

Ezekiel's Prophecy to the Exiles—God's Message to Egypt (January 17, 588 BC)

Ezekiel 29:1–16

The Crocodile of the Nile

- 1 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to me:
 2 “Son of man, turn toward Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt.
 3 Tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign LORD says:

“Look, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt,
 the great monster lying in the midst of its waterways,
 who has said, “My Nile is my own, I made it for myself.”

- 4 I will put hooks in your jaws
 and stick the fish of your waterways to your scales.
 I will haul you up from the midst of your waterways,
 and all the fish of your waterways will stick to your scales.
 5 I will leave you in the wilderness,
 you and all the fish of your waterways;
 you will fall in the open field and will not be gathered up or collected.
 I have given you as food to the beasts of the earth and the birds of the skies.
 6 Then all those living in Egypt will know that I am the LORD
 because they were a reed staff for the house of Israel;
 7 when they grasped you with their hand, you broke and tore their shoulders,
 and when they leaned on you, you splintered and caused their legs to be unsteady.

Judgment on Egypt

- 8 “Therefore, this is what the sovereign LORD says: Look, I am about to bring a sword against you, and I will kill every person and every animal.
 9 The land of Egypt will become a desolate ruin. Then they will know that I am the LORD. Because he said, “The Nile is mine and I made it,”
 10 I am against you and your waterways. I will turn the land of Egypt into an utter desolate ruin from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border with Ethiopia.
 11 No human foot will pass through it, and no animal's foot will pass through it; it will be uninhabited for forty years.
 12 I will turn the land of Egypt into a desolation in the midst of desolate lands; for forty years her cities will lie desolate in the midst of ruined cities. I will scatter Egypt among the nations and disperse them among foreign countries.

Future Restoration for Egypt

- 13 “For this is what the sovereign LORD says: At the end of forty years I will gather Egypt from the peoples where they were scattered.
 14 I will restore the fortunes of Egypt, and will bring them back to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin; there they will be an insignificant kingdom.
 15 It will be the most insignificant of the kingdoms; it will never again exalt itself over the nations. I will make them so small that they will not rule over the nations.
 16 It will never again be Israel's source of confidence, but a reminder of how they sinned by turning to Egypt for help. Then they will know that I am the sovereign LORD.”

Jeremiah Buys a Field (c. 588 BC)

Jeremiah 32

Synopsis of Jeremiah's Current Condition

- 1 In the tenth year that Zedekiah was ruling over Judah the LORD spoke to Jeremiah. That was the same as the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.
 2 Now at that time, the armies of the king of Babylon were besieging Jerusalem. The prophet Jeremiah was confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse attached to the royal palace of Judah.
 3 For King Zedekiah had confined Jeremiah there after he had reproved him for prophesying as he did. He had asked Jeremiah, “Why do you keep prophesying these things? Why do you keep saying that the LORD says, ‘I will hand this city over to the king of Babylon? I will let him capture it.’
 4 King Zedekiah of Judah will not escape from the Babylonians. He will certainly be handed over to the king of Babylon. He must answer personally to the king of Babylon and confront him face to face.
 5 Zedekiah will be carried off to Babylon and will remain there until I have fully dealt with him. I, the LORD, affirm it! Even if you

continue to fight against the Babylonians, you cannot win.”

Jeremiah Buys a Field at Anathoth from His Cousin Hanamel

6 So now, Jeremiah said, “The LORD told me,

7 ‘Hanamel, the son of your uncle Shallum, will come to you soon. He will say to you, “Buy my field at Anathoth because you are entitled as my closest relative to buy it.”’

8 Now it happened just as the LORD had said! My cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guardhouse. He said to me, ‘Buy my field which is at Anathoth in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin. Buy it for yourself since you are entitled as my closest relative to take possession of it for yourself.’ When this happened, I recognized that the LORD had indeed spoken to me.

9 So I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel. I weighed out seven ounces of silver and gave it to him to pay for it.

10 I signed the deed of purchase, sealed it, and had some men serve as witnesses to the purchase. I weighed out the silver for him on a scale.

11 There were two copies of the deed of purchase. One was sealed and contained the order of transfer and the conditions of purchase. The other was left unsealed.

12 I took both copies of the deed of purchase and gave them to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah. I gave them to him in the presence of my cousin Hanamel, the witnesses who had signed the deed of purchase, and all the Judeans who were housed in the courtyard of the guardhouse.

