EZEKIEL 32

The Monster in the Net: Egypt's Funeral Song

> *"Though I instilled a terror of him in the land of the living, yet he will be made to lie down among the uncircumcised along with those slain by the sword, even Pharaoh and all his hordes."*
> EZEKIEL 32:32

Where Ezekiel has brought us

1. Chapter 32 closes Ezekiel’s seven oracles against Egypt with two dated words.

2. By now Jerusalem has fallen; in 33:21 the news reaches the exiles.

A Funeral Song for a Living King

Pharaoh thought he was a lion; God calls him a crocodile in the mud.

EZEKIEL 32:2

"Son of man, take up a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him, 'You compared yourself to a young lion of the nations, Yet you are like the monster in the seas; And you burst forth in your rivers And muddied the waters with your feet And fouled their rivers.'"

DAVID GUZIK

Wright, in Guzik, contrasts Pharaoh's regard for himself as a lion with what he really is — a crocodile thrashing about and stirring up mud.

WHAT IT MEANS

Pharaoh "compared yourself to a young lion of the nations" (v2) — that was his self-image, the king of beasts striding across the earth.

qinah (קִינָה)

QINAH · "LAMENTATION"

Qinah is a lamentation — a dirge, a funeral song. Ezekiel is told, "Son of man, take up a lamentation over Pharaoh king of Egypt" (v2), and v16 closes the first oracle the same way: "This is a lamentation and they shall chant it."

Lion or Crocodile? The First Lament



Pharaoh’s self-image against God’s verdict, and the six steps of the first lament (vv1–16).

The Net and the Darkness

God nets the monster, leaves it on the land, and darkens the sky.

EZEKIEL 32:3

Thus says the Lord GOD, "Now I will spread My net over you With a company of many peoples, And they shall lift you up in My net.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik cites Poole that Hophra's soldiers left dead in the Libyan deserts literally fulfilled the picture of bodies on the open field.

WHAT IT MEANS

God hauls the monster out of the water and leaves it on the land (v4). Its flesh covers the mountains and its blood soaks the ravines (vv5–6).

resheth (רֶשֶׁת)
RESHETH · "NET"

Resheth is a net for catching animals. God says, "Now I will spread My net over you With a company of many peoples" (v3).

The Sword of Babylon

Babylon's sword devastates Egypt's pride — and then the waters settle.

EZEKIEL 32:11

For thus says the Lord GOD, "The sword of the king of Babylon will come upon you.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that skeptics question whether Babylon ever conquered Egypt, since secular confirmation is thin.

WHAT IT MEANS

God names His instrument once more: "The sword of the king of Babylon will come upon you" (v11).

gaon (גָּאוֹן)
GAON · "PRIDE"

Gaon means majesty, pride, arrogance — the swelling splendor of a great nation. The swords of Babylon's mighty ones "will devastate the pride of Egypt, And all its hordes will be destroyed" (v12).

Down to the Pit

Two weeks later: wail, and bring Egypt down to the uncircumcised.

EZEKIEL 32:18

"Son of man, wail for the hordes of Egypt and bring it down, her and the daughters of the powerful nations, to the nether world, with those who go down to the pit;

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notes that most agree this second oracle came two weeks after the first, in the same month — the seventh and last word against Egypt.

WHAT IT MEANS

The final oracle is a descent. God tells Ezekiel to wail and to bring Egypt down — her and "the daughters of the powerful nations" (v18).

bor (בּוֹר)

BOR · "PIT"

Bor is a pit or cistern — and then the grave. Ezekiel is told to bring Egypt down "to the nether world, with those who go down to the pit" (v18).

The Graveyard of Empires

Assyria, Elam, Meshech, Tubal, Edom, Sidon — once feared, now in shame.

EZEKIEL 32:22

"Assyria is there and all her company; her graves are round about her. All of them are slain, fallen by the sword,

DAVID GUZIK

Ezekiel tours the underworld like a cemetery: Assyria (vv22–23); Elam, east of Babylon (vv24–25); Meshech and Tubal (vv26–27); Edom (v29); the chiefs of the north and the Sidonians (v30).

