

**EZEKIEL**

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to Ezekiel chapter 29 as we continue our study through the Word of God. We are currently in a portion of Ezekiel that deals with the judgment of the nations that surround Jerusalem. This section covers Ezekiel chapter 25 through chapter 32 and we have covered the judgment of 15 nations so far in these chapters. And the reason for the chapters of judgment is that these nations, including the 16<sup>th</sup> one we will be looking at tonight, is that as the judgment of God is poured out upon them they may know who the **LORD** is!

As we conclude these next 4 chapters tonight the focus will be the judgment upon Egypt. And as we will see, their pride is what brought them down. It is what brought Lucifer down and it is what brings us down. You see, pride causes us to fall and we will see that this evening.

Now keep in mind that these stories are not here just to tell us of what has transpired in history, which is important. They are placed here so we can learn from them. As I have said before, the thing we learn from history is we don't learn from history. May that not be the case in our lives! Pride is a destructive monster in the hearts and lives of people and nations and if we don't learn from these lessons we too will fall! So let's pick up our study this evening in Ezekiel chapter 29 beginning in verse 1 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study through His Word.

**EZEKIEL 29****VERSES 1-3**

1. The timeframe here of this prophecy is that the Southern Kingdom of Judah is just a few months away from being taken into captivity by the Babylonians. And as this is happening in Judah God is speaking to Ezekiel regarding another judgment, this one upon Egypt!

2. And what we see here is the pride of this Pharaoh. Keep in mind that the Pharaoh in Egypt at this time was Hophra. This man saw himself as great, like the great crocodile of the Nile River who does whatever he pleases, this sea monster you might say. And he is boasting of all his accomplishments, all he has done, how he built this great nation.

When someone talks like that the red flag's should be going up! "Danger will Robinson!" for all you Lost in Space fans. Why the danger? Because God says, "**Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.**" Proverbs 16:18. There is no seeking God, no dependence upon God, it is all about what I have done and in the end, a person who lives that way will die that way, apart from God!

**VERSES 4-7**

1. I think the picture here is that Pharaoh is this monster, which would make the fish his people. And God is saying that He is going to wipe them out, destroy them and Pharaoh.

2. Now we know that Judah kept looking to Egypt for help in their fight against their enemies but the picture here and through history is that they were no help to them just as God said! Egypt is pictured as a reed that grew abundantly along the banks of the Nile River. They were very fragile and unable to support any weight and thus, Egypt would be no support for them!

We see this played out during the reign of Hezekiah. The Assyrians were moving southward towards Jerusalem having already captured the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Now they were moving into the Southern Kingdom of Judah. They already captured 46 cities in the northern parts of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. And to strike fear into the hearts of the inhabitants of Jerusalem the King of Assyria sends the Rabshakeh, his title not his name, and it means chief of staff, to try and get Hezekiah and the people of Judah to surrender.

We read of this in Isaiah 36:5-6 where we see the Rabshakeh say to them, **“I say you speak of having plans and power for war; but they are mere words. Now in whom do you trust, that you rebel against me? Look! You are trusting in the staff of this broken reed, Egypt, on which if a man leans, it will go into his hand and pierce it. So is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who trust in him.”**

Hezekiah tried to make an alliance with Egypt to help in this battle against the Assyrians. But the help never came as the Egyptians were coming up, the other half of the Assyrian army was on its way down and they defeated the Egyptians. They put an end to this alliance before it was ever started.

God did not want His people to look to Egypt, look to the world for help and God still feels the same way today. We need to look to Him for only in Him do we find true deliverance, true salvation!

VERSES 8-16

1. Once again we see the issue being pride and because of their pride God was going to bring them into captivity for 40 years. Pharaoh saw himself as a god, in control of his destiny, but God was going to show him there is only one God!

