

Dr. Robert Vannoy, Major Prophets, Session 26, Ezekiel 30 – Prophecy against Egypt [Memphis & Thebes] Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Vannoy, Major Prophets, Session 26, Ezekiel 30 – Prophecy against Egypt [Memphis & Thebes], Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Robert Vannoy's lecture on Ezekiel highlights prophecies against Egypt, specifically focusing on Memphis and Thebes. He emphasizes Ezekiel's prediction of the destruction of idols in Memphis and the cessation of native Egyptian rulers. Vannoy connects historical events, such as conquests by Nebuchadnezzar, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and Turks, to the fulfillment of the prophecy regarding the lack of continuous Egyptian rulers. The lecture contrasts the fates of Thebes, which remained full of images, with Memphis, which was dismantled to build Cairo. Vannoy argues that Ezekiel's prophecies about these cities serve as evidence of his divine inspiration and God's control over history. The lecture closes by pointing to the apologetic value of predictive prophecy.

2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Vannoy, Major Prophets, Session 26 – 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 → Major Prophets.



Vannoy_MP_Session
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3. Briefing Document: Vannoy, Major Prophets, Session 26, Ezekiel 30 – Prophecy against Egypt [Memphis & Thebes]

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Robert Vannoy's lecture on Ezekiel, focusing on Ezekiel's prophecies against Egypt (specifically Memphis and Thebes).

Briefing Document: Robert Vannoy on Ezekiel's Prophecies Against Egypt (Ezekiel 30)

Main Theme: Vannoy's lecture focuses on the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecies against Egypt in Ezekiel 30, particularly those concerning the cities of Memphis and Thebes. He uses these prophecies as evidence for Ezekiel's authenticity as a prophet and God's control over history.

Key Ideas and Facts:

1. Prophecy Against Memphis (Ezekiel 30:13):

- Ezekiel prophesies the destruction of idols and images in Memphis, and the end of a native Egyptian prince ruling Egypt. "This is what the Sovereign LORD says: 'I will destroy the idols and put an end to the images in Memphis. No longer will there be a prince in Egypt, and I will spread fear throughout the land.'"
- Vannoy highlights the remarkable nature of this prediction, comparing it to predicting the end of idols in Rome during the Roman Empire.
- He emphasizes the long and significant history of Memphis as a capital city, dating back to 3000 B.C., which makes the prophecy even more striking.
- Vannoy interprets "no more a prince of Egypt" to mean a lack of *continuation* of native Egyptian rulers, not necessarily a permanent absence.

1. Historical Context and Fulfillment of "No More a Prince":

- Vannoy traces the succession of foreign rulers in Egypt after Ezekiel's prophecy: Babylonians, Persians, Greeks (Ptolemies), Romans, Arabs, and Turks.
- He notes that even after Egypt declared independence in 1850, Turkish rulers remained in power until Nasser's revolution.
- He questions whether Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak can be considered truly "Egyptian" princes, suggesting a stronger Arab influence. "You could debate that Nasser: is he a 'prince from the land from Egypt?' My guess is he is more Arab than Egyptian."

- Vannoy points to the Coptic people as potentially representing a more direct lineage to native Egyptians, distinct from the Arab population.
- Ultimately, he argues that Ezekiel's prophecy regarding the lack of continuation of native Egyptian rulers has been remarkably fulfilled throughout history.

1. **Prophecy Against Thebes (Ezekiel 30:14-16):**

- Ezekiel prophesies judgment on Thebes, including destruction and captivity. "I will lay waste Upper Egypt, set fire to Zoan, and inflict punishment on Thebes. I will pour out my wrath on Pelusium, the stronghold of Egypt, and cut off the hordes of Thebes."
- He notes Thebes was a city in Upper Egypt. Today known as Karnack and Luxor.
- Vannoy explains how Thebes was taken by the Assyrians in 663 B.C., attacked by the Ptolemies, and eventually ceased to be inhabited after a Roman attack in 29 B.C.

1. **Contrast Between Thebes and Memphis:**

- Vannoy emphasizes the stark contrast between the fates of Thebes and Memphis, as prophesied by Ezekiel.
- While Thebes became a city of ruins, it remained full of images and idols. If Ezekiel had said that the idols and images would cease from Thebes, he would have been wrong.
- Memphis, on the other hand, virtually disappeared. "I will destroy the idols and I will cause their images to cease from Memphis."
- He attributes the destruction of Memphis to the construction of Cairo by the Mohammedans, who used Memphis as a "stone quarry."

1. **Archaeological Evidence and Encyclopedia Britannica:**

- Vannoy cites the Encyclopedia Britannica on Memphis to confirm the city's historical size and importance (population of 700,000 in Hellenistic times).
- The Encyclopedia Britannica states that Memphis was destroyed by the Arabs and the Mediaeval builders of Cairo used their ruins as a stone quarry.
- He notes the scant archaeological remains of Memphis today, with "a few stones among the palm trees and fields, an alabaster sphinx, and a recumbent colossus of Ramses II" being all that remains.

