The Egyptian and Nubian Empires

BEFORE YOU READ
In the last section, you read about the religion of the ancient Hebrews. In this section, you will read about the interaction of Egypt and Nubia.

AS YOU READ
Use the time line below to take notes on changes in Egypt and Nubia.

Nomadic Invaders Rule Egypt
(page 89)

Who were the Hyksos?
At the end of its second period of glory, power struggles weakened Egypt. New invaders, the Hyksos, arrived. They had the chariot. Egyptians had never seen this war machine before. The Hyksos ruled Egypt for many years. Some historians believe that the Hyksos encouraged the Hebrews to settle there.

Around 1600 B.C., a series of warlike rulers began to restore Egypt’s power. Eventually, the Hyksos were driven completely out of Egypt. The pharaohs began some conquests of their own.

The New Kingdom of Egypt
(pages 90–91)
The time from 1570 to 1075 B.C. is called the New Kingdom. In this third period, Egypt was richer and more powerful than ever.

Hatshepsut was one of the rulers of the New Kingdom. She encouraged trade. Her stepson, Thutmose III, was a much more warlike ruler. He and other pharaohs of this New Kingdom brought
Egyptian rule to Syria and Palestine in the east. They also moved south into Nubia. This was a part of Africa near where the Nile began. Egypt had traded with Nubia and influenced the region since the time of the Middle Kingdom.

The pharaohs of the New Kingdom did not build pyramids, like those who had come before. Instead, they built great tombs in a secret place called the Valley of the Kings. Some pharaohs also built huge palaces for themselves or temples to the Egyptian gods.

Ramses II stood out among the great builders of the New Kingdom. He reigned from about 1290 to 1244 B.C.

2. What was the relationship between Nubia and Egypt during the New Kingdom?

The Empire Declines (pages 91–92)

How did Egypt lose power?

Around 1200 B.C., invaders attacked the eastern Mediterranean. They brought trouble with them.

Some of these invaders were called the “Sea Peoples.” They attacked the Egyptian empire. They attacked the Hittite kingdom, too.

As the power of Egypt fell, the land broke into many small kingdoms. People from Libya began to invade Egypt. They took control of the land. They followed the Egyptian way of life.

3. Who invaded Egypt?

The Kushites Conquer the Nile Region (pages 92–93)

How did the Kushites rule?

As Egypt grew weaker, the Nubian kingdom of Kush became more powerful. Under Egyptian rule, the people of Kush accepted many Egyptian traditions and customs. They felt that they had to protect Egyptian values.

A Kushite king named Piankhi moved into Egypt to force out the Libyans. He united the Nile Valley. He wanted to bring back Egypt’s glory. The Kushites ruled Egypt for a few decades. Then the Assyrians invaded. They forced the Kushites back to their home.

4. How did the Kushites view Egyptian culture?

The Golden Age of Meroë (page 94)

What was Meroë?

The Kushite kings settled in the city of Meroë, south of Egypt. Their kingdom entered a golden age. The city played an important role in trade. Meroë also became an important center for making iron weapons and tools.

Traders in the city brought their iron to the ports of the Red Sea. These goods were taken on ships to Arabia and India. The traders from Meroë, in the meantime, brought back jewelry, cloth, silver lamps, and glass bottles. The city thrived from about 250 B.C. to about A.D. 150. By A.D. 350 Meroë had fallen to rival Aksum, a seaport farther south.

5. Why was Meroë important?