

## Reading Guide for Ezekiel 25-32

Chapters 25-32 make up a collection of judgment oracles to seven nations. Up to this point, Ezekiel's oracles have been directed exclusively toward Judah and Jerusalem. Now the prophet is commanded to speak to the other nations, who, for their sins against the Lord and His people, will also face destruction at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, the agent of divine judgment to the nations. Additionally, this section serves as a transition in the book of Ezekiel, as the emphasis will shift from Israel's judgment to its eventual restoration.

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This compilation of oracles to the nations begins with four short units to Judah's neighbors, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia. Each unit is made up of a single judgment oracle, except for Ammon, which contains two. These nations are charged specifically for their crimes against Judah, thus providing vindication for the remnant. In regard to structure, the first six oracles (which include both oracles to Ammon and the first oracle to Tyre in 26:2-6) all follow a nearly identical pattern, which can be noted in the outline.

### I. ORACLES TO AMMON (25:1-7)

#### Message-reception Formula (v. 1)

#### Introduction (vv. 2-3b)

Call to Ezekiel to Face Ammon and Speak the Word (vv. 2-3a)

Call for Ammon to Hear the Word (v. 3b)

#### Judgment Oracle 1 (25:3c-5)

Quotation Formula (v. 3c)

Accusation: Ammon Gloated Over Judah's Destruction (v. 3d)

Sentence: Ammon will be Given to the People of the East (vv. 4-5a)

Recognition Formula (v. 5b)

#### Judgment Oracle 2 (25:6-7)

Quotation Formula (v. 6a)

Accusation: Ammon Gloated Over Judah's Destruction (v. 6b)

Sentence: Ammon will be Given to Another People and be Destroyed (v. 7ab)

Recognition Formula (v. 7c)

### II. ORACLE TO MOAB (25:8-11)

#### Judgment Oracle (25:8-11)

Quotation Formula (v. 8a)

Accusation: Moab Denied Judah's Status Before the Lord (v. 8b)

Sentence: Moab will be Given to the People of the East (vv. 9-11a)

Recognition Formula (v. 11b)

### III. ORACLE TO EDMON (25:12-14)

#### Judgment Oracle (25:12-14)

Quotation Formula (v. 12a)

Accusation: Edom Acted Vengefully (v. 12b)

Sentence: Edom will Know the Vengeance of the Lord (vv. 13-14a)

Recognition Formula (v. 14b)

Declaration Formula (v. 14c)

### IV. ORACLE TO PHILISTIA (25:15-17)

#### Judgment Oracle (25:15-17)

Quotation Formula (v. 15a)

Accusation: Philistia Acted Vengefully (v. 15b)

Sentence: Philistia will Fall Victim to the Lord's Vengeance (vv. 16-17a)

Recognition Formula (v. 17b)

## **V. ORACLES TO TYRE (26:1-28:19)**

This unit is made up of various oracles directed to Tyre, a Phoenician city on the Mediterranean coast, known for its bustling and profitable trade. These oracles alternate between judgments and laments, but are joined together by themes of death and mourning, descent into the Pit (Sheol), trembling and desolation. Tyre's judgment came in the form of Nebuchadnezzar's thirteen-year siege on the city, from 586-573 B.C.

### **1. Judgment on Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar (26:1-14)**

As noted above, the first oracle follows the same pattern as the previous. An additional oracle is linked to it, specifying Nebuchadnezzar as the agent of Tyre's judgment.

#### **Message-reception Formula (26:1)**

#### **Judgment Oracle: Tyre will Fall to the Nations for Her Taunts Against Jerusalem (26:2-6)**

Accusation: Tyre Gloated Over Jerusalem's Destruction (v. 2)

Sentence: Tyre will Fall Victim to Many Nations (vv. 3-6a)

Recognition Formula (v. 6b)

#### **Additional Judgment Oracle: Nebuchadnezzar will Bring Judgment (26:7-14)**

Quotation Formula (v. 7a)

Pronouncement of Judgment: Nebuchadnezzar will Destroy Tyre (vv. 7b-14a)

Declaration Formula (v. 14b)

### **2. Tyre will be Destroyed, Lamented, and Cast into the Pit (26:15-21)**

A lament naturally follows the "death" of Tyre. It is the nations who served in and profited from Tyre's bustling trade that now lament their downfall. However, this is not the final word. The next oracle (vv. 19-21) depicts Tyre's further descent into the Pit, where the once great city becomes desolate and uninhabited.