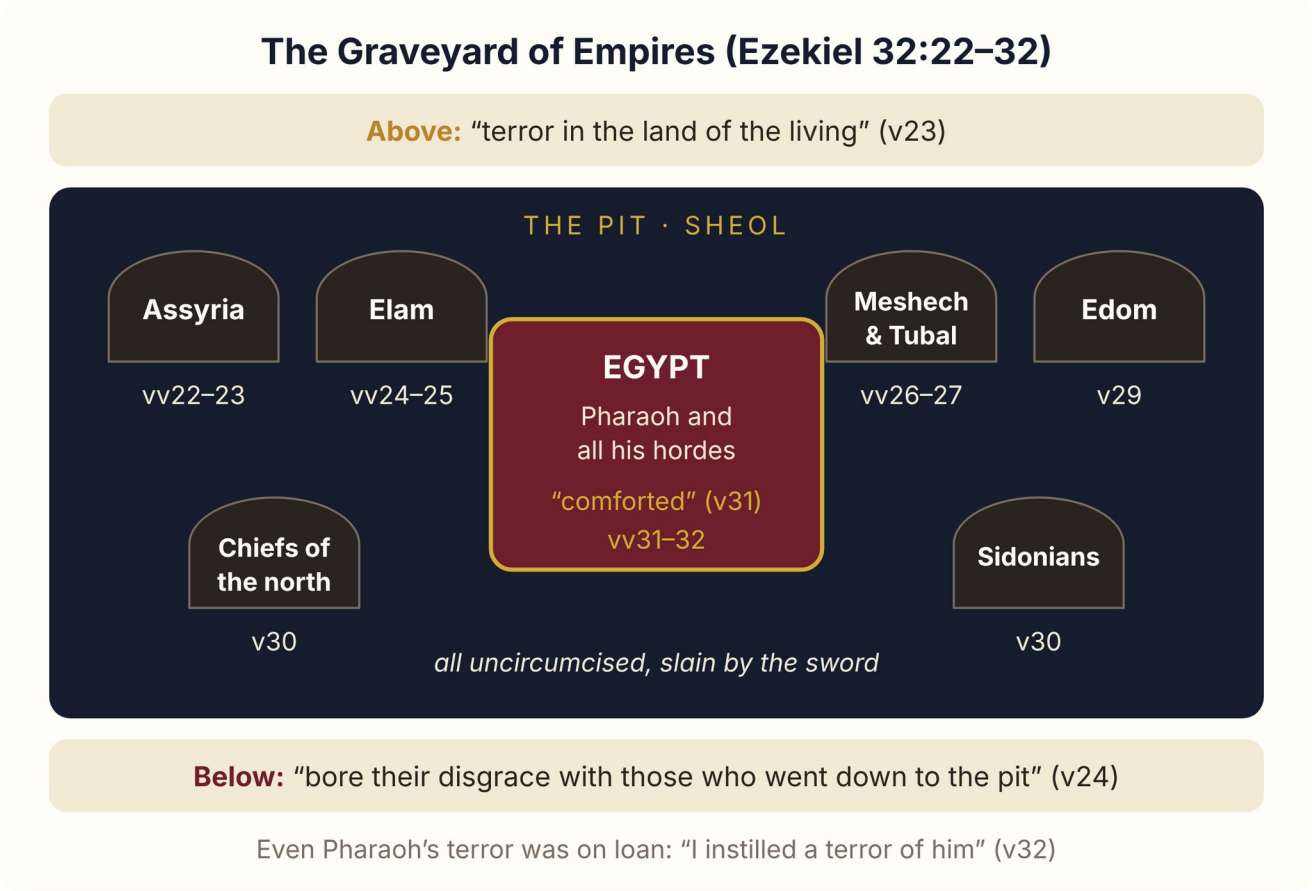
WHAT IT MEANS

Every nation in this graveyard was feared once. Assyria, Elam, Meshech and Tubal, Edom, the Sidonians — each "instilled their terror in the land of the living" (v24), and each now lies among the slain.

chittith (חִתִּית)
CHITTITH · "TERROR"

Chittith means dread, terror — and the notes point out that it is used only in Ezekiel (26:17; 32:23–32). It is the refrain of this graveyard tour: nation after nation "spread terror in the land of the living" (v23).

The Graveyard of Empires



Ezekiel's tour of the pit (vv22–32): every nation once spread terror in the land of the living, and every one now bears its disgrace below.

Pharaoh's Cold Comfort

Pharaoh finds company in the grave — and God has the last word.

EZEKIEL 32:31

"These Pharaoh will see, and he will be comforted for all his hordes slain by the sword, even Pharaoh and all his army," declares the Lord GOD.

DAVID GUZIK

Wright, in Guzik, says of Pharaoh's comfort: 'This is the only consolation Pharaoh can find.' Clarke, in Guzik, notes that the king who claimed to be a god would lie among 'the vulgar dead.'

WHAT IT MEANS

The series against Egypt ends with Pharaoh looking around the grave and finding company. That is his only comfort.

nacham (נָחַם)

NACHAM · "COMFORTED"

Nacham means to be consoled — or to be sorry. Pharaoh will see the other fallen kings "and he will be comforted for all his hordes slain by the sword" (v31).

What to carry from this chapter

1

A funeral song for the living.

God has Ezekiel sing Pharaoh's dirge while Pharaoh still sits on his throne (v2).

2

Lion or crocodile?

Wright, in Guzik: Pharaoh saw a lion; God saw a crocodile thrashing about and stirring up mud (v2).

3

Plagues revisited.

Blood on the land and darkness over Egypt echo the first and ninth plagues of Moses' day (vv6–8).

4

Settled waters.

With the monster gone, God makes the rivers "run like oil" — no feet stirring up the mud (v14).

More to carry

5

Thin records, real evidence.

Feinberg, in Guzik: the silence of Greek historians proves nothing; ‘Some consider the prophecy as completely fulfilled.’

6

Chittith belongs to Ezekiel.

The word for terror appears only in Ezekiel — the refrain of the nations who terrorized the living (vv23–32).

7

Swords under their heads.

Even honored warriors cannot escape: “the punishment for their iniquity rested on their bones” (v27).

8

Cold comfort.

Nacham is consolation — but Pharaoh’s only comfort is that he is not alone in ruin (v31).

Talk it through

1. Pharaoh saw a lion in the mirror; God saw a crocodile muddying the water. Where is the gap between how you see yourself and how God sees you?

2. God promises to make the waters settle once the monster is gone. What churning in your life do you need Him to still?

3. Every nation in the graveyard once spread terror in the land of the living. What reputation or toughness have you counted on that will not go past the grave?

4. Pharaoh's only comfort was company in ruin. What real comfort does Christ offer that Pharaoh never had?

CLOSING

Pharaoh's funeral song was written while he still wore the crown, and the graveyard of empires was waiting for him. But no man has to go down to the pit in shame — the One who holds the keys of death offers real comfort, and He can make the muddiest water settle.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides and reflection journal: see the Ezekiel study page.