

Dr. Leslie Allen, Daniel, Session 14, Doom for Egypt (Ezek 29:1-32:32) Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Allen, Ezekiel, Session 14, Doom for Egypt (Ezek 29:1-32:32), Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Leslie Allen's lecture dissects Ezekiel 29-32, focusing on prophecies against Egypt. The lecture explores the chronological arrangement and the historical context of these messages, particularly their relation to Judah's hopes for Egyptian aid against Babylon. **Allen highlights the shifting dates and the varying perspectives of the exiles during the time of siege.** The lecture also examines the literary devices such as metaphors and lamentations used to convey the impending doom, while contrasting Egypt's power with God's ultimate authority. **A key theme is the disappointment of Judah's reliance on Egypt, a "broken reed," underscoring the futility of seeking help from earthly powers.** The lecture concludes by noting the transition from a focus on death and the underworld to one of life and restoration in the subsequent chapters of Ezekiel.

2. 17 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Allen, Ezekiel, Session 1 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Ezekiel).



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on14.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Allen, Ezekiel, Session 14, Doom for Egypt (Ezek 29:1-32:32)

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from Dr. Leslie Allen's Lecture 14 on Ezekiel 29-32, focusing on the oracles against Egypt:

Briefing Document: Ezekiel 29-32 - Doom for Egypt

Overview: This lecture analyzes Ezekiel 29-32, a section dedicated to prophecies of doom against Egypt. Dr. Allen highlights the historical context, the literary structure, and the theological implications of these messages, connecting them to Ezekiel's overall ministry and the situation of the Judean exiles. He also addresses apparent discrepancies between Ezekiel's prophecies and historical events, specifically regarding Tyre.

Key Themes and Ideas:

- **Historical Context: Judah's Reliance on Egypt & The Babylonian Siege:** The prophecies against Egypt are largely pre-fall (before the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BCE) and tied to Judah's misplaced hope in Egyptian military assistance against the Babylonian siege. "The oracles against Egypt, in general, seem to align with Ezekiel's negative pre-fall ministry about the coming downfall of Judah...because they're associated with Judah's hope of deliverance from Babylonian attack by the intervention of the Egyptian army." Ezekiel had already warned against relying on Egypt (Chapter 17). The failure of Egypt to effectively counter the Babylonian siege is a key point.
- **Chronological Order & Structure:** The placement of these oracles (29-32) before the messages about other nations (25-28) which are dated post-fall is noteworthy. Dr. Allen suggests the second edition of Ezekiel anticipates good news, even though chronologically it might seem backwards. The structure of the book is deliberate.
- **Egypt as a Symbol:** Pharaoh is portrayed as a powerful, even monstrous, figure (a "monster living in the Nile River," a "crocodile...with overtones of the chaos monster"), representing Egypt's self-proclaimed power and independence. However, God is greater than even this "superpower."

- **The "Broken Reed" Metaphor:** Egypt's support for Judah is described as a "staff of reed," recalling previous instances in Judah's history (Hezekiah's reign, Isaiah) where reliance on Egypt proved futile and damaging. The metaphor emphasizes Egypt's unreliability. The act of leaning represents a misplaced faith. "See, you are relying on Egypt, that broken staff of a reed, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it."
- **Judgment and Restoration (Limited):** While the primary message is one of judgment and downfall for Egypt, there's also an element of restoration mentioned (particularly in 29:9-16), albeit to a diminished status. Egypt would survive, but not as a political superpower. This parallels Judah's own experience of exile and restoration. The restoration wouldn't allow them to tempt Judah again.
- **Ezekiel's Credibility and the Case of Tyre (29:17-21):** This section addresses criticism of Ezekiel's earlier prophecies against Tyre, which seemingly weren't fulfilled literally (specifically regarding the looting of Tyre after a long Babylonian siege). The Babylonian troops found Tyre's "cupboard was bare." Dr. Allen suggests that prophetic language can involve rhetorical embellishment and explains that the Babylonian army instead received perks from Egypt as a consolation prize after invading in 568 BCE. God's reassurance to Ezekiel is emphasized in verse 21, restoring confidence in his ministry.
- **"The Day of the Lord" Applied to Egypt (Chapter 30):** The prophetic theme of "the day of the Lord," often used in judgment oracles against Judah, is now applied to Egypt. "In chapter 7, we may remember that Ezekiel picked up that theme of the day of the Lord and applied it against Judah. Now, it's redirected against Egypt." This underscores that Egypt, like Judah, will face divine judgment. Jewish mercenaries were included in Egypt's allied troops who would suffer.
- **God's Sovereignty vs. Egyptian Power (Chapter 31):** Egypt is compared to a towering, seemingly invincible cosmic tree, a popular motif in the ancient Near East. However, God, as the creator, has the power to "chop it down," demonstrating that even the greatest earthly power is ultimately subject to divine will. Egypt's pride and self-sufficiency become the cause of her downfall.

