

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* (דְּבַר־יְהוָה, "word of the LORD") emphasizes divine origin—this is not political speculation but prophetic certainty. The verb *nakah* (נָכָה, "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

הַדָּבָר	אֲשֶׁר	דִּבֶּר	יְהוָה	אֶל	יִרְמְיָהוּ	הַנָּבִיא
The word	H834	spake	that the LORD	H413	to Jeremiah	the prophet
H1697		H1696	H3068		H3414	H5030
לָבֹא	נְבוּכַדְרֶאצַּר	מֶלֶךְ	בָּבֶל	לְהַכּוֹת	אֶת	אֶרֶץ
should come	how Nebuchadrezzar	king	of Babylon	and smite	H853	the land
H935	H5019	H4428	H894	H5221		H776
מִצְרָיִם:						
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.