

EZEKIEL 32

AGAINST EGYPT, PART 4

Here in this chapter, we have two distinct prophecies relating to Egypt – both in the same month, around 585 BC (about one year after the fall of Jerusalem); but with a two-week’s interval between them. They are both lamentations – and this was not only to signify how sorrowful the fall of Egypt would be; but it would also show how much the prophet himself would grieve over it, from a generous principle of love to mankind in general. In these two lamentations, the destruction of Egypt is represented under two similitudes: the first being the killing of a lion or a whale (verses 1-16), and the second being the funeral of a great political leader (verses 17-32).

In the first song of lamentation, there is a gradual transition from the strictly figurative to the more literal. It begins with parabolical representations of the coming destruction of Pharaoh’s greatness. The huge monster that had formerly moved at will and troubled everyone around him now becomes a helpless prey in the hands of the mighty; and his mortal remains are spread forth over hill and valley, so that they meet the eyes of men everywhere and acquaint them with his fate. This proud monarch was not to be slain and then buried out of sight. Instead, the circumstances connected with his downfall were Divinely ordered in such a way as to keep everyone mindful of his fallen greatness, so that they would not forget him nor the sad change that had taken place in his condition. And this idea is still further expanded by the introduction of a new image – namely, the extinguishing of the light in that portion of the world, so as to make it a land of darkness instead of a bright and illuminated region; thereby striking terror into the minds of those who would behold it. Then, becoming more literal in his descriptions, the prophet exhibits the kingdom of Egypt as a general wreck – its people scattered in fragments among the nations, and its riches given up as a spoil to the hands of enemies. It was relating to Egypt as an empire – as the seat of a monarchy that had once extensively ruled, and still sought to rule in the affairs of men – that this description must be understood. And its details did indeed come to pass. The political power of Egypt began to cease after the Babylonian conquest; the arm of its power was forever broken; its monarch could no longer move about as he pleased, and trouble the neighboring nations.

The next vision fills up the remainder of the chapter, and closes this series of Divine judgments. There the prophet utters another lamentation over the fallen power; he sings its funeral-dirge, so to speak – accompanying the departed

Outline of the chapter:

- ❖ A song of lamentation concerning Egypt, given under the parabolical representation of the killing of a lion or whale – verses 1-16
- ❖ Another song of lamentation, represented by the similitude of the funeral of a great political leader – verses 17-32



one into the world of spirits, and surrounding him there with other prostrate monuments of human greatness. Egypt is here portrayed, in the person of its destroyed king and people, as being introduced into the shadowy mansions of the nether world, where – in regards to power and influence among humanity – the small and the great are reduced to one sad level. To represent Egypt's king and mighty forces as being transferred to that place was essentially the same as saying that their power on earth was finished; it was numbered forever with the things that are past and gone.

Thus closes the Divine word against Pharaoh and his kingdom; they are condemned to go down to the land of forgetfulness, in common with all the surrounding heathen who stood in a position of rivalry or antagonism against God and His people. Throughout the whole series of the predictions, we find that there is one great point of difference between the two parties. The judgment that lights upon the Lord's people is only partial and temporary, and then their power and dominion return again and settle in everlasting possession. But as for the neighboring kingdoms, which all aspired for the supremacy – they fell to rise no more. The supremacy *must* belong to Israel, because the covenant of blessing was with him; from him, the Messiah was to come – in Whom, all power, blessing, and glory were to reside. Throughout the Old Testament, the antipathies of the surrounding nations failed to extirpate Israel; and in every case, their struggles for dominion only resulted in their decay or ruin. Before Israel was finally dispersed among the nations, all their ancient rivals had fallen from their former greatness, and lost their national personality; Israel stood their ground much better than any of them. But that relative prosperity was only the foreshadowing of the great distinction between God's children and the people of the world, which is spoken of in these prophecies; for its ultimate and proper development is to be sought only in Christ! In Him, the supremacy and kingdom which were secured in covenant to Israel have reached their full height. All the external victories that were gained over the surrounding heathen nations, and all the advantages granted to Israel in preference to them, were only the sign and the prelude of Jesus' glorious ascendancy over the whole earth! Such is the matchless honor of God's people among the nations! From His children has sprung all that is or ever shall be permanently great and glorious! Christ has become the life of humanity; He has acquired the right to reign over all the tribes of men, and all the regions of the earth; and no matter how long the struggle may last, or how severe the conflict may be, the result is certain – that the kingdoms of this world, one and all, must become the Kingdom of our Lord; and that all people shall bow the knee to Him alone!

Thank You, Lord Jesus, for becoming the life of humanity, and for acquiring the right to reign over all the tribes of men, and all the regions of this earth! Amen.