

Jeremiah 46:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, and will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof.

Analysis

Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers—Jeremiah employs vivid flood imagery using *ye'or* (יַאֲרֹ), specifically the Nile River whose annual inundations both sustained and threatened Egypt. The verb *ga'ah* (גָּאָה, "riseth up") conveys pride, arrogance, and overwhelming force—the same word used for the Red Sea's waves in Exodus 15:1. Egypt's boast **I will go up, and will cover the earth; I will destroy the city** uses *alah* (אָלָה, ascend/attack) and *kasah* (כָּסָה, cover/engulf), echoing the prideful language of imperial conquest.

Yet the oracle ironically foreshadows Egypt's defeat—just as Pharaoh's armies were swallowed by flood waters at the Red Sea, so Egypt's military ambitions would be drowned at Carchemish. The dual imagery of Nile and rivers (*neharot*, נְהָרוֹת) points to Egypt's confederation with other nations, all rising together in apparent strength. This passage illustrates the prophetic principle that pride precedes destruction (Proverbs 16:18)—Egypt's self-exalting confidence made them ripe for divine judgment through Babylon.

Historical Context

This oracle references Pharaoh Necho II's ambitious northern campaign (609-605 BC), culminating in the catastrophic defeat at Carchemish in 605 BC where Nebuchadnezzar crushed the Egyptian-Assyrian coalition. Egypt's imperial aspirations to control Syria-Palestine and restore its ancient glory were

dramatically reversed. The 'city' likely refers to Carchemish or represents Egyptian-controlled cities throughout the Levant that would fall to Babylon.

Related Passages

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How does Egypt's flood imagery contrast with God as the true controller of waters and nations?
2. What does Egypt's boastful language reveal about the spiritual danger of national or personal pride?
3. How does this prophecy demonstrate God's sovereignty over empires that seem invincible?

Interlinear Text

מִצְרַיִם	כִּי־אֶרֶץ	אֲעֵלָה	וְכָנְהָר וְתֵּ	יִתְּגַּעֲשׂוּ	מִיָּם
Egypt	like a flood	I will go up	like the rivers	are moved	and his waters
H4714	H2975	H5927	H5104	H1607	H4325

וַיֹּאמֶר	אֲעֵלָה	אֲכַסֶּה	אֶת־רֶץ	אֶבְיָדָהּ	עַיָּר
and he saith	I will go up	and will cover	the earth	I will destroy	the city
H559	H5927	H3680	H776	H6	H5892

וְיֹשְׁבֵי	בָּהּ:
and the inhabitants	
H3427	H0