

Ezekiel 29-32—God’s Judgement On Egypt, A Picture Of The Evil World System—Part 1

Memory Verse

Ezekiel 36:26-27 NKJV

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Introduction

In chapters 29-32 Ezekiel continues his series of prophecies of judgment on the nations surrounding Israel. However, Egypt is given special attention with seven prophecies or messages dedicated to how and why God will judge Egypt (we will only cover the first two prophecies, found in chapter 29, today). There are two reasons for this. Firstly, Egypt, up till this point, has been a world power for many centuries, but this long rule and dominance over the surrounding nations would soon come to an end.

Secondly, Israel has had a lot to do with Egypt, having been held in bondage there as slaves there prior to the exodus for over a hundred years. Despite this, Israel always sought to go back to Egypt when times got tough. Instead of relying on God and seeking His help, they would seek Egypt’s help. This was a constant snare and trap for the Israelites, going back even to Abraham’s time (see Genesis 12:10–20). Isaiah had also warned God’s people, *Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help* (Isaiah 31:1 NKJV). The worldly fare of Egypt was also a constant temptation for Israel, with Israel repeatedly worshiping their gods and committing the same kinds of gross and sexual sins.

The Big Picture

This has an important application to us as Christians today. Remember that Egypt, ruled by pharaoh, is a picture of the current evil world system, ruled by satan. It is the antithesis of God. It is immoral, prideful, corrupt, and holds people in bondage — every person is born into this world as slaves to sin (except Adam and Jesus). However, it is also a source of worldly, temporary pleasure, specifically designed or set up by satan to strongly appeal to our sinful nature and physical or bodily appetites. This means that the evil part of us, our sinful nature, is strongly drawn to what this evil world system in which we live offers. This is our constant struggle against sin.

1 John 2:15-17 NLT paraphrase

Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. ¹⁶ For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure [lust of the flesh], a craving for everything we see [lust of the eyes], and pride in our achievements and possessions [the pride of life]. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. ¹⁷ And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.

However, the world (Egypt) does more than just tempt us with fleeting or passing pleasures, it also promises solutions to our problems. Therefore, we are tempted to not just indulge ourselves in worldly pleasures, but also to rely on the world system for help and support. We will see that this was true for the Israelites, just as it is true for us today. Studying these chapters will do for us what they did for the Israelites; they will reveal to us the true nature of Egypt, both as the empire it once was, and as the evil world system that it represents—how it is completely unable to help us. Therefore, when we do lean on it, it will inevitably fail us.

The seven prophecies or messages of judgement concerning Egypt

1. Ezekiel 29:1-16 — God versus king crocodile, “never trust a crocodile’s smile”
2. Ezekiel 29:17-21 — Babylon will defeat Egypt, “all bad things will come to an end”
3. Ezekiel 30:1-19 — Egypt and her allies will fail, “appearances can be deceiving”
4. Ezekiel 30:20-26 — God breaks pharaoh’s arms, “all strength comes from God”
5. Ezekiel 31:1-18 — Egypt cut down like a great tree, “learn lessons from history”
6. Ezekiel 32:1-16 — A funeral song, “the crocodile is caught in God’s net”
7. Ezekiel 32:17-32 — The ultimate destiny of Egypt and other world empires, Hell

1. God versus king crocodile, “never trust a crocodile’s smile”

Ezekiel 29:1-3 NKJV—*God is against prideful Pharaoh*

In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 2 “Son of man, set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt. 3 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.’”

v 1 **In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month:** King Zedekiah was the last king to reign over an independent Jerusalem. Zedekiah had rebelled against God and king Nebuchadnezzar, breaking his oath of loyalty. As a result king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had invaded Judah and the siege against Jerusalem had been going for a year and two days (24:1–2; 2 Kings 25:1). It will be seven more months till the Babylonians break through the walls of Jerusalem and end the independent kingdom of Judah (2 Kings 25:3–8). However, even at this late stage, the Jews, and especially their king Zedekiah, were still hoping that the Egyptians would come to their rescue. This prophecy or message was given by God to help them to cease depending on Egypt and depend on God instead.