And we do see this played out in history even though their destruction would be several years down the road they were in captivity for forty years. “A Babylonian chronicle suggests that Egypt was conquered around 568 B. C. Forty years after this date, the Persians instituted a policy of resettlement for many of the peoples who had been dispersed by Babylon.” (Earl D. Radmacher; Ronald Barclay Allen; H. Wayne House: Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Commentary)

So this once great and powerful nation was going into captivity for forty years and when they returned they would not be as strong as they were, they would never be a world power again! Just look at the nation today, the poverty, the backwardness of its religious practices and laws. All that is left are the great pyramids, the tombs of the past, just as God had said!

2. Many churches and people are the same today. Pride has left them an empty tomb, even though there was much life to begin with. Be careful, pride is very destructive.

VERSES 17-21

1. Once again we are given the timeframe of this prophecy; it is in the twenty-seventh year and the first month or almost 17 years from the prophecy given in the first verse of this chapter.

2. Last time in our study we looked at the destruction of Tyre. Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians attacked this sea port city for 13 years and when they finally broke through the walls, all they found were a few soldier's and empty buildings.

They had moved the city by night to an island ½ mile off shore. So the Babylonians received no spoil for all their labor. But God says He will give them Egypt, and that is exactly what took place. The Babylonians captured the Egyptians and their wealth. He placed them in captivity for 40 years. And Israel, in seeing this, will recognize the Lord, that He has done all these things!

Of this judgment one writer wrote, "After describing the timing of his revelation (v. 17), Ezekiel reports the frustration that the Babylonians endured in their siege of Tyre. The image of the heads and shoulders rubbed raw is an idiomatic way to suggest hard physical labor over a long period of time (18). In the metaphor of the passage, the effort spent on Tyre has not been paid, so 'wages' (plunder) were overdue to the Babylonian army. Plunder from Egypt would substitute for plunder from Tyre (v. 19). Indeed, just three years later . . . the Babylonians did successfully invade Egypt. Our sources about this conquest are sparse, but Pharaoh Amasis II apparently had to pay huge sums to buy off the Babylonians, thus 'paying the bill' left by Tyre." (Douglas Stuart, *The Preachers Commentary, Ezekiel*, p.275)

You see, God did this for Babylon because they were serving Him, even though they did not see it that way. God was using the Babylonians to bring about His judgment upon these nations that surrounded Jerusalem as well as Jerusalem!

3. And verse 21 shows that when Israel hears what has happened to Egypt that they will see that the Lord has done this and there is no other God like Yahweh!

**EZEKIEL 30****VERSES 1-5**

1. Historically this is what happened as the Babylonians came down upon Egypt and the surrounding nations. Now we read of this phrase, “**day of the Lord**” and I think there are two ways to look at this. First of all it is speaking of God brining judgment upon Egypt by the hands of the Babylonians, but I also see this looking into the future. I realize that many commentators don’t see this as speaking of the last days but let me show you what I mean and you can decide for yourself.

You see, that phrase “**day of the Lord**” speaks of God’s judgment upon a Christ rejecting world during the Tribulation Period. You can read of this time in the Scriptures in the Old Testament books of Isaiah, Joel, Zechariah, and Zephaniah to name a few. Also, we see this in the New Testament as well in the books of I & II Thessalonians, II Peter and the book of Revelation, besides other places.

And the *day of the LORD* begins with the 7 year Tribulation Period. You can read of this in Daniel 11:40-43, which says regarding the Antichrist that, **“At the time of the end the king of the South shall attack him; and the king of the North shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter the countries, overwhelm them, and pass through. He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon. He shall stretch out his hand against the countries, and the land of Egypt shall not escape. He shall have power over the treasures of gold and silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt; also the Libyans and Ethiopians shall follow at his heels.”**

So I see a near term fulfillment and a long term fulfillment of this prophecy.

#### VERSES 6-9

1. Once again we see the judgment of God upon Egypt and that not only is God going to bring down Egypt but all those nations who have sided with her will be brought down as well.