- **Lamentation and the Underworld (Chapter 32):** This chapter is explicitly designated as a lamentation against Egypt. The lecture highlights an increasing preoccupation with death and the underworld in the oracles against foreign nations. This aligns with the negativity of Ezekiel's messages for Judah, which Allen sees as a death-like experience. He also notes that the focus will shift to life after chapter 33. Egypt is going to be set along other nations who had once exercised great power, but who were now only empty memories.

Key Quotes:

- "The oracles against Egypt, in general, seem to align with Ezekiel's negative pre-fall ministry about the coming downfall of Judah...because they're associated with Judah's hope of deliverance from Babylonian attack by the intervention of the Egyptian army."
- "This is because you were a staff of reed to the house of Israel."
- "See, you are relying on Egypt, that broken staff of a reed, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it."
- "It shall become plunder for the nations, those foreign contingents who made up the Babylonian army. And then, in 2612, they will plunder your riches and loot your merchandise."
- "In chapter 7, we may remember that Ezekiel picked up that theme of the day of the Lord and applied it against Judah. Now, it's redirected against Egypt."

Implications:

- The prophecies against Egypt serve as a warning against misplaced trust in earthly powers and a reminder of God's ultimate sovereignty.
- The lecture highlights the complexities of prophetic interpretation, acknowledging the potential for rhetorical devices and the challenges of reconciling prophecy with historical events.
- The oracles against Egypt serve as a transition in the book of Ezekiel, leading from messages of doom to messages of hope and restoration for Judah.

4. Study Guide: Allen, Ezekiel, Session 14, Doom for Egypt (Ezek 29:1-32:32)

Ezekiel's Oracles Against Egypt: A Study Guide (Ezekiel 29-32)

I. Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What is significant about the dating in Ezekiel 29:1, and how does it relate to the messages against Egypt?
2. According to Dr. Allen, how did the 597 exiles view God's support, and how did Egypt factor into their hopes?
3. Explain the "staff of reed" metaphor used in the messages against Egypt, and what historical events does it recall?
4. How does the third message in Ezekiel 29:9-16 present a different perspective on Egypt's future compared to the first two messages?
5. Why were the Judean exiles critical of Ezekiel regarding his prophecies against Tyre in Ezekiel 29:17-21?
6. What "consolation prize" did Ezekiel prophesy that Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonian army would receive in place of plunder from Tyre, and when did this event supposedly occur?
7. How does Ezekiel use the prophetic theme of "the day of the Lord" in chapter 30, and who does it apply to in this context?
8. In Ezekiel 30:20-26, what event had occurred that dashed the exiles' hopes, and how did God describe this event to Ezekiel in a private message?
9. In chapter 31, what is the significance of the metaphor of a cosmic tree and how is it applied to Egypt?
10. What morbid theme becomes increasingly prominent in Ezekiel's oracles against foreign nations, and how does it contribute to the structural role of the book?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The date in Ezekiel 29:1 backtracks chronologically, being earlier than previous dates in the book, specifically January 587 BC. This date is significant because it is pre-fall of Jerusalem, and it suits the content of the first message, which aligns

with Ezekiel's pre-fall ministry focused on the coming downfall of Judah and its hopes for Egyptian intervention.