v 2, 3 **Set your face against Pharaoh king of Egypt... Behold, I am against you:** Why was God so against pharaoh and Egypt? Because they had enslaved and mistreated God’s people, and had also been a constant source of temptation, both spiritually and politically. The pharaoh spoken of here is pharaoh Hophra. Zedekiah had promised to be loyal to king Nebuchadnezzar, but had then gone behind his back to get help from pharaoh Hophra in Egypt. Hophra and his army had come out of Egypt in 588 BC, causing the Babylonians to temporarily lift their siege of Jerusalem, but the relief was short lived. Pharaoh and his army went back to Egypt without engaging king Nebuchadnezzar in battle, and king Nebuchadnezzar went back to Jerusalem to continue his siege. Yet another Egyptian broken promise!

v 3 **O great monster who lies in the midst of his rivers:** God likened Pharaoh to a great crocodile that lived in the Nile river. The princes and people are pictured as fish.

“Egyptian prayers encouraged the pharaoh to be a crocodile to his enemies.” (Vawter and Hoppe)

“Pharaoh was compared to a ferocious crocodile, guarding the waters of the land—the Nile and all the canals—and attacking anybody who dared to challenge his claims.” (Wiersbe)

v 3 **My River is my own; I have made it for myself:** How many times do we see this kind of proud boast in the Scriptures? Too many. Man taking credit for something that he received from God as a gift.

1 Corinthians 4:7 NKJV

For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

James 1:16-17 NKJV

Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

Once again we see the familiar pattern; the gift God gave them was a tremendous blessing to them, but when the people experienced the blessing, they became proud and forgot God. The Nile gave them fertile farmlands, plentiful water supplies, and an easy mode of transportation to take their bountiful harvests to market. If there were no Nile river, there would be no Egyptian empire, just a desert.

“It is a graphic method of again drawing attention to the fact that all forgetfulness of God amounts at last to self-deification. That is the sin of every king and of every people who fail to recognise God and to deal with Him.” (Morgan)

Ezekiel 29:4-5 NKJV—God catches the crocodile (pharaoh) with a hook in the jaw
4 But I will put hooks in your jaws, and cause the fish of your rivers to stick to your scales; I will bring you up out of the midst of your rivers, and all the fish in your rivers will stick to your scales. 5 I will leave you in the wilderness, you and all the fish of your rivers; you shall fall on the open field; you shall not be picked up or gathered. I have given you as food to the beasts of the field and to the birds of the heavens.

v 4 **But I will put hooks in your jaws:** This was how crocodiles were hunted back then. They would be hooked by their jaw and then dragged out of the water where they would be killed. In this analogy the fish represent the people, they would also suffer along with Pharaoh.

v 5 **I have given you as food to the beasts of the field:** “The Egyptian pharaohs were diligent to prepare their burial places, but Hophra would be buried like an unwanted dead animal. What a humiliating way to bury a man who claimed to be a god!” (Wiersbe)

Ezekiel 29:6-7 NKJV—God will be glorified when He punishes Egypt for not keeping her promises

6 “Then all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. 7 When they took hold of you with the hand, you broke and tore all their shoulders; when they leaned on you, you broke and made all their backs quiver.”

v 6 **Then all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the Lord:** The Egyptians had many gods, and they trusted them completely. Through His judgements, God would disgrace and discredit all their gods, and the Egyptians would see that God is the true God.

v 6-7 **When they [Judah] leaned on you, you [Egypt] broke:** One of the most painful experiences in life is when we are let down by someone we trust. In this case, the nation of Judah put all their eggs in one basket—Egypt—and they lost everything. It was a dangerous and senseless gamble. As mentioned before, Egypt did make a token effort to help Judah (Jeremiah 37:7). They mobilised their army and started to march, but then retreated when the Babylonians started their way. It would be like you are broken down on a 45 degree day in the desert, dying of thirst, and you manage to phone a friend. Your friend says, “Yes, I’ll help you, I’ll go and get some water for you now.” Sure, he goes to the shop and buys the water, giving you hope that all will be well, but he then goes home and drinks it himself, leaving you to perish.