#### VERSES 10-12

1. God’s judgment is severe upon Egypt and once again the reason is simple, that even these pagan nations will know **“... that I am the LORD...”** Ezekiel 30:8.

Also keep in mind, like many nations would do, when the Babylonians defeated various nations they would take their captives and place them into their armies, make them slaves. They would use them to defeat other nations, like Egypt.

VERSES 13-19

1. Notice that here we see God pour out His judgment upon the gods of Egypt. Their military might could not help them. Their gods could not help them. And in the end they had nothing but death and destruction. You see, all their pride, all their idols, all their gods were going to be brought down to the ground, they would not stand.

Interestingly enough, God says that the strength of Egypt was “**Sin**” in verse 15. Sin was ancient Pelusium, a fortress town on the northeastern border where the ruling Egyptian dynasty of Ezekiel’s day had a residence.

So yes there was a physical city by that name, “**Sin**” but make no mistake about it, God was going to pour out His judgment upon their *SIN!* That is no different today. Look at the boasting of people today who are living in sin - they see it as their strength.

People today flaunt their sin and they want everyone to embrace their sin and when that doesn’t happen they call us hateful, intolerant and-so-on. Good is evil and evil is good and they see no problem with it. And God will judge it, they will not get away with sin! But notice again what God is going to do in Egypt, the destruction that is coming upon them.

They were saying “**No**” to the true and living God, also a city called “**No**” and God says that He will split “**No**” open and pour out His fury upon “**Sin!**” Make no mistake about it, if you don’t know that He is the Lord, you will! God will judge sin just like He did here with Egypt and the only salvation is found in the shed blood of the Lamb applied to the doorposts of our lives!

2. J. Vernon McGee gives us some insight into some of the areas of judgment that are spoken of here in Ezekiel. He wrote,



“I will cause their images to cease out of Noph.” Noph is Memphis, and in Ezekiel’s time it was the great city of Egypt. It was a very wealthy city, and it had idols in profusion—up and down both sides of the streets were idol after idol. They were the city’s decoration! No other place has ever had idols like Memphis had them. Here God says that He would make the idols to cease out of Memphis.

I have walked over what is supposed to be the ruins of Memphis, and all that is left of the idols is one great big statue of Raamses. It lies on its back, and a building has been erected around it to house the statue. That is the only thing left in Memphis. God did exactly what He said He was going to do. He made the idols to cease.

“There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt.” There is no royal line in Egypt any more. Neither can any of the rulers be called great men. They all have had to look to other nations for aid and support.

- J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible, Vol. III, p. 496

Don’t miss the point here. After God’s judgment there will be no full-bloodied Egyptian of the royal family who will reign in Egypt! Now some may argue and say, “What about King Farouk? He began to reign in the 1930’s.” Keep in mind that King Farouk belonged to a dynasty that was founded by an Albanian in the early 1800’s. God’s Word stands!

VERSES 20-26

1. When you see pictures of Egyptian rulers what are they usually holding? They usually have a scepter in their hands and it spoke of their power. But God says that He has broken the arm of Pharaoh. The idea here is that the power has been taken away; they can't hold the scepter any longer.

God is going to bring down Hophra the Pharaoh of Egypt because of His pride. He thought he was a god but he found out he was only a man! And again this judgment was to show them who God is, the true and living God. **“Then they shall know that I am the LORD.”**

2. We read of the pride, the arrogance of people back then and wonder how in the world they could be so foolish! Make no mistake about it, we are no different today. We are an arrogant, prideful people who don't see our need for God. You see, God is spending 4 chapters discussing the fall of Egypt and its leader because of their pride so that we might learn the lesson and apply it to our own lives.

Maybe you have heard of the story of the frog that lived in a pond that was drying up. And he tried to figure out a way to rectify the problem before the pond dried up and it was too late. One day a couple of ducks landed beside him in the pond and he said to them, “You know, it must be great to fly above the land, what a view you must have! The things you see, it must be great! Do you think you can place a stick in your mouths and show me the land, the things that only you can see? Then, maybe when you are done, you can place me in a pond that has an abundant water supply!”