#### **The Nations Lament the Fall of Tyre (26:15-18)**

Quotation Formula (v. 15a)

The Rulers of the Coastlands Hear About Tyre's Fall (vv. 15b-16)

The Nations' Lament (vv. 17-18)

#### **The Lord will Send Tyre into Sheol (26:19-21)**

Quotation Formula (v. 19a)

Judgment: Tyre will be Sent Down to the Pit Never to be Found Again (vv. 19b-21a)

Declaration Formula (v. 21b)

### **3. A Lament for Tyre (27:1-36)**

The next section is another lament for Tyre with strong emphasis on their past glory and perfection. Tyre is described as a ship, its construction as a metaphor for its wealth and their international crew as a metaphor for their political power. This is followed with a very detailed description of all of Tyre's traders and merchandise. This dramatically sets up their fall and subsequent lament by those many traders and dealers.

#### **Message-reception Formula (27:1)**

#### **Command to Raise a Lament Over Tyre (27:2-3a)**

#### **Tyre's Past Perfection (27:3b-11)**

Quotation Formula (v. 3b)

Tyre's Arrogance (v. 3c)

Tyre as a Metaphorical Ship: Its Wealth (vv. 4-7)

Tyre as a Metaphorical Ship: Its Political Power (vv. 8-11)

#### **Tyre's Many Traders and Dealers (27:12-25)**

#### **Tyre's Downfall (27:26-36)**

The Reaction to Tyre's Downfall (vv. 26-32a)

Lament Over Tyre's Downfall (vv. 32b-36)

#### **4. Oracle Against the Prince of Tyre (28:1-19)**

The unit ends with a judgment oracle against the ruler of Tyre. This judgment oracle follows the typical pattern of judgment oracle, condemning him for his divine claims and pronouncing the sentence of death. It is naturally followed by a lament describing his past glory and their present disaster.

##### **Judgment Oracle Against the Prince of Tyre (28:1-10)**

Message-reception Formula (v. 1)  
Command to Speak the Word (v. 2a)  
Accusation: The Prince of Tyre's Claim of Divinity (vv. 2b-5)  
Sentence: He will be Killed and Cast into the Pit (vv. 6-10a)  
Declaration Formula (v. 10b)

##### **Lament Over the King of Tyre (28:11-19)**

Message-reception Formula (v. 11)  
Command to Raise a Lament (v. 12a)  
Quotation Formula (v. 12b)  
Description of Tyre's Wealth and Beauty (vv. 12c-14)  
Tyre's Sin and Judgment (vv. 15-18b)  
    *Tyre's Violence (vv. 15-16a)*  
    *Pronouncement of Judgment (v. 16b)*  
    *Tyre's Pride (v. 17a)*  
    *Pronouncement of Judgment (v. 17b)*  
    *Tyre's Defilement (v. 18a)*  
    *Pronouncement of Judgment (v. 18b)*  
Tyre's Fate: A Horror and Be No More Forever (v. 19)

#### **VI. ORACLE TO SIDON (28:20-26)**

Sidon was another prominent city on the Phoenician coast, 25 miles north of Tyre. These oracles function both as a pronouncement of judgment on Sidon and hope for Israel's future. After all, it is the judgment on Sidon, as well as the other surrounding nations, that not only vindicates God's people, but also paves the way for their eventual return to the land.

##### **Message-reception Formula (25:20)**

##### **Command to Prophecy to Sidon (25:21-22a)**

##### **Judgment on Sidon will Mean Blessing for the House of Israel (25:22b-24)**

Quotation Formula (v. 22b)  
The Lord will Manifest His Glory (v. 22c)  
    Recognition Formula with Proof (v. 22d)  
God will Send Pestilence and the Sword (v. 23ab)  
    Recognition Formula (v. 23c)  
Israel will No Longer be Plagued by Those Around Them (v. 24a)  
    Recognition Formula (v. 24b)

##### **Judgment on the Surrounding Nations will Mean Blessing for the House of Israel (vv. 25-26)**

Quotation Formula (v. 25a)  
Israel will Return to Their Own Land (vv. 25b-26ab)  
Recognition Formula (v. 26c)

## **VII. ORACLES TO EGYPT (29:1-32:32)**

Egypt, the seventh nation addressed in this section, is comprised of seven oracles. With the exception of the third oracle, all are introduced with a date notice. As they do in the books of Jeremiah and Isaiah, the oracles against Egypt make up a large section in the book of Ezekiel. The reason for this was Judah's constant temptation to put their hope and trust in Egypt (i.e. Pharaoh and his army) rather than the Lord. As these oracles reveal, despite Egypt's seemingly unstoppable military might and wealth, all hope in them for salvation from Nebuchadnezzar would prove to be in vain.

