

God's Eternal Plan #24
The Resurrection of Egypt
Isaiah 19:22-25

They eyes of the world are fixed on the Middle East. The Arab-Israeli tensions, the peace effort, and the oil crises have captured the attention of everyone. For students of Scripture, however, these things are not surprising. **The Bible teaches that God has a special purpose for that valuable piece of “real estate” which is bounded on the west by the Mediterranean and extends eastward and northward to the River Euphrates.** The news programs, with their repeated references to nations in that part of the world, sound like a replay of Bible history, and they provide a significant commentary about the Lord's program for His chosen people and the Promised Land. Those familiar with the Word of God are intrigued when the countries of Israel, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, and Jordan are mentioned, and the Bible students are suddenly alerted when they see these ancient names emblazoned across the front pages of their newspapers and headlined on their TV screens.

The unrest and anger in Palestine today are not new to that region. The strife merely continues which has characterized that particular section of the globe for centuries. Many wars have been waged and much blood has been shed as the armies of succeeding generations have battled again and again for possession of those parched, barren, and bleak areas. **At the geographic and political center of this turmoil lies the nation of Israel.** Its borders have been bitterly challenged since its modern-day inception in 1948.

As we continue our study in prophecy, we are going to look at the resurrection of Egypt and the coming of the Lord.

The prophet Ezekiel, with his companion prophet Jeremiah, and his companion Daniel, was writing at the time that Babylon was dominating the international scene. But the nation that had the past glory was Egypt. You will remember the nation of Israel had her beginnings in Egypt, as the 70 patriarchs, because of famine, went down into Egypt. **God nourished them there, and multiplied their number, until they became a nation of two and one half million people that ended up in slavery.** And when God redeemed them, Egypt did not collapse from the exodus. It was one of the strongest and most powerful nations on the face of the earth at that time. And when Assyria arose, Assyria challenged Egypt's right to world supremacy, and between Egypt and Assyria there was a long and bitter period of conflict, where neither of those nations could regain their place of dominance.

But when Nebuchadnezzar started out on his conquest, his conquest established the Babylonian Empire, and without any question the Babylonian

Empire was the dominant Empire, until they were finally replaced by the Medo-Persians.

But at the time of Ezekiel's writing Egypt was still at the height of her power. And we find in Ezekiel 29 and 30 an amazing evidence of the accuracy of God, as God reveals His program, not only as it affects His people Israel, but as it affect the other nations of the earth as well. And Ezekiel 29:1-3 says, "In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me, saying, Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt. Speak, and say, Thus says the Lord God: Behold, I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt, O great monster who lies in the midst of his rivers, who has said, My River is my own; I have made it for myself." Notice that Pharaoh is referred to by God as the "great monster who lies in the midst of his rivers." **Pharaoh was the one that was most responsible for the water canals that watered the great valley that gave Egypt his prosperity.** But God says in verse 3, "I am against you, O Pharaoh king of Egypt..." And in verses 8-10 God tells us what the results would be because He was against Egypt, "Therefore thus says the Lord God: Surely I will bring a sword upon you and cut off from you man and beast. And the land of Egypt shall become desolate and waste; then they will know that I am the Lord, because he said, The River is mine, and I have made it. Indeed, therefore, I am against you and against your rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate..."

You see, the problem was that Pharaoh had yielded to the temptation of Satan to be independent of God, as seen in the words, "The River is *mine*, and I have made it..." **The waters of the Nile River flowed from down in the heart of Africa northward to the Mediterranean Sea, and brought rich soil with its waters.** And with the over-flooding of the land, the Nile brought prosperity and fertility to the soil. And the crops that resulted made Egypt the "bread basket" of the world. But the Nile River was dependent on the rainfall, and the rainfall was dependent on God.

But Pharaoh was so filled with pride that he had lost sight of the hand of God. Therefore, he concluded, "I do not depend on this river, but this river depends on me." And God said that He was going to show this mighty ruler, Pharaoh that Jehovah was God, and beside Him there was none other.

But God went on to make another prophecy in verses 13-14, "Yet, thus says the Lord God: At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered. I will bring back the captives of Egypt and cause them to return to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin, and there they shall be a lowly kingdom." After the Babylonians had conquered Egypt and subdued it, and made it a part of the Babylonian kingdom, the same way Nebuchadnezzar made Palestine part of their kingdom, God said, "I am going to

make Egypt independent of her conqueror.” Therefore, when the Babylonians were conquered by the Medo-Persians, Egypt was given the privilege of going back to her land the same way the Medes and the Persians gave Ezra and Nehemiah the right for the Jews to go back to their land.

But God also made another prophecy in verse 15, “It shall be the lowliest of kingdoms; it shall never again exalt itself above the nations, for I will diminish them so that they will not rule over the nations anymore.” **When God brought Israel out of the Babylonian captivity, to a large extent, they were restored to their former glory.** But God said that when Egypt is brought back to their land, their former glory would pass away, and they would never “rule over the nations anymore.” In other words, even though Egypt has been allowed her freedom, that nation will always be an insignificant nation. And the remaining verses of Ezekiel 29 & 30 tell us something of the decline of the Egyptian nation.

Therefore, one of the world’s greatest nations had been reduced to dust and rubble because they prospered and became proud and forget God, as seen in Ezekiel 30:19, “Thus I will execute judgments on Egypt, then they shall know that I am the Lord.” We have this warning in Proverbs 14:34, “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.” The Bible again reminds us in Proverbs 29:2, “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when a wicked man rules, the people groan.”

Remember this truth – no people can reject God, ignore the truth of God, and walk independently of God, without inviting the divine judgment of God. This is a lesson that America needs to learn before it is too late.

But what does this problem with Egypt have to do with us today? If you have been following the present-day news, then you know that something is happening in the land of Egypt, for she is a nation that is once again flourishing. It is a nation that is once more gaining a place in the limelight of international events. **Is all of this just happenstance, or is God moving us into a place of understanding?** To answer that question we must go back to Bible prophecy and the words of Isaiah 19:22, “And the Lord will strike Egypt, He will strike and heal it; they will return to the Lord, and He will be entreated by them and heal them.” Over 2,000 years ago the prophet knew nothing concerning the 21st century, but God did! **And today we are seeing the hand of God at work in fulfilling His Word and will.** From a nation steeped in idolatry, today Christian make up around 10-20% of Egypt’s population. The finality of this prophecy will not be completed until the millennial kingdom, but you and I are already seeing the resurrection of the nation of Egypt, as God prepares this world for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

As I look around me today, I am acutely aware that we are living in an age of pessimism and despair. The lawlessness and reckless pursuit of earthly pleasures all about us are symptoms of the spiritual sickness of mankind; and most thinking people, even those who are not Christians are painfully aware of this fact. Unsaved people who seriously contemplate the future see no hope for the individual, or for the human race. **Many of them believe we are approaching the midnight hour, and quietly predict that man will one day soon destroy himself through drugs or nuclear war.** The people who talk in glowing terms about a warless and classless world are theorists who are not facing reality. Without God, the God who speaks in the Bible, man is doomed both individually and collectively. **In sharp contrast, we who believe the Bible are not hopeless not living in the dark.** We know that the same God, who for centuries told man He would send the Savior to pay the price for sin and conquer death, and then fulfilled His promise, will also carry out every promise He has made to us.