The ducks agreed to the frog's proposal and picked up a stick, put it between them in their mouths, and began to flap their wings. As they did the frog opened his mouth and grabbed hold of the stick tightly with his mouth. And soon they were off flying over the land. A farmer walking by and seeing this frog flying above the land, being held by a stick between two ducks, marveled and said, "Who thought of such a wonderful idea?" And the frog opened his mouth and said "I diiiiiiiii . . . ." The moral of the story is, pride comes before the fall. Thus, be careful!

### EZEKIEL 31

#### VERSES 1-2

1. We are just a couple months from the Jerusalem going into captivity and we see this prophecy against Egypt given. And this time we are going to see the fall of Pharaoh. He thought of himself as being so great, he thought of himself as a god. So the true God is asking him who he would compare himself too, but before he can answer that question, God is going to answer it for him as we will see.

2. That is a great question, "***Who are you like in your greatness?***" And make no mistake about it, we all want to be like somebody else! People want to be like movie stars or rock stars or billionaires, or have this look or that look to attract the opposite sex and-so-on.

The second question is "Why do you want to be that person?" The answer is pretty simple, you want to have what they have, whatever that may be. And if that is how you feel you are dishonoring God!

Now some of you may be taken back by that but put it into perspective. If God created you like you are, and He did, then did He make a mistake? Of course God did not make a mistake. The real issue is contentment in what God has given us, who we are. Now there is nothing wrong with desiring to be all that God wants you to be, but not to be something that God did not intend you to be. That is pride!

### VERSES 3-9

1. God speaks of Assyria like a cedar tree, a mighty cedar tree. And as big and strong and mighty as this tree was, it came crashing to the ground. And to illustrate this we can look at what took place as Assyria was the only nation in Mesopotamia to invade Egypt and destroy its capital city, Thebes, which took place in 633 B. C. The picture here is that the Assyrians were a powerful nation and yet, God brought them down by the hands of the Babylonians, they were cut down.

We also see that the city of Nineveh fell to Nabopolassar King of Babylon in 612 B. C., and he was the father of Nebuchadnezzar. And the rest of the nation of Assyria was taken by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians in 609 B. C.

Thus, just as Assyria fell at the hands of the Babylonians, so too will Egypt be brought down, so too will Pharaoh be brought down! That is what we will see as we read on.

VERSES 10-14

1. Now the picture shifts back to Pharaoh as we are told, “... **‘Because you have increased in height ...’**” Remember back in verse 2 the Lord is speaking to Pharaoh and now that He has shown Pharaoh what has happened to Assyria in their pride, how they were cut down, He tells Pharaoh that is what will happen to him! Not only will Egypt be brought into His judgment but so too will Pharaoh!

VERSES 15-18

1. When Egypt fell they went down to the pit, they went down into Hell with Pharaoh. How can God do that? Because of ***PRIDE*** which lead Pharaoh and the nation to do their own thing, worship their own gods instead of the true and living God which lead into all kinds of sin and judgment fell upon them!

2. Now how does this relate to us? First of all, how do you think of yourself? Do you see yourself better than others? Do you see yourself as head and shoulders above the rest? Are you doing it your own way? Are you the master of your destiny? Do you think you can really pull it off? If you do, watch out!

You see, with that much pride there is no room for God and you will be brought down, not only in this life, but in the life to come you will be cast into Sheol, or outer darkness. And I will guarantee you this, in Hell you won't be jockeying for position to be the most important person in Hell! The reality is that in Hell everyone loses and you will have an eternity to think about all your glory that you received on this earth and how it is nothing now.

3. There is a teaching that is back into the church today that says that there is no Hell. The Emergent Church is big on this one. In April of 2011 Time Magazine had a front page story by Rob Bell that read – “What if There is No Hell? A popular pastor’s best-selling book has stirred fierce debate about sin, salvation and judgment.”

