What happens on this day?**

**16.) What will “the day of the Lord” mean for Egypt and its allies?**

**17.) Which of Egypt’s allies are mentioned in this passage? What will happen to them all?**

**18.) Who are the “messengers” God mentions in verse 9? What does it mean that they come on “ships?”**

**19.) Read Ezekiel 30:10-12. Whom will God use to punish Egypt, and what will he do?**

**20.) What does it mean that God will “dry up the Nile?” Is this literal or figurative?**

**21.) Read Ezekiel 30:13-19. What do the locations mentioned in this passage all have in common?**

**22.) What will happen to all of these places?**

**23.) Read Ezekiel 30:20-26. When did Ezekiel receive this oracle? Where does this fall in the timeline of Israel’s history?**

**24.) What metaphor does God use to show what He will do to Pharaoh?**

**25.) How does God continue to use this metaphor to describe what He will do for Babylon?**

**26.) What phrase is found at the end of this passage (that is repeated many times throughout these two chapters, and in many other chapters of Ezekiel as well)? How does this phrase reveal God’s purposes in everything He does?**

**Because Egypt had failed to live up to its promises as an alliance partner for God’s people, it had stood idly by when Babylon came and attacked Jerusalem. Even though this whole sequence of events was ordained by God, He still could not abide Egypt’s treachery. Thus, He would punish Pharaoh and Egypt for their lack of commitment to their alliance.**

**Thankfully, we Christians know that God always keeps His promises in Christ, and unlike any sinful humans with whom we might align ourselves, He will never let us down when we need Him. Had the Israelites remembered that, they may not have gotten themselves into this mess in the first place.**

**But God was not done with Pharaoh or Egypt quite yet! We still have two more chapters of oracles against them coming up next. Get ready for some more divine wrath upon idolaters!**