13 In the presence of all these people I instructed Baruch,

14 ‘The LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, “Take these documents, both the sealed copy of the deed of purchase and the unsealed copy. Put them in a clay jar so that they may be preserved for a long time to come.”’

15 For the LORD God of Israel who rules over all says, “Houses, fields, and vineyards will again be bought in this land.”’

Jeremiah’s Prayer

16 “After I had given the copies of the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD,

17 ‘Oh, Lord GOD, you did indeed make heaven and earth by your mighty power and great strength. Nothing is too hard for you!

18 You show unfailing love to thousands. But you also punish children for the sins of their parents. You are the great and powerful God who is known as the LORD who rules over all.

19 You plan great things and you do mighty deeds. You see everything people do. You reward each of them for the way they live and for the things they do.

20 You did miracles and amazing deeds in the land of Egypt which have had lasting effect. By this means you gained both in Israel and among humankind a renown that lasts to this day.

21 You used your mighty power and your great strength to perform miracles and amazing deeds and to bring great terror on the Egyptians. By this means you brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt.

22 You kept the promise that you swore on oath to their ancestors. You gave them a land flowing with milk and honey.

23 But when they came in and took possession of it, they did not obey you or live as you had instructed them. They did not do anything that you commanded them to do. So you brought all this disaster on them.

24 Even now siege ramps have been built up around the city in order to capture it. War, starvation, and disease are sure to make the city fall into the hands of the Babylonians who are attacking it. LORD, you threatened that this would happen. Now you can see that it is already taking place.

25 The city is sure to fall into the hands of the Babylonians. Yet, in spite of this, you, Lord GOD, have said to me, “Buy that field with silver and have the transaction legally witnessed.”’

God’s Answer to Jeremiah’s Prayer

26 The LORD answered Jeremiah.

27 “I am the LORD, the God of all humankind. There is, indeed, nothing too difficult for me.

28 Therefore I, the LORD, say: ‘I will indeed hand this city over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and the Babylonian army. They will capture it.

29 The Babylonian soldiers that are attacking this city will break into it and set it on fire. They will burn it down along with the houses where people have made me angry by offering sacrifices to the god Baal and by pouring out drink offerings to other gods on their rooftops.

30 This will happen because the people of Israel and Judah have repeatedly done what displeases me from their earliest history until now and because they have repeatedly made me angry by the things they have done. I, the LORD, affirm it!

31 This will happen because the people of this city have aroused my anger and my wrath since the time they built it until now. They have made me so angry that I am determined to remove it from my sight.

32 I am determined to do so because the people of Israel and Judah have made me angry with all their wickedness—they, their kings, their officials, their priests, their prophets, and especially the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem have done this wickedness.

33 They have turned away from me instead of turning to me. I tried over and over again to instruct them, but they did not listen and

respond to correction.

34 They set up their disgusting idols in the temple which I have claimed for my own and defiled it.

35 They built places of worship for the god Baal in the Valley of Ben Hinnom so that they could sacrifice their sons and daughters to the god Molech. Such a disgusting practice was not something I commanded them to do! It never even entered my mind to command them to do such a thing! So Judah is certainly liable for punishment.'

The Promise of Future Restoration and a New Covenant

36 "You and your people are right in saying, 'War, starvation, and disease are sure to make this city fall into the hands of the king of Babylon.' But now I, the LORD God of Israel, have something further to say about this city:

37 'I will certainly regather my people from all the countries where I will have exiled them in my anger, fury, and great wrath. I will bring them back to this place and allow them to live here in safety.

38 They will be my people, and I will be their God.

39 I will give them a single-minded purpose to live in a way that always shows respect for me. They will want to do that for their own good and the good of the children who descend from them.

40 I will make a lasting covenant with them that I will never stop doing good to them. I will fill their hearts and minds with respect for me so that they will never again turn away from me.

41 I will take delight in doing good to them. I will faithfully and wholeheartedly plant them firmly in the land.'

42 "For I, the LORD, say: 'I will surely bring on these people all the good fortune that I am hereby promising them. I will be just as sure to do that as I have been in bringing all this great disaster on them.

43 You and your people are saying that this land will become desolate, uninhabited by either people or animals. You are saying that it will be handed over to the Babylonians. But fields will again be bought in this land.

44 Fields will again be bought with silver, and deeds of purchase signed, sealed, and witnessed. This will happen in the territory of Benjamin, the villages surrounding Jerusalem, the towns in Judah, the southern hill country, the western foothills, and southern Judah. For I will restore them to their land. I, the LORD, affirm it!"