Think about that for a minute. If there is no sin then there is no need for salvation, we don’t need a Savior, we don’t need Jesus. If there is no sin and thus no need for salvation then obviously there is no judgment. Do you think this is an important subject? You bet it is, it has a person’s eternal destiny resting upon what is the truth in this matter.

Let me just share a couple of statements made by Rob Bell regarding Hell. “When people use the word hell, what do they mean? They mean a place, an event, a situation absent of how God desires things to be. Famine, debt, oppression, loneliness, despair, death, slaughter – they are all hell on earth.” (Rob Bell) “For Jesus, heaven and hell were present realities. Ways of living we can enter into here and now. He talked very little of the life beyond this one . . .” (Rob Bell, Velvet Elvis) I am not sure what Bible he is reading or which Jesus he is following?

These are from Brian McLaren and again, listen to what he has to say about Hell. “We should consider the possibility that many, and *perhaps even all* of Jesus’ hell-fire or end-of-the-universe statements refer not to postmortem [after death] judgment but to the very historic consequences of rejecting his kingdom message of reconciliation and peacemaking.” (Brian McLaren) And yet the Bible says that Jesus did not come to bring peace on earth. Go figure, who are you going to believe, Brian McLaren or the Lord?

He also wrote, “For many Christians, their faith is primarily about what happens to people after they die. That distracts them from seeking justice and living in a compassionate way while we’re still alive in this life. We need to go back and take another look at Jesus’ teachings about hell. For so many people, the conventional teaching about hell makes God seem vicious. That’s not something we should let stand.” (Brian McLaren)

And lastly, “Yes, I find a character named God who sends a flood that destroys all humanity except Noah’s family, but that’s almost trivial compared to a deity who tortures the greater part of humanity forever in infinite eternal conscious torment, these words that need to be read slowly and thoughtfully to feel their full import.” (Brian McLaren)

Do you know what this sounds like besides garbage? It is like Christian Science. To them heaven and hell are just states of the mind and not a literal place that we go to. Obviously these people are not looking at what the Scriptures teach but they are doctrines of demons that come from the pit of Hell!

I hope I am clear on this. Sin has separated man from God and if you doubt that there is sin in the world then turn on the news. And the reality is, **“All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.”** Romans 3:23.

What does that mean? It means we need salvation, we need a Savior or we will face the judgment of God! Thus, **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.”** John 3:16-17.

But, if you reject the gift of God, if you reject His salvation that only He can bring, the forgiveness of sins, then you will face His judgment! Listen carefully to what we are told in Revelation 20:10-15 regarding the Lake of Fire or the final resting place for those who reject Jesus. We are told, **“The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”**

Listen to how we can sum this up. We are told,

It is interesting that a much higher percentage of people believe in the existence of heaven than believe in the existence of hell. According to the Bible, though, hell is just as real as heaven. The Bible clearly and explicitly teaches that hell is a real place to which the wicked/unbelieving are sent after death. We have all sinned against God (Romans 3:23). The just punishment for that sin is death (Romans 6:23). Since all of our sin is ultimately against God (Psalm 51:4), and since God is an infinite and eternal Being, the punishment for sin, death, must also be infinite and eternal. Hell is this infinite and eternal death which we have earned because of our sin.



The punishment of the wicked dead in hell is described throughout Scripture as “eternal fire” (Matthew 25:41), “unquenchable fire” (Matthew 3:12), “shame and everlasting contempt” (Daniel 12:2), a place where “the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:44-49), a place of “torment” and “fire” (Luke 16:23-24), “everlasting destruction” (2 Thessalonians 1:9), a place where “the smoke of torment rises forever and ever” (Revelation 14:10-11), and a “lake of burning sulfur” where the wicked are “tormented day and night forever and ever” (Revelation 20:10).

