

**WFN Lesson**  
**April 1, 2020**  
**Ezekiel 25-32**

-In certain ways, the oracles against foreign nations could bring a modicum of hope to Israel

-“Oracles against foreign nations as a prophetic speech form go back to the 8<sup>th</sup>-cent. Prophets Amos (Amos 1:3-2:16) and Isaiah (Isa. 7:7-8; 10:5-15). Although they are similar in form to the oracles of judgment against Israel, the oracles against the nation have a different function. In effect, they serve to announce Israel’s impending salvation because prophets usually direct these oracles against the nations that have profited from Israel’s fall. In Ezekiel they function as a kind of transition between the first major section of the book (Ezek. 1-24), which contains the prophet’s words of judgment against Israel, and the last section of the book (chs. 33-48), which speaks of Israel’s restoration. The fall of the nations is a harbinger of better times for Judah” (Vawter & Hoppe, 119).

-Read Ezekiel 28:1-10, 17-19 (Tyre)

-Tyre and Israel were previously allies (back in Solomon’s day). However, their excellence in trade and commerce led them to become proud and take advantage of their neighbors.

-The peoples of Phoenicia (where Tyre and Sidon are located) were very skilled sailors. Specifically, Tyre was actually a small island-fortress off the coast of Palestine. Chapter 27 of Ezekiel likens the city-state of Tyre to a beautifully-crafted ship that ends up dashed to pieces in the heart of the sea. It’s a very poignant illustration (give it a read if you have time!).

-Read Ezekiel 30:20-26 (Egypt)

-Tyre = economic interests; Egypt = military might interests

-Egypt was already declining, but God is prepared to take away whatever strength still remains.

-“Ezekiel’s concentration on Egypt is understandable. He believed that God had granted universal sovereignty to Nebuchadnezzar so that Babylon might serve as the instrument of divine judgment on Judah. Babylon’s principal political and military rival in the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. was Egypt. While the other nations that the prophet condemned were little more than minor irritations to Nebuchadnezzar, Egypt alone could present serious obstacles in the way of his plans for a Neo-Babylonian Empire. What distressed the prophet was that Egypt was pulling Judah into its orbit. The only effect this could have was the prolonging of Judah’s agony. The sooner Judah submitted to divine judgment effected through Babylon, the sooner its restoration would occur. In effect, Egypt was tempting Judah to avoid accepting God’s will” (Vawter & Hoppe, 135).

-Read Psalm 79

-One effect that God’s judgment on Israel has is that it can cause the people to once again be concerned with God’s name being upheld among the nations. Yes, Israel wants saved from their predicaments. But, they also don’t want other nations bad-mouthing God. Israel being defeated (because of their sins) makes God look weak, and God certainly is not weak.

-Read Daniel 4:28-37 (easier for kids to understand)

-Just like the nations listed in Ezekiel 25-32, King Nebuchadnezzar becomes prideful. In this story, God really puts him in his place.

-You've probably seen athletes showboat before. They think they are going to win free and clear. A wide receiver starts high-stepping on his way to the end zone. The runner slows down a bit or starts making gestures with their arms to signify the fact that they've already won. Often, these athletes get away with it. Sometimes, their showing off allows the competition to catch up. The wide receiver gets tackled hard, and maybe even coughs up the ball. The runner gets passed up and loses the race. They are humiliated and humbled. It stings, but it's a really great learning/growing experience!

-Ultimately, God is the "biggest fish." The sooner we realize that, the better it will be.

### Memory Verse

-Proverbs 16:18— Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.

### Fun Activity

-Outer Space Size Comparison: Watch the video at the following address:

-<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i93Z7zljQ7I>

\*Talk about how you can't get too caught up in being on top or being in the front of the pack, because there's always something or someone bigger or better out there, ready to humble you and take you down. So, we should direct our praise not to ourselves, but to God, who is the biggest and best.