

Isaiah 19:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom.

Analysis

'And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom.' Divine judgment manifests as civil war—God withdrawing the common grace maintaining social cohesion, resulting in fratricidal conflict. The progression from individual ('brother...neighbour') to corporate ('city...kingdom') indicates comprehensive internal strife. This judgment pattern appears throughout Scripture—God often judges nations by removing unity, causing self-destruction (Judges 7:22; 2 Chronicles 20:23). Egypt will devour itself without external invasion needed. This demonstrates that social peace is a divine gift; its removal produces chaos. Reformed theology recognizes all good, including social harmony, derives from God's grace; judgment simply withdraws that grace, letting sin's natural consequences manifest.

Historical Context

Egyptian history between 8th-6th centuries BCE featured exactly this pattern: civil wars between rival dynasties, nomes (provinces) fighting each other, competing pharaohs, internal fragmentation. After the Ethiopian 25th Dynasty, Egypt experienced the Saite period, Persian conquests, more internal divisions, Ptolemaic conflicts, and eventual Roman absorption. The once-unified empire

fragmented repeatedly. Archaeological evidence and ancient historians (Herodotus, Manetho) document these chaotic periods. The prophecy's fulfillment demonstrates God's sovereign control over even powerful empires—He can destroy them externally through invaders or internally through removing the grace maintaining cohesion.

Related Passages

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. What does civil war as divine judgment teach about God's common grace maintaining social order?
2. How does God judging nations by removing unity demonstrate sovereignty over internal affairs?
3. Why do societies fall into self-destructive conflict when divine restraint is removed?

Interlinear Text

וְסִכְסַכְתִּי י	בְּמִצְרַיִם	בְּמִצְרַיִם	וְנִלְחָמוּ	
And I will set	against the Egyptians	against the Egyptians	and they shall fight	
H5526	H4714	H4714	H3898	
וְאֵל יֵשׁ	בְּאָחִיו	וְאֵל יֵשׁ	בְּרֵעֵהוּ	בְּעִיר
and every one	against his brother	and every one	against his neighbour	against city
H376	H251	H376	H7453	H5892
בְּעִיר	בְּמַמְלָכָה:	בְּמַמְלָכָה:		
against city	against kingdom	against kingdom		
H5892	H4467	H4467		

Additional Cross-References

Judges 7:22 (Parallel theme): And the three hundred blew the trumpets, and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host: and the host fled to Beth-shittah in Zererath, and to the border of Abel-meholah, unto Tabbath.

1 Samuel 14:20 (Parallel theme): And Saul and all the people that were with him assembled themselves, and they came to the battle: and, behold, every man's sword was against his fellow, and there was a very great discomfiture.

Matthew 10:36 (Parallel theme): And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

Matthew 12:25 (Kingdom): And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:

Matthew 10:21 (Parallel theme): And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

Ezekiel 38:21 (Parallel theme): And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother.

Isaiah 9:21 (Parallel theme): Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: and they together shall be against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still.