2. The 597 exiles wrongly believed that God was on their side and would soon take them home. They placed their hope in the military intervention of Egypt to deliver them from the Babylonian attack, and Egypt was considered a second superpower that could avail itself against the Babylonians.
3. The "staff of reed" metaphor refers to Egypt's unreliable support for Judah, particularly when they sought military assistance. It recalls earlier instances, such as Hezekiah's reign, where Egypt failed to provide effective help against the Assyrians, acting as a broken reed that pierces the hand of anyone who leans on it.
4. The third message acknowledges that Egypt would be restored after judgment and exile, following a similar pattern to Judah's experience. However, it also states that Egypt would no longer be a political superpower but a third-world country, removing it as a temptation for Judah to place military trust in it.
5. The exiles criticized Ezekiel because his prophecies of Tyre's destruction, specifically regarding looting by the Babylonian army, were not literally fulfilled. They used this discrepancy to question Ezekiel's credibility and the reliability of his future prophecies about the return to the land.
6. Ezekiel prophesied that the Babylonian army would receive spoils from Egypt as a "consolation prize" for the lack of plunder from Tyre. This refers to Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Egypt in 568 BC, which may have been anticipated or in the planning stages around 571 BC.
7. Ezekiel uses the theme of "the day of the Lord" to describe a time of doom and judgment, traditionally associated with oracles against Judah. In chapter 30, he redirects this theme against Egypt, indicating that Egypt will be the victim of Yahweh's intervention and hostility.
8. In Ezekiel 30:20-26, the event that dashed the exiles' hopes was the Babylonian army driving back the Egyptian army that had come to Jerusalem's aid. God communicated privately to Ezekiel that He had broken the arm of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, rendering him unable to wield the sword and effectively ending any hope of Egyptian intervention.
9. The metaphor of a cosmic tree represents Egypt's greatness, power, and apparent invincibility. The tree's height symbolizes Egyptian pride and self-sufficiency, but

despite its grandeur, God can chop it down, illustrating that even the most powerful nations are subject to God's will and judgment.

10. The morbid theme of death and the underworld becomes increasingly prominent in Ezekiel's oracles against foreign nations. This preoccupation contributes to the structural role of the book by aligning with the negative messages for Judah, emphasizing the death-like experience of exile, and creating a polarization between death and the life that will be emphasized from chapter 33 onwards.

II. Essay Questions

1. Analyze the chronological order of the oracles against foreign nations in Ezekiel, particularly those directed at Egypt, and discuss why the editor(s) of Ezekiel may have chosen this specific arrangement.
2. Examine the ways in which Ezekiel uses metaphors and symbolic language, such as the "staff of reed" and the "cosmic tree," to convey his message about Egypt's role in Judah's downfall and God's ultimate sovereignty.
3. Discuss the role of the "day of the Lord" motif in Ezekiel's prophecies against both Judah and Egypt, and explain how the shifting application of this theme contributes to the overall message of the book.
4. Explore the tension between judgment and restoration in Ezekiel's prophecies concerning Egypt, and consider how this tension reflects broader themes of hope and despair within the book.
5. Evaluate the significance of Ezekiel's prophecies against Tyre and Egypt, and how the perceived failure of the prophecies against Tyre led to a reinterpretation focused on Egypt's fate and God's faithfulness to Ezekiel.

III. Glossary of Key Terms

- **Oracle:** A prophetic message or utterance believed to come from God, often conveying judgment, warning, or promise.
- **Pharaoh:** The title of the rulers of ancient Egypt, considered to be both king and deity.
- **Nile River:** The primary source of life and prosperity in ancient Egypt, used extensively for irrigation and transportation.
- **Leviathan:** A monstrous sea creature, often associated with chaos and opposition to God in the Old Testament.
- **Babylon:** A major Mesopotamian empire that conquered Judah and exiled many of its people in the 6th century BC.
- **Nebuchadnezzar:** The king of Babylon who conquered Jerusalem and played a central role in Ezekiel's prophecies.
- **Tyre:** A major Phoenician city-state known for its maritime trade and wealth, which Ezekiel prophesied against.
- **Day of the Lord:** A prophetic theme referring to a time when God will intervene in history to judge nations and establish his rule.
- **Mercenaries:** Soldiers hired to serve in a foreign army, often for financial gain.
- **Elephantine:** A military fortress on the southern border of Egypt, largely manned by Jewish mercenaries.
- **Cosmic Tree:** A metaphor prevalent in the ancient Near East, representing the world as a great tree connecting heaven and the underworld.
- **Funeral Lament:** A song or poem expressing sorrow and mourning for the dead, often used in prophetic literature to foreshadow the downfall of nations.
- **Underworld:** The realm of the dead in ancient Near Eastern mythology, often depicted as a dark and dismal place.
- **Exiles:** People forced to leave their homeland, particularly referring to the Judeans who were deported to Babylon after the conquest of Jerusalem.

