

Jeremiah 46:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come and smite the land of Egypt.

Analysis

The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come and smite the land of Egypt

—This verse introduces a second oracle against Egypt, predicting Nebuchadnezzar's later invasion of Egypt itself (fulfilled 568 BC). The phrase devar-YHWH (דְּבָרֵי יְהוָה, "word of the LORD") emphasizes divine origin—this is not political speculation but prophetic certainty. The verb nakah (נִכְהָה, "smite") means to strike down, defeat utterly, demonstrating God's active judgment through pagan Babylon.

Significantly, God calls Nebuchadnezzar by name and identifies his role as divine instrument. Though pagan, Nebuchadnezzar executes God's purposes (cf. Isaiah 45:1 where Cyrus is called God's "anointed"). This reveals God's absolute sovereignty—He raises up and casts down empires according to His will (Daniel 2:21, 4:17). Egypt, who enslaved Israel and resisted God's purposes through Pharaoh Necho's interference in Judah (killing righteous King Josiah, 2 Kings 23:29), would face comprehensive judgment. The prophecy's later fulfillment confirmed Jeremiah as true prophet versus the false prophets who promised Egypt's continued strength.

Historical Context

After Carchemish (605 BC), Nebuchadnezzar campaigned repeatedly toward Egypt. His full invasion of Egypt occurred around 568 BC, documented in fragmentary Babylonian texts. This came after Egypt's Pharaoh Hophra encouraged Judah's final rebellion (Jeremiah 37:5-7), leading to Jerusalem's destruction in 586 BC. Egypt's consistent role as a 'broken reed' (Isaiah 36:6) that injured those trusting it justified this later invasion. Apries (Pharaoh Hophra) was eventually overthrown, partially fulfilling these prophecies.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. What does God's use of pagan Nebuchadnezzar teach about His sovereignty over all nations?
2. How does this prophecy vindicate God's justice against Egypt's long history of oppressing and misleading His people?
3. Why is it important that this word came from the LORD rather than Jeremiah's political analysis?

Interlinear Text

הָנָבֵּּא יְהוָה יְמִינֵּי הָרָא אֶל־ The word H834 spake that the LORD H413 to Jeremiah the prophet	בְּדָבָר H1697	יְהִי הָרָא אֶל־ H1696	דָּבָר אֲשֶׁר H3068	בְּדָבָר H413	יְמִינֵּי הָרָא אֶל־ H3414	בְּדָבָר H5030
לֹבֶן וְאֶל־ should come H935	נְבוּכָדְנָצָר how Nebuchadrezzar H5019	מֶלֶךְ king H4428	בְּבָבִילוֹן of Babylon H894	בְּבָבִילוֹן and smite H5221	לִפְכֵּו וְתַּבְּבֵל and smite H853	אֶרְץ אֶת the land H776
מִצְרַיִם of Egypt H4714						

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 44:30 (Kingdom): Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will give Pharaoh-hophra king of Egypt into the hand of his enemies, and into the hand of them that seek his life; as I gave Zedekiah king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, his enemy, and that sought his life.

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