1. Apologetic Value of the Prophecies:

- Vannoy argues that the fulfillment of these prophecies, particularly those concerning Memphis and Thebes, provides strong evidence for Ezekiel's prophetic gift and God's sovereignty over history.
- He acknowledges that the prophecies do not contain all the details of how they would be fulfilled (e.g., the rise of Islam and the building of Cairo), but that they provide enough information to recognize the fulfillment. "But I think you're back into this matter of the character of predictive prophecy where you don't get all the details. It is not like history written after the event. You get enough so that when one is fulfilled you can say, "Yes, this is the fulfillment."

Conclusion:

Vannoy uses the prophecies concerning Memphis and Thebes in Ezekiel 30 as powerful examples of fulfilled prophecy. He argues that the historical fates of these cities, particularly the destruction of Memphis and the cessation of native Egyptian rule, demonstrate the accuracy of Ezekiel's predictions and, consequently, his status as a true prophet of God. The contrast between the fates of the two cities further strengthens this argument. Vannoy positions these prophecies as having significant apologetic value for demonstrating God's control over history.

4. Study Guide: Vannoy, Major Prophets, Session 26, Ezekiel 30 – Prophecy against Egypt [Memphis & Thebes]

Ezekiel's Prophecies Against Egypt: A Study Guide

Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What two cities in Egypt are specifically mentioned in Ezekiel 30, and what general fate is predicted for them?
2. What was Memphis's historical significance in ancient Egypt?
3. How did the prophecy regarding a "prince from Egypt" find fulfillment in the centuries following Ezekiel?
4. Who conquered Egypt after the Babylonians, and what was their impact on Egyptian leadership?
5. What happened to the city of Thebes (Luxor and Karnak), and how does it contrast with what happened to Memphis?
6. Why is the physical state of Thebes today important to the prophecy of Ezekiel 30?
7. What event led to the near-total disappearance of Memphis, and how did it happen?
8. Why is the prophecy about Memphis considered remarkable, and how does it go beyond a "clever guess?"
9. According to the lecture, what group represents the "true native Egyptian lineage?"
10. How do the prophecies against Memphis and Thebes serve as evidence for Ezekiel's legitimacy as a prophet?

Quiz Answer Key

1. The two cities specifically mentioned are Memphis and Thebes. The prophecy predicts the destruction of idols and images in Memphis and that it will be in constant distress, while Thebes will be taken by storm and punished.

2. Memphis was the first capital city of a united Egypt, established around 3000 B.C. It remained one of Egypt's most ancient and important cities throughout much of its history.
3. After Ezekiel's prophecy, Egypt was ruled by a succession of foreign powers including Babylonians, Persians, Greeks (Ptolemies), Romans, Arabs, and Turks. This resulted in the lack of a continuous line of native Egyptian rulers for over two millennia.
4. After the Babylonians, the Persians conquered Egypt, instituting Persian rulers. This was followed by the conquests of Alexander the Great, leading to Greek (Ptolemaic) rule.
5. Thebes was attacked, revolted, and eventually became a city of ruins that remained inhabited by others, unlike Memphis. It contrasts with the destruction of idols and images and the eventual disappearance of Memphis, with its stones being used to build Cairo.
6. Thebes is full of images and idols, which contradicts what would have happened if the same prophecy about idols ceasing had been made about it. This stands in contrast to the complete disappearance of images in Memphis.
7. The rise of Islam and the building of Cairo in 640 A.D. led to the destruction of Memphis. The stones from the ruins of Memphis were used as a quarry to build Cairo, leading to the near-total disappearance of the ancient city.
8. The prophecy is considered remarkable because it accurately predicted the destruction of idols and images and the disappearance of a major city like Memphis. This is seen as going beyond a "clever guess" due to the specific nature of the events and their long-term fulfillment.
9. According to the lecture, the Coptic people of the Coptic Church are considered the "true native Egyptian lineage," distinct from the Arab influences in the broader population.
10. The prophecies against Memphis and Thebes demonstrate Ezekiel's legitimacy as a prophet because they were fulfilled long after he gave them. This shows specific knowledge of future events that could not be anticipated through human insight, thereby supporting his divine inspiration.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the significance of Ezekiel's prophecy against Memphis in the context of ancient Near Eastern history. How does the fulfillment of this prophecy provide insights into the nature of divine sovereignty and the course of human events?
2. Compare and contrast the fates of Memphis and Thebes as described in Ezekiel 30. What theological lessons can be drawn from these contrasting outcomes regarding divine judgment and the reliability of prophetic pronouncements?
3. Discuss the challenges involved in interpreting predictive prophecy, using Ezekiel's prophecies against Egypt as a case study. How do considerations of historical context, linguistic nuance, and the "character of predictive prophecy" influence our understanding of these texts?
4. Examine the claim that Ezekiel's prophecies against Egypt possess "apologetic value." How can these prophecies be used to defend the truthfulness of the Bible and the existence of a God who rules and controls history?
5. Explore the historical and cultural factors that contributed to the decline of native Egyptian rule after the time of Ezekiel. How did the succession of foreign empires impact the religious and cultural landscape of Egypt, and to what extent did these developments fulfill Ezekiel's prophetic vision?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Memphis:** An ancient city in Egypt, founded around 3000 B.C. as the first capital of a united Egypt. The prophecy stated that God would destroy the idols there, and it was destroyed in 640 AD when Cairo was created.
- **Thebes:** An ancient city in Upper Egypt, known today as Luxor and Karnak. The prophecy stated that this city would be taken by storm and that people would be cut off. It remained a place of images and idols, unlike Memphis.
- **Ezekiel:** A major prophet in the Old Testament who delivered prophecies of judgment and restoration to the Israelites during the Babylonian exile. He gave prophecies of judgment against foreign nations, such as Egypt.
- **Prophecy:** A message or revelation from God, often concerning future events or divine judgment. A prophecy is considered evidence of a prophet and God.
- **Nebuchadnezzar:** The king of Babylon who conquered Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar's conquest is evidence that Ezekiel is a true prophet.
- **Ptolemies:** A dynasty of Greek rulers who governed Egypt after the death of Alexander the Great. The Ptolemies seized Egypt and represented themselves as pharaohs, but they were Greek.
- **Cairo:** A city in Egypt built around 640 A.D., built 10 miles from Memphis, and with stones quarried from Memphis. The stones from Memphis were used to build Cairo, causing Memphis to disappear.
- **Copts:** Native Egyptians that are part of a Greek-oriented Coptic church. The lineage of the Copts is a native Egyptian lineage.
- **Arabs:** People descended from Ishmael and Esau, who intermarried with the descendants of the two. They are from the line of Shem.
- **Ham:** One of the three sons of Noah. Egyptians come out of Ham.