### **1. Judgment for Pharaoh's Pride (29:1-16)**

This section is dated to January 7, 587 B.C., early in Babylon's siege of Jerusalem. It consists of three oracles that center around Pharaoh, whose pride and boastful claims enticed Judah to trust in them. It begins with Pharaoh depicted as a monster lurking in the Nile, claiming dominion over it. He will, however, be speedily dispatched and cast into the wilderness. The second oracle depicts Egypt as a staff (cf. Isa. 36:6) that, instead of providing support for Judah, has only hurt them; for this too they will be judged. The third oracle combines these two crimes, pronouncing judgment for Pharaoh's boastful claims, making it so Egypt will never again rise to their former dominance, thus removing any temptation for Judah to trust in them.

#### **Date Notice/Message-reception Formula (29:1)**

#### **Command to Prophecy to Sidon (29:2-3a)**

#### **Pronouncement of Judgment on Pharaoh (29:3b-6a)**

Quotation Formula (v. 3b)

Pharaoh's Pride (v. 3c)

The Lord's Judgment (vv. 4-5)

Recognition Formula (v. 6a)

#### **Judgment Oracle on Egypt, the Broken Staff (29:6b-9b)**

Accusation: Egypt Providing False Hope (vv. 6b-7)

Sentence: Judgment on Pharaoh and Egypt (vv. 8-9a)

Recognition Formula (v. 9b)

#### **Judgment and Restoration (29:9c-16)**

##### **Judgment Oracle (29:9c-12)**

Accusation: Pharaoh's Pride (v. 9c)

Sentence (vv. 10-12b)

*Judgment on Pharaoh (v. 10a)*

*Judgment on the Land Egypt (vv. 10b-12a)*

*Exile of the Egyptians (v. 12b)*

##### **Restoration Oracle: Egypt will be Restored as a Lowly Kingdom (29:13-16)**

Quotation Formula (v. 13a)

Restoration Oracle (v. 13b-16a)

Recognition Formula (v. 16b)

### **2. Nebuchadnezzar's Conquest of Egypt as Wages for Tyre and Validation of Ezekiel (29:17-21)**

Dated April 26, 571 B.C., this oracle comes two years after Nebuchadnezzar's thirteen-year siege on Tyre (586-573 B.C.). The siege against Tyre was lengthy and failed to yield any great gain for Babylon. Apparently, there were some among the exiles that took issue with Ezekiel's earlier prophecies toward Tyre, seeing them as not coming to pass, at least not the way they thought they should. The Lord, however, brings reassurance that *Egypt* is Babylon's spoil for the siege against Tyre. Verse 21 adds emphasis, affirming that Israel's future hope as prophesied by Ezekiel is secure.

**Date Notice/Message-reception Formula (29:17)**

**Egypt will be Payment for Nebuchadnezzar's Siege on Tyre (29:18-20)**

Nebuchadnezzar's Siege of Tyre Yields Little Spoil (v. 18)

Nebuchadnezzar's Conquest of Egypt will be Payment for Tyre (vv. 19-20)

**Affirmation of Israel's Future Promises (29:21)**

Israel's Future Power (v. 21a)

Ezekiel's Continued Prophetic Ministry (v. 21b)

Recognition Formula (v. 21c)

**3. The Day of the Lord Upon Egypt (30:1-19)**

This undated section centers around Egypt's coming judgment by the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, this time described in terms of the "Day of the Lord." Egypt will inevitably fall, along with her allies, and these oracles describe in great detail the names of these cities and allies. This adds further proof to Judah that hope in Egypt is of no avail.