The punishment of the wicked in hell is as never ending as the bliss of the righteous in heaven. Jesus Himself indicates that punishment in hell is just as everlasting as life in heaven (Matthew 25:46). The wicked are forever subject to the fury and the wrath of God. Those in hell will acknowledge the perfect justice of God (Psalm 76:10). Those who are in hell will know that their punishment is just and that they alone are to blame (Deuteronomy 32:3-5). Yes, hell is real. Yes, hell is a place of torment and punishment that lasts forever and ever, with no end. Praise God that, through Jesus, we can escape this eternal fate (John 3:16, 18, 36).

- <http://www.gotquestions.org/hell-real-eternal.html>

I think that is pretty clear. Don't listen to what anyone says, trust what God's Word has to say. He loves you so much that while you were still a sinner He died for you and that free gift of eternal life that is found in Him He has given to you. All you must do is receive it by faith and apart from the forgiveness of sins you will spend eternity apart from Him in the Lake of Fire! I didn't say that, God did!

**EZEKIEL 32****VERSES 1-8**

1. This prophecy is dated after the capture of Jerusalem by the Babylonians and it is a lamentation for Pharaoh the King of Egypt! And once again we see the pride of Pharaoh as he saw himself as strong as a lion, able to devour anyone he wanted. He saw himself as this powerful crocodile or sea monster swimming in the Nile River. And because of his strength, because of his power, he did as he pleased. He stirred up all kinds of trouble, moving back and forth, doing what he wanted. And it does sound impressive and I'm sure he terrified many people and nations. But what man sees as strong, powerful, invincible, God sees as nothing.

And as you picture how perfect this powerful sea monster is, it has been captured in the net of God. It was not even a fight! And in the end, they are not only captured but they are cast into captivity as well as many of them destroyed in the battle! Egypt is being cut down.

2. As you talk with some Christians today they are worried about this, they are worried about that. They see all the evil out there and they wonder what is going to happen! I will tell you what will happen. God will spread His net over them; they will be destroyed in His judgment. And please don't say, "But . . ." There are not but's about it! We know the end of the story; God wins and sits upon the throne of David to rule and reign for 1,000 years! That does not mean that hard times won't come, they will. But as much as the world can take away from us, they can't take away our Lord from us because nothing can separate His love from us! Praise God!

VERSES 9-16

1. All those nations that looked to Egypt for help, all those nations that sided with Egypt, sending them mercenaries to fight with them, all those nations that were close to Egypt, when Egypt fell to Babylon, their hearts sank. They knew that it was only a matter of time before Babylon came upon them and destroyed them.

And as you look at a land that was flowing with people and activity, that is now gone. It would never rise to its former glory. In verses 13 and 14 we see the waters that were muddy as they trampled back and forth doing as they pleased before their captivity has now changed. Now the land is desolate. The people are in captivity and the rivers are running crystal clear because there is no one left to disturb them.

2. And once again we see the phrase, “**. . . Then they shall know that I am the LORD.**” Ezekiel 32:15. Is that speaking of Egypt or the surrounding nations that saw the demise of Egypt? I think both are in view here. Pharaoh and the Egyptians will know who the LORD is and so too will the surrounding nations. And for those who made it through this judgment, it was their choice to turn to the true and living God or to reject Him. And sadly, like many do today, they turn from the One who loves them so much!

VERSES 17-21

1. Here were a people and a nation who saw themselves as beautiful, but their beauty could not save them, they were going to Hell. One writer summed it up like this,

Egyptian soldiers will fall by the sword. Their corpses are abandoned on the field of battle. Nations already in Sheol are exhorted to drag the slain Egyptian forces on down into their midst (draw her down and all her multitude; v 20). The irony here is obvious. No nation in history put more emphasis on life after death – the elaborate pyramids and subterranean burial vaults; the art of embalming; the amassing of enormous wealth and every conceivable provision for abundant life in the world to come. None of this, however, will prevent the mighty Pharaohs from being brought down in shame to the pit.