5. FAQs on Vannoy, Major Prophets, Session 26, Ezekiel 30 – Prophecy against Egypt [Memphis & Thebes], Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions about Ezekiel's Prophecies Against Egypt

1. What specific cities in Egypt did Ezekiel prophesy against, and what was the nature of the prophecies?

Ezekiel specifically prophesied against Memphis and Thebes (among other places). Regarding Memphis, Ezekiel prophesied that its idols and images would cease to exist (Ezekiel 30:13). In contrast, while Thebes was prophesied to be taken by storm (Ezekiel 30:16) and punished, there was no prophecy about the idols disappearing.

2. What is significant about the prophecy concerning "a prince from the land of Egypt"?

Ezekiel prophesied that "a prince from the land of Egypt shall not continue to be." This is interpreted to mean that native Egyptian rulers would cease to have continuous rule over Egypt. After Ezekiel's prophecy, Egypt was ruled by Babylonians, Persians, Greeks (Ptolemies), Romans, Arabs, and Turks, before a more recent period of possible native rule by individuals such as Nasser and Mubarak. It is a debated point if these recent rulers qualify as native Egyptians, given the intermixing of Arab heritage.

3. How does the history of Memphis after Ezekiel's prophecy fulfill the prophecy against it?

Memphis remained a significant city for centuries after Ezekiel. However, when the Arabs conquered Egypt in 640 A.D., they built Cairo nearby and used Memphis as a quarry, dismantling its structures to build the new capital. This led to the near disappearance of Memphis, fulfilling the prophecy that its idols and images would cease to exist.

4. How does the current state of Thebes contrast with the fulfillment of the prophecy against Memphis?

Unlike Memphis, Thebes (modern Luxor and Karnak) remains full of ancient images, idols, and ruins. This is consistent with Ezekiel's prophecy, which predicted the destruction of Thebes but not the elimination of its images and idols. Thebes is now essentially a large outdoor museum, contrasting sharply with the fate of Memphis.

5. What is the historical significance of Memphis in ancient Egypt?

Memphis was an extremely important city in ancient Egypt. Around 3000 B.C., when Menes united Upper and Lower Egypt, he established Memphis as the capital. It remained one of the most significant cities throughout much of Egyptian history, serving either as the capital or a prominent urban center for millennia.

6. What role did foreign powers play in the rule of Egypt following Ezekiel's prophecy?

Following Ezekiel's prophecy, Egypt experienced a long series of foreign rulers. These included the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks (under the Ptolemies), Romans, Arabs, and Turks. This extended period of foreign rule aligns with the prophecy that native Egyptian princes would not continue to rule uninterrupted.

7. How does the destruction of Memphis provide evidence for Ezekiel being a true prophet?

The specific details of the destruction of Memphis, particularly the cessation of its idols and images due to the construction of Cairo, is seen as a remarkable fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy. This fulfillment, which occurred long after the time Ezekiel made the original statement, is presented as evidence that he was speaking with divine knowledge, far beyond human capacity to predict.

8. What apologetic value do the prophecies against Memphis and Thebes hold?

The prophecies against Memphis and Thebes, and their subsequent fulfillment, hold apologetic value because they serve as tangible evidence supporting the claims of the Bible and the divine inspiration of Ezekiel. Since the fulfillment occurred long after the prophecies were given, it strengthens the argument that Ezekiel was a true prophet and that God controls history and can reveal future events.