The fact was that Egypt was not only unwilling to help, but also completely unable to help. Why? Because they too were under God’s judgement. We will see in later prophecies that God had taken the sword out of Pharaoh’s hand and given it to Nebuchadnezzar. Judah had put their eggs in the wrong basket, yet again, when they had trusted Pharaoh’s promise of protection.

“The Egyptians had a reputation for making promises and not keeping them (2 Kings 18:20–21; Isaiah. 36:6).” (Wiersbe)

“It was the sin of the Jews to trust Egypt; it was Egypt’s great sin to falsify promise with the Jews, and for this God now punish Egypt.” (Poole)

Application: Remember the big picture, pharaoh is a picture of satan and Egypt a picture of the world

Just like Egypt and pharaoh were under God’s divine judgment, so is satan and this evil, materialistic, hedonistic (pleasure seeking) world system. It is only a matter of time before it is all completely destroyed. Seeking satisfaction and help from the world is like being adrift at sea, and asking to be rescued by another sinking ship; if you put your trust in the things of this world, if you seek to find your happiness in the material and sensual pleasures of this world, then you will go down with it, you will share in its judgments.

Revelation 18:4-8 NLT paraphrase—*The coming judgement on the evil world system*
Then I heard another voice calling from heaven, “Come away from her, my people. Do not take part in her sins, or you will be punished with her.”⁵ For her sins are piled as high as heaven, and God remembers her evil deeds.⁶ Do to her as she has done to others. Double her penalty for all her evil deeds. She brewed a cup of terror for others, so brew twice as much for her.⁷ She glorified herself and lived in luxury, so match it now with torment and sorrow. She boasted in her heart, ‘I am queen on my throne. I am no helpless widow, and I have no reason to mourn.’⁸ Therefore, these plagues will overtake her in a single day— death and mourning and famine. She will be completely consumed by fire, for the Lord God who judges her is mighty.”

Listen to what God says here, “Come away from her, my people. Do not take part in her sins, or you will be punished with her.” This is exactly what happened to the nation of Judah—they went down with the sinking ship. Amazingly, the few people who were left in Judah after Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and the temple again rebelled against Babylon and defected to Egypt, even after seeing how Egypt failed to rescue them from the Babylonian siege when they needed them the most. Jeremiah warned them yet again to trust God and not Egypt, but yet again, they would not listen to God’s messenger (see 2 Kings 25:22-26 and Jeremiah 42), but trusted instead in Egypt.

Consider some of the ways that Christians can get caught up with and/or seek help from the world:

- * materialism—seeking pleasure and happiness from their possessions and wealth
- * worldly counsel—seeking the world’s wisdom (in reality foolishness) instead of God’s wisdom found in the Word
- * worldly entertainment and amusement—seeking pleasure and happiness through disengaging their minds and allowing worldly fare to satisfy their sinful nature (a-muse-ment, muse means to think. Therefore, a-muse means no thinking—we have let our guard down and have ceased to take every thought captive, see 2 Corinthians 10:5)
- * pride, fame and acceptance—what is the point of being accepted or recognised by someone or some group who is not accepted or recognised by God? This kind of acceptance and recognition is very short lived.

Ezekiel 29:8—12 NKJV—Egypt judged because of her pride

8 ‘Therefore thus says the Lord God: “Surely I will bring a sword upon you and cut off from you man and beast. 9 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.’ 10 Indeed, therefore, I am against you and against your rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border of Ethiopia. 11 Neither foot of man shall pass through it nor foot of beast pass through it, and it shall be uninhabited forty years. 12 I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate; and among the cities that are laid waste, her cities shall be desolate forty years; and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries.”

v 8 **Surely I will bring a sword upon you and cut off from you man and beast:** The sword is a picture of war. Later God specifies that He will use Nebuchadnezzar and his army to conquer Egypt.