**Date Notice/Message-reception Formula (30:1)**

**Command to Prophecy (30:2a)**

**Lament for Egypt (30:2b-4)**

Quotation Formula (v. 2b)

Call to Lament (v. 2c)

Reasons for the Lament (vv. 3-4)

**Cush and the Rest of Egypt's Mercenary Army will be Defeated (30:5)**

**All of Egypt's Allies will be Defeated (30:6-8)**

Quotation Formula (v. 6a)

Egypt's Allies will Fall (v. 6b)

Their Lands will be Desolated (v. 7)

Recognition Formula (v. 8)

**Cush will be in Dread of Their Coming Destruction (30:9)**

**Nebuchadnezzar will Bring Judgment on Egypt (30:10-12)**

**Judgment on All Egypt's Cities (30:13-19)**

Quotation Formula (v. 13a)

Judgment on Memphis, Pathros, and Zoan (vv. 13b-14a)

Judgment on Thebes and Pelusium (vv. 14b-16a)

Judgment on Memphis, On, Pi-beseth, and Tehaphnehes (vv. 16b-19a)

Recognition Formula (v. 19b)

**4. Pharaoh's Arms Broken/Nebuchadnezzar's Arms Strengthened (30:20-26)**

This oracle, dated to April 29th, 587 B.C., aims to destroy any last vestiges of the exiles' hope in Egypt saving Jerusalem. Pharaoh Hophra had been defeated once before in an attempt to repel Babylon. For those who held onto hope that Egypt would make a second attempt to defeat Babylon (their "one good arm"), the Lord pronounces to them that He will not only break both of Egypt's arms, but will strengthen Nebuchadnezzar.

**Date Notice/Message-reception Formula (30:20)**

**Pronouncement of Judgment on Egypt (30:21-26)**

Pharaoh's Broken Arm Remains Unhealed (v. 21)

The Lord will Break Both Pharaoh's Arms and Strengthen Nebuchadnezzar (vv. 22-25a)

Recognition Formula with Resumptive Judgment (vv. 25b-26a)

Recognition Formula (v. 26b)

## **5. Judgment on Assyria for Their Pride as a Lesson for Egypt (31:1-18)**

This section is dated to June 21, 587 B.C. Here Pharaoh compares himself to Assyria's former greatness, using the metaphor of a great cosmic tree. However, like Assyria, Egypt will be felled to the ground and descend into Sheol.

**Date Notice/Message-reception Formula (31:1)**

**Command to Prophecy (31:2)**

**Egypt Compares Itself to Assyria's Former Greatness (31:2b-9)**

Question: Who Does Egypt Compare Itself to? (v. 2b)

Answer: Assyria as a Great Tree (vv. 3-9)

**Assyria's Fall Because of Its Pride (31:10-14)**

Quotation Formula (v. 10a)

Resumptive Accusation (v. 10b)

Assyria's Sentence: It was Felled by a Ruthless Nation (vv. 11-13)

Assyria's Fall as a Lesson to the Other Nations (v. 14)

**Assyria's Descended into Sheol with All the Other Wicked (31:15-17)**

**Application for Pharaoh and Egypt (31:18)**

## **6. A Lament for the Slain Pharaonic Dragon (32:1-16)**

Dated to March 3, 585 B.C., this oracle was given after the fall of Jerusalem, where the exiles realized there was no more hope for the city to be spared. But the Lord is not done with Egypt. Their destruction is now couched in the metaphor of Pharaoh as a sea monster. Although he fancies himself the lion of the nations, he will be fished out by the Lord Himself, left to be devoured by the birds and beasts of the land. The agent of the Lord's destruction is revealed to be Nebuchadnezzar.

**Date Notice/Message-reception Formula (32:1)**

**Command to Raise a Lament (32:2a)**

**Pharaoh as a Dragon of the Sea (32:2b)**

**Judgment on Pharaoh and Egypt (32:3-10)**

Quotation Formula (v. 3a)

The Dragon Hauled from the Sea and Consumed on Land (vv. 3b-6)

The Sky Over Egypt will be Darkened (vv. 7-8)

The Reaction of the Other Nations to Egypt's Fall (vv. 9-10)

**Nebuchadnezzar as the Lord's Agents of Egypt's Fall (32:11-15)**

**Statement about the Lament (32:16)**

## **7. Egypt Destined for Sheol (32:17-32)**

This section is dated to March 17, 585 B.C. Despite Egypt's claims of eternal power, they would suffer the same disgraceful fate of the powers that came before it. The hope of life and blessing for God's people will not lie in the strength of the nations, but in the promises of God.

**Date Notice/Message-reception Formula (32:17)**

**Command to Wail Over Egypt Who Has Descended to the Netherworld (32:18)**

**Egypt's Fate is No Different than the Other Nations (32:19-21)**

**Other Nations in Sheol (32:22-30)**

Assyria (vv. 22-23)

Elam (vv. 24-25)

Meshech-Tubal (vv. 26-28)

Edom (v. 29)

Princes of the North and the Sidonians (v. 30)

**Reaffirmation of Pharaoh and Egypt's Fate (32:31-32)**