

Isaiah 19:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither.

Analysis

'And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither.' The Nile's branches ('rivers'—distributaries in the Delta) turn away—changing course or drying up. 'Brooks of defence' (irrigation canals) empty—defensive moats and waterways fail. Reeds and flags (papyrus and marsh plants) wither. This comprehensive ecological collapse affects every level of Egyptian life: transportation (Nile boats), defense (water barriers), agriculture (irrigation), and industry (papyrus production for boats, writing materials, textiles). The totality demonstrates divine judgment affecting entire economic and social systems, not just isolated aspects. When God judges nations, consequences cascade through interconnected systems, producing comprehensive disruption. This illustrates that blessing and curse are systemic, affecting all of life's domains.

Historical Context

Ancient Egypt's complex irrigation system channeled Nile water throughout the Nile Valley and Delta. Canals served agricultural, defensive, and transportation purposes. Papyrus (ancient paper) was a major Egyptian product, growing in marshlands. The prophecy describes ecological disaster affecting all these interdependent systems. Historically, while not literal total collapse, Egypt did experience periods when irrigation systems failed due to political chaos, maintenance neglect during invasions, or extended low-flood periods. These

caused cascading economic failures. Modern ecological principles confirm how interconnected systems mean isolated failures can trigger comprehensive collapse —precisely what the prophecy describes as divine judgment's pattern.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does comprehensive ecological collapse illustrate the interconnectedness of divine blessings?
2. What does cascade failure (irrigation, defense, agriculture, industry) teach about judgment's systemic nature?
3. Why are human economic and social systems ultimately vulnerable without divine blessing?

Interlinear Text

וְאֶת־יְחִזָּה וְאֶת־גַּנְגָּר וְתַּדְלִיל וְאֶת־יְמִינָה וְאֶת־יְמִינָה
And they shall turn the rivers shall be emptied and dried up and the brooks
H2186 H5104 H1809 H2717 H2975

מִצְרָיִם וְאֶת־מַצְחָה וְאֶת־מַצְחָה וְאֶת־מַצְחָה
of defence the reeds and flags shall wither
H4693 H7070 H5488 H7060

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 37:25 (Parallel theme): I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.