v 9 **Because he said, ‘The River is mine, and I have made it:** God here gives the main reason for His judgement—pride. Pride always comes before a fall, see Proverbs 16:18. This is true for the believer and unbeliever alike. Pride causes us to trust in ourselves, and not in God. God gives us the strength to overcome a sin, but then we think that we have done it by our own strength, and so go back to relying on ourselves, and of course we fail again. The Bible warns us of this systemic cycle of sin in:

1 Corinthians 10:12 NKJV

Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

v 10-12 **From Migdol to Syene... Neither foot of man shall pass through it nor foot of beast pass through it... her cities shall be desolate forty years... cities that are laid waste... and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries:** The entire land of Egypt would be laid waste and be uninhabited for 40 years. Large numbers of Egyptians were killed by war, large numbers were taken as captives to Babylon, and many others would have fled to neighbouring countries.

“Berosus, the historian of Babylon, states that Nebuchadnezzar, after he had conquered Egypt, took great numbers of the captives to Babylon. Others, undoubtedly, fled to neighbouring areas as in similar cases.” (Feinberg)

Ezekiel 29:13—16 NKJV—God promises to restore Egypt as a lowly country

13 ‘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. **14** 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. **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. **16** No longer shall it be the confidence of the house of Israel, but will remind them of their iniquity when they turned to follow them. Then they shall know that I am the Lord God.” ’ ’ ”

v **13 I will gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they were scattered... It shall be the lowliest of kingdoms:** Amazingly, God promises to show mercy to the Egyptians by bringing them back into the land after 40 years. The only other nation God promised to restore was Israel. But there was a reason for this. Egypt would never again regain her former glory as a world empire. Instead, even as she is today, Egypt was a lowly or unimportant country following her restoration. This is important as it is a constant reminder to Israel to never put their trust in Egypt again.

v **16 No longer shall it be the confidence of the house of Israel:** “One reason God would bring Egypt low and **diminish them** was so that Israel would no longer put their misplaced trust in Egypt. The lowly, diminished state of Egypt would **remind them of their iniquity when they turned to follow them.**” (David Guzik)

Our sinful nature has a powerful attraction to this evil world system, pictured in the bible as Egypt. The world system looks so strong, so robust, so promising, so dependable, so real. But look at the physical nation of Egypt now—poor, weak, and struggling with many problems. Israel no longer looks to the nation of Egypt for help anymore, because it’s obvious that Egypt can’t help them. Just remember the big picture, that this evil, materialistic, hedonistic, world system we live in is under God’s judgement. As we read in Revelation 18 before, God is calling us to come out of it so we don’t share in it’s punishment. Don’t jump aboard the sinking ship only to go down with it, losing everything and wasting your life. Look at the nation of Egypt today and realise that this world system is also coming to an end—its wisdom, its glory, its money, its pleasures, and it’s fame and acceptance.

Revelation 18:14 NKJV

The fruit that your soul longed for has gone from you, and all the things which are rich and splendid have gone from you, and you shall find them no more at all.

This is one reason why Hell will be so tormenting for the unbelievers who choose to go there; the sinful pleasures they loved will no longer be available to them—they will be completely unfulfilled for all eternity—not able to enjoy anything—good, or evil. There will be no parties in Hell, only everlasting torment and emptiness. Remember that the world only offers *the passing pleasures of sin* (see Hebrews 11:25).

For the believer, all we will lose is our reward (not our salvation) at the Bema seat judgement, but that still has eternal consequences—it will limit our glory (reward) and will also diminish our potential role in the future Millennial Kingdom.

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 NLT paraphrase

Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw. ¹³ But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person's work has any value. ¹⁴ If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.

As Hal Lindsay joked, there will many Christians who will smell like smoke in heaven, because most of what they did was for their own little kingdom, the kingdom of me and my family, and not for the kingdom of God.

2. Babylon will defeat Egypt, "all bad things will come to an end"

This is the second of the seven prophecies or messages against Egypt.