5. FAQs on Allen, Ezekiel, Session 14, Doom for Egypt (Ezek 29:1-32:32), Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Here is an 8-question FAQ based on the provided text:

FAQ on Ezekiel's Prophecies Against Egypt (Ezekiel 29-32)

- **Why does Ezekiel devote so much attention to prophecies against Egypt?**
- Ezekiel's oracles against Egypt (chapters 29-32) were primarily directed at the Judean exiles, countering their hopes for deliverance from Babylonian oppression through Egyptian military intervention. Egypt represented the last major power they believed could save them. Ezekiel's messages aimed to demonstrate that relying on Egypt was futile and that God's judgment would prevail.
- **How do the prophecies against Egypt relate to Ezekiel's pre- and post-fall ministry (before and after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 BC)?**
- Generally, the messages against Egypt align with Ezekiel's pre-fall ministry, emphasizing the impending downfall of Judah and the failure of reliance on Egypt. However, some portions, particularly those speaking of Egypt's eventual restoration (though as a diminished power), seem to resonate with his post-fall prophecies of hope and restoration for Judah. The arrangement of these chapters in Ezekiel aims to anticipate good news for the reader.
- **What are some of the metaphors and imagery used to describe Pharaoh and Egypt in these prophecies?**
- Pharaoh is portrayed as a monster in the Nile, similar to a crocodile or Leviathan, symbolizing his great power and claim to be the master of his domain. Egypt itself is depicted as a "staff of reed," ironically highlighting its unreliability as an ally for Judah. Another metaphor used was that of a cosmic tree, representing Egypt's power and pride.
- **Why was the date of Ezekiel 29:1 significant?**
- The date in Ezekiel 29:1 (January 587 BC) is significant because it backtracks chronologically from previous dates in the book. It places this particular oracle before the fall of Jerusalem, aligning with the message that Egypt would fail to provide deliverance.

- **How did the Judean exiles react to Ezekiel's prophecies, particularly those concerning Tyre?**
- The Judean exiles criticized Ezekiel when his prophecies against Tyre, specifically concerning looting by the Babylonian army, did not literally come to pass. They questioned his credibility as a prophet, using this failure to cast doubt on his future prophecies of restoration for Israel.
- **How does Ezekiel respond to criticism regarding the unfulfilled prophecies against Tyre?**
- Ezekiel's later prophecy in Ezekiel 29:17-21 addresses this criticism. God reassures Ezekiel that the Babylonian army would receive compensation from Egypt instead of Tyre. This addresses the immediate concern of the Babylonian army not getting their loot, but also serves to support Ezekiel's prophetic authority. Additionally, it hints at the potential role of rhetorical embellishment in prophetic messages.
- **What is the significance of the "Day of the Lord" in the context of these prophecies against Egypt?**
- The "Day of the Lord" is a prophetic motif typically associated with judgment against Judah. However, in Ezekiel 30, it is redirected against Egypt, indicating that Egypt, like Judah, would face divine judgment. This reinforces the idea that both nations would suffer consequences for their actions.
- **What is the increasing preoccupation with death and the underworld in these oracles, and what does it represent?**
- The recurring references to death and the underworld reflect the death-like experience of exile that Judah was undergoing. This morbid preoccupation serves as a structural element, emphasizing the negativity of the messages before transitioning to the themes of life and restoration in the later chapters of Ezekiel.