

Isaiah 36:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Lo, thou trustest in the staff of this broken reed, on Egypt;
whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it:
so is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all that trust in him.

Analysis

The metaphor of Egypt as a "broken reed" that pierces the hand of anyone leaning on it is vivid and accurate. Egypt had encouraged Judah's rebellion against Assyria but provided no meaningful military support. The imagery teaches that alliances with worldly powers not only fail to help but actively harm. This principle extends to spiritual life—trusting created things rather than the Creator brings injury. God alone is the trustworthy support that never breaks.

Historical Context

Egypt's 25th Dynasty (Kushite) had promised support to western kingdoms resisting Assyria but repeatedly failed to deliver effective military aid.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What "broken reeds" do we lean on instead of trusting God fully?
2. How do worldly alliances often harm rather than help believers?

3. What does it mean to find God alone as our sufficient support?

Interlinear Text

הִנֵּה הַ	הַבֹּטֶחַ יָם	עַל	מִשְׁעַנֶּת הַ	הַקֵּץ הַ	הַכָּצוּץ	הַזֶּה
H2009	Lo thou trustest	H5921	in the staff	reed	of this broken	H2088
	H982		H4938	H7070	H7533	
עַל	יָם מִצְרַיִם	אִישׁ יִסָּמֵךְ	אִישׁ	עַל יוֹ	וְאֵל	
H5921	of Egypt	H834	lean	whereon if a man	H5921	it will go
	H4714		H5564	H376		H935
לְכָל	יָם מִצְרַיִם	מֶלֶךְ	כִּי הַ	פָּרַע הַ	וְנִקְבָּה הַ	בְּכַפּוֹ
	of Egypt	king	it so is Pharaoh		and pierce	into his hand
	H4714	H4428	H6547		H5344	H3709
עָלָיו:	הַבֹּטֶחַ יָם					
H5921	Lo thou trustest					
	H982					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 31:3 (References Egypt): Now the Egyptians are men, and not God; and their horses flesh, and not spirit. When the LORD shall stretch out his hand, both he that helpeth shall fall, and he that is holpen shall fall down, and they all shall fail together.

2 Kings 18:21 (Faith): Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

2 Kings 17:4 (Kingdom): And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.