Ezekiel 29:17-18 NKJV—Nebuchadnezzar gained no material reward from defeating Tyre

17 And it came to pass in the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, that the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 18 "Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon caused his army to labor strenuously against Tyre; every head was made bald, and every shoulder rubbed raw; yet neither he nor his army received wages from Tyre, for the labor which they expended on it.

v 17 **It came to pass in the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month:** Ezekiel received this prophecy about 16 years after the one previously recorded in this chapter. Going by the dating, it is the last prophecy received by Ezekiel. In this case the years are in relation to Jeconiah's captivity. He was the king of Judah taken captive to Babylon when Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah the second time in 597 BC. Nebuchadnezzar had installed Zedekiah as a puppet or vassal king in Jeconiah's place.

v 18 **Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon caused his army to labor strenuously against Tyre:** The siege against Tyre lasted 13 long years. That's 13 years building siege mounds, shifting dirt, and working battering rams. Imagine Nebuchadnezzar's disappointment after he eventually broke through the walls of Tyre and found that the city was empty—they had relocated to an island about 700m off the coast. Paying all those soldiers for all those years would have cost him a fortune—wars are not cheap—therefore, **neither he nor his army received wages from Tyre.** Usually the winning army pays its soldiers by sharing the spoils of the war. In this case there were very few spoils to share.

Ezekiel 29:19—20 NKJV—God will give the riches of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar

19 Therefore thus says the Lord God: 'Surely I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; he shall take away her wealth, carry off her spoil, and remove her pillage; and that will be the wages for his army. 20 I have given him the land of Egypt for his labor, because they worked for Me,' says the Lord God.

v 19 **Surely I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; he shall take away her wealth, carry off her spoil, and remove her pillage; and that will be the wages for his army:** Because Nebuchadnezzar had worked so hard but

gained so little in his siege of Tyre, God compensates him by giving him the wealth of the land of Egypt as the spoils of war. As the quotes show below, this prophecy was fulfilled three years later in 568 BC.

“A fragmentary cuneiform text refers to Nebuchadrezzar’s thirty-seventh year (568 B.C.) when the king of Babylon marched against Egypt, that is, within three years of this prophecy.” (Block)

“One fragmentary Babylonian text from the chronicles of the Chaldean king (B.M. 33041) implies that Babylonia invaded Egypt about 568/567 b.c. This is corroborated by Josephus (Antiq. X, 180–82 [ix.7]).” (Alexander)

v 20 **Because they [the Babylonians] worked for Me:** I don’t think that Nebuchadnezzar would have agreed with this statement back then, any more than Joe Biden or Anthony Albanese would today. He was a proud man, and it would have been unlikely that Nebuchadnezzar would have given God any glory for the victories that he had achieved, especially in his early years. However, regardless of how much Nebuchadnezzar understood about what was going on in the background, God was exercising His sovereignty—God was strengthening Babylon, but weakening Pharaoh. Babylon was a tool in God’s hand, a tool that God used to discipline many nations, including Israel and Egypt. Later, in His own good time and as He saw fit, God would use another nation or tool to discipline Babylon.

Application: This world is not out of control—God is achieving His purposes in exactly the way He desires

There are two lessons to learn here. Firstly, I don’t think that this would have been a popular message for the Jews either. Babylon as God’s instrument or worker? No way! God should be using Israel, His chosen people. But it was because of their lack of submission to God that God had to stop using them and use a pagan nation instead. It brings shame to God and the church when the church is not submissive and obedient to God and God has to use the world to discipline the church, which is happening today.

Secondly, we should not fear or worry when we see so many nations, with so many insane dictators, doing so many crazy and hurtful things. God has His purposes in all of it—it’s all working for His glory and our ultimate good. God is setting up the nations, like organising a chessboard, so that the prophecies concerning the second coming of Christ will be fulfilled. Every detail is necessary and has a purpose. We must learn to look beyond the evil and see God’s good hand in it all. Habakkuk found it hard to understand how God could use the wicked Babylonians to discipline Israel, but in the end, it was his understanding of God’s sovereignty that helped him to understand.