Encouragement in the Guardhouse (c. 588/587 BC)

Jeremiah 33

The Rebuilding of Judah and Jerusalem

1 The LORD spoke to Jeremiah a second time while he was still confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse.

2 "I, the LORD, do these things. I, the LORD, form the plan to bring them about. I am known as the LORD. I say to you,

3 'Call on me in prayer and I will answer you. I will show you great and mysterious things which you still do not know about.'

4 For I, the LORD God of Israel, have something more to say about the houses in this city and the royal buildings which have been torn down for defenses against the siege ramps and military incursions of the Babylonians:

5 'The defenders of the city will go out and fight with the Babylonians. But they will only fill those houses and buildings with the dead bodies of the people that I will kill in my anger and my wrath. That will happen because I have decided to turn my back on this city on account of the wicked things they have done.

6 But I will most surely heal the wounds of this city and restore it and its people to health. I will show them abundant peace and security.

7 I will restore Judah and Israel and will rebuild them as they were in days of old.

8 I will purify them from all the sin that they committed against me. I will forgive all their sins which they committed in rebelling against me.

The Restoration of Joy and Thanks

9 All the nations will hear about all the good things which I will do to them. This city will bring me fame, honor, and praise before them for the joy that I bring it. The nations will tremble in awe at all the peace and prosperity that I will provide for it.'

10 "I, the LORD, say: 'You and your people are saying about this place, "It lies in ruins. There are no people or animals in it." That is true. The towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem will soon be desolate, uninhabited either by people or by animals. But happy sounds will again be heard in these places.

The Restoration of Pastures and Flocks

11 Once again there will be sounds of joy and gladness and the glad celebrations of brides and grooms. Once again people will bring their thank offerings to the temple of the LORD and will say, "Give thanks to the LORD who rules over all. For the LORD is good and his unfailing love lasts forever." For I, the LORD, affirm that I will restore the land to what it was in days of old.'

12 "I, the LORD who rules over all, say: 'This place will indeed lie in ruins. There will be no people or animals in it. But there will again be in it and in its towns sheepfolds where shepherds can rest their sheep.

13 I, the LORD, say that shepherds will once again count their sheep as they pass into the fold. They will do this in all the towns in the southern hill country, the western foothills, the southern hill country, the territory of Benjamin, the villages surrounding Jerusalem,

and the towns of Judah.’

The Restoration of the Davidic Dynasty and the Levitical Priesthood

14 “I, the LORD, affirm: ‘The time will certainly come when I will fulfill my gracious promise concerning the nations of Israel and Judah.

15 In those days and at that time I will raise up for them a righteous descendant of David. “‘He will do what is just and right in the land.

16 Under his rule Judah will enjoy safety and Jerusalem will live in security. At that time Jerusalem will be called “The LORD has provided us with justice.”

17 For I, the LORD, promise: “David will never lack a successor to occupy the throne over the nation of Israel.

18 Nor will the Levitical priests ever lack someone to stand before me and continually offer up burnt offerings, sacrifice cereal offerings, and offer the other sacrifices.””

19 The LORD spoke further to Jeremiah.

20 “I, LORD, make the following promise: ‘I have made a covenant with the day and with the night that they will always come at their proper times. Only if you people could break that covenant

21 could my covenant with my servant David and my covenant with the Levites ever be broken. So David will by all means always have a descendant to occupy his throne as king and the Levites will by all means always have priests who will minister before me.

22 I will make the children who follow one another in the line of my servant David very numerous. I will also make the Levites who minister before me very numerous. I will make them all as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sands which are on the seashore.”

23 The LORD spoke still further to Jeremiah.

24 “You have surely noticed what these people are saying, haven’t you? They are saying, ‘The LORD has rejected the two families of Israel and Judah that he chose.’ So they have little regard that my people will ever again be a nation.

25 But I, the LORD, make the following promise: I have made a covenant governing the coming of day and night. I have established the fixed laws governing heaven and earth.

26 Just as surely as I have done this, so surely will I never reject the descendants of Jacob. Nor will I ever refuse to choose one of my servant David’s descendants to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Indeed, I will restore them and show mercy to them.”

Scripture quoted by permission. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the NET Bible® copyright ©1996–2006 by Biblical Studies Press, L.L.C. <http://bible.org> All rights reserved. This material is available in its entirety as a free download or online web use at <http://netbible.org/>.