The leaders of nations already in Sheol are represented as greeting Pharaoh and his allies with mocking words upon their arrival in the pit. The mighty Egyptians have died an ignominious [disgraceful] death - the death of the uncircumcised - by the sword (v 21).

- James E. Smith, *An Exegetical Commentary on EZEKIEL*, pp. 193-194

As we read on we will see these other nations that are with Egypt down in Sheol or Hell, the ones who arrived there before Pharaoh and the Egyptians, the ones who were greeting them. And if you think about it, it is not a great greeting. I guess the greeting could go something like this, “Welcome to Hell where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth!” Not something you want to hear!

VERSES 22-32

1. As you read this you see the destination of those nations and people who reject the Lord. As you get to verse 31 we see that Pharaoh is comforted by those he meets in Sheol. Now don't get the idea that he was at ease knowing that he was not alone in Sheol or maybe he was because he didn't care who was with him there! But it is not a warm greeting that is for sure, or maybe it is! Not like you might think! One write put it like this regarding these nations. He wrote,

The great nations that terrorized the earth have been permanently and totally removed from the world of the living. They are now only a bad memory. The graves of satellite nations surround that of Egypt itself in those inaccessible regions (v 23). Seven times in vv 23-32 the prophet repeats the charge that these nations caused terror in the land of the living. The ancients bragged about their brutality.

- James E. Smith, An Exegetical Commentary on EZEKIEL, p. 194

2. Now as you look at this list of nations please understand that it is not an exhaustive list. There are many more nations and people that are in Sheol awaiting the Great White Throne judgment or that final judgment before they are cast into the Lake of Fire. But what a list it is. We see Assyria, Elam, Meshech, Tubal, Edom, the princes of the north, the Sidonians, and of course Pharaoh.

Now what brought all these nations down, all these people down? We have talked about it a lot tonight. What brought them down was **PRIDE!** And of course, the middle letter in the word "*pride*" is "*I*" and that will always get you in trouble. They refused to acknowledge the Lord, they had an "*I*" problem and now they are in the pit of Hell with a great company of people who felt as they did.

3. What can we glean from this? How can we know if we have pride in our life? There are two important indicators. The first is that we are not thankful. It is an attitude that we deserve these things; it is our right to have them. Many in America feel this way and it truly is sad. You see, the reality is the very breath we breathe is a gift from God, it is not our right. We need to be thankful for all that God has blessed us with. Each day we wake-up we need to thank Him for that!

The second thing is having a life that is absent of prayer. The idea is we can do it on our own. We can get by without His help or anyone else's help. A life filled with prayer shows that you are dependent upon God for everything. We need to understand that in these bodies of flesh we can do nothing on our own, for we have no strength. I like the way that Jesus put it in Matthew 6:11, "**Give us this day our daily bread.**" You see, our daily dependence upon God for the basic necessities of life! The opposite of that is a daily dependence upon ourselves and that is never a good thing, that is pride!

4. As I close this evening we have seen how this powerful leader allowed pride to bring him down and the nation down. But there was another King who saw things differently. In fact, he cried out in Psalm 28, **“To You I will cry, O Lord my Rock: Do not be silent to me, Lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit. Hear the voice of my supplications When I cry to You, When I lift up my hands toward Your holy sanctuary. Do not take me away with the wicked And with the workers of iniquity, Who speak peace to their neighbors, But evil is in their hearts. Give them according to their deeds, And according to the wickedness of their endeavors; Give them according to the work of their hands; Render to them what they deserve. Because they do not regard the works of the Lord, Nor the operation of His hands, He shall destroy them And not build them up. Blessed be the Lord, Because He has heard the voice of my supplications! The Lord is my strength and my shield; My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, And with my song I will praise Him. The Lord is their strength, And He is the saving refuge of His anointed. Save Your people, And bless Your inheritance; Shepherd them also, And bear them up forever.”**

David was a man after God’s own heart and he sought the Lord, he depended upon the Lord and the Lord kept him from the pit of destruction because David walked with the Lord and not apart from Him. May we do the same!