Ezekiel 29:21 NKJV—God will begin to strengthen Israel

21 ‘In that day I will cause the horn of the house of Israel to spring forth, and I will open your mouth to speak in their midst. Then they shall know that I am the Lord.’ ”

v 21 **In that day I will cause the horn of the house of Israel to spring forth:** At the time of writing this prophecy, Judah had already been in captivity for 16 years since the third and final Babylonian invasion of Judah. God is giving them a clear message that He has not forgotten them, and that, even though they will be in exile for another 28 years or so, God would strengthen (horn is a symbol of power) them and encourage them. Notice that Judah’s suffering was not in vain, God’s discipline was already producing good fruit in the nation, just as God had earlier promised that it would.

v 21 **Then they shall know that I am the Lord:** Yet another reminder of God's ultimate purpose—it's His desire for all people, Jew and gentile, to come to know Him as their Saviour.

2 Peter 3:9 AMP

The Lord does not delay and is not tardy or slow about what He promises, according to some people's conception of slowness, but He is long-suffering (extraordinarily patient) toward you, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should turn to repentance.

Application: The work that God does in us as believers is not easy or pleasant, but very necessary for our growth and purification, so hold fast

What God said concerning Israel is a precious truth for us as believers as well. God's work in our lives is never in vain; in the end we will grow stronger because of it. Don't try to understand the how, it's beyond us. Just remember the why—it's for our good:

Romans 8:28-29 AMP

We are assured and know that [God being a partner in their labor] all things work together and are [fitting into a plan] for good to and for those who love God and are called according to [His] design and purpose.

29 For those whom He foreknew [of whom He was aware and loved beforehand], He also destined from the beginning [foreordaining them] to be molded into the image of His Son [and share inwardly His likeness], that He might become the firstborn among many brethren.

Isaiah 55:6-13 NLT paraphrase

Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near. ⁷ Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will forgive generously.

⁸ "My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the Lord. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. ⁹ For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

¹⁰ "The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. ¹¹ It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it.

¹² You will live in joy and peace. The mountains and hills will burst into song, and the trees of the field will clap their hands! ¹³ Where once there were thorns, cypress trees will grow. Where nettles grew, myrtles will sprout up. *These events will bring great honour to the Lord's name; they will be an everlasting sign of his power and love.*"

Conclusion: Trust God and not the evil world system we live in (Egypt)

Hold fast during the trials. Continue to trust that God knows what He is doing as we persevere through the life-changing work of sanctification that God is doing in and through us. Don't quit and take the easy way out. Don't be like the Israelites, always seeking to go back to Egypt so they could enjoy it's passing sinful pleasures. Meditate on and find strength in the following verses:

James 1:12NKJV

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

James 5:10-11 NKJV

My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. ¹¹ Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

Hebrews 10:32-39 NLT paraphrase

Think back on those early days when you first learned about Christ. Remember how you remained faithful even though it meant terrible suffering. ³³ Sometimes you were exposed to public ridicule and were beaten, and sometimes you helped others who were suffering the same things. ³⁴ You suffered along with those who were thrown into jail, and when all you owned was taken from you, you accepted it with joy. You knew there were better things waiting for you that will last forever.

³⁵ So do not throw away this confident trust in the Lord. Remember the great reward it brings you! ³⁶ Patient endurance is what you need now, so that you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.

³⁷ "For in just a little while, the Coming One will come and not delay. ³⁸ And my righteous ones will live by faith. But I will take no pleasure in anyone who turns away."

³⁹ But we are not like those who turn away from God to their own destruction. We are the faithful ones, whose souls will be saved.

1 Peter 5:10-11 NKJV

But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. ¹¹ To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

By living life putting our trust in God we bring glory to God. We overcome sin, we achieve what is humanly impossible in ministry and family, and we grow to be more mature in our walk with God.

Romans 8:17-18 NLT paraphrase

And since we are His children, we are His heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share His glory, we must also share His suffering.

¹⁸ Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He will reveal to us later.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 NLT paraphrase

For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! ¹⁸ So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever.