

## Ezekiel Part 38 (Ezekiel 31-32)

1. **31:1-9** This message has been dated to the summer of 587 B.C. - to the time of the final siege before the fall of Jerusalem. Ezekiel prophesied against the king of Egypt.
2. These verses recount the fall of the king of Assyria, who is compared to a cedar of Lebanon. The cedars of Lebanon were known for their height and durability.
3. These trees grew taller than all other trees (vv. 3, 5) - a symbolic reference to Assyria's former position of world dominance.
4. All the birds nested in the cedar (v. 6), a reference to the small nations that became dependent on Assyria.
5. This "tree" was a model of beauty and majesty for all to see (v. 7). None of the cedars in the garden of God could rival it (v. 8).
6. The phrase "Garden of God" is a reference to Eden (v. 9) but also represents the whole world order as initially created by God.
7. Assyria was the greatest nation in world history up to the point of its rise as a dominant world power. The point of the image of the tree in vv. 3-9 is to present the matchless splendor and power of Egypt.
8. **31:10-18** And because of Assyria's pride and perversion of powers, God determined to bring judgment on it (vv. 10-11), the most ruthless nation in history.
9. So God raised the most "ruthless," (v. 12), nations against it, and it fell. All nations abandoned Assyria and left it to fall (vv. 12-13).
10. No other trees would ever reach such height, but God would consign them all to the "pit" (v. 14).
11. On the day Assyria went into Sheol - God assisted its burial. Nations trembled and mourned at the sound of its fall and descent. into Sheol.
12. The allies went down with the "cedar," and all the nations were consoled (vv. 16-17).
13. All that was said to this point has laid the foundation for the conclusion in v. 18.
14. If Assyria, with its splendor, power, and majesty, could not escape the judgment of God, neither would Egypt.
15. The same fate that befell Assyria would befall Egypt's fallen "cedar" (v. 18).

16. We can take several things from this passage:
  - a. First, God hates pride because it leads people and nations to ruin.
  - b. Second, the mighty fall as do the weak. When the mighty fall, it is also a loss for the weak and dependent.
  - c. Third, the fall of the tree was a reminder of the mortality of human beings and individual accountability to God.
17. The pride and perversion of Egypt were its downfall. This warns that the same characteristics will bring the downfall of any individual or nation.
18. For Judah the message was equally devastating. If they had any hope that Egypt would save them from the hands of the Babylonians, Ezekiel had just pronounced that their “deliverer,” that is, Pharaoh, would fall.
19. Not only would Egypt be judged, but also Israel’s last (false) hope had failed.
20. Chapter 32 verses 1-16 is the sixth message in the series of prophecies against Egypt. It characterizes Pharaoh as a sea monster and uses language similar to the earlier message in chap. 29.
21. **32:17–25** Ezekiel’s final message against Egypt occurred in 585 B.C. (v. 17).
22. The message is a review of the demise of the past political powers with the conclusion that Egypt would join them (v. 18).
23. **32:26–32** Another two groups, Meshech and Tubal, also were in the “pit.” These two groups were older nations in Asia Minor (see 27:13) known for their terror and ruthlessness (v. 26).
24. The oracles against the nations in chapters 25–32 were originally delivered to the people of Judah.
25. Although the words written seem to be solely for those particular nations, they are foremost for the people of Judah in Jerusalem and Babylon and serve at least three purposes.
26. First, the oracles reveal God’s judgment against the nations that either mocked or aided in Jerusalem’s fall.
27. Second, as with both the king of Tyre and the Pharaoh of Egypt, God would throw them down from their self-elevated positions of power—there is no room for such arrogance and pride in God’s creation.
28. Third, the oracles are essentially a dismantling of the gods of the nations, which is in turn a dismantling of the gods Judah had begun to rely wrongly upon, and the proclamation that Yahweh is the one and only true God for all nations.

As mentioned in the introduction to this section, the phrase “know I am the LORD” occurs nineteen times. The primary purpose of these oracles is that everyone should come to “know the LORD.”