

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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The Burden of Egypt (Part 1)

Since the time of Abraham, there has been a unique relationship between Egypt and Yahweh's people. It was a place of refuge during times of trouble. Abraham, then called Abram, went to Egypt to live during a famine:

10 And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land. -Genesis 12

Likewise, Jacob, who is also named Israel, moved his family from the land of Canaan to Egypt during a famine:

5 And Jacob rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him.

6 And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him:

7 His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt. -Genesis 46

Yahshua (Jesus) fled to Egypt with His family for safety from King Herod, the Edomite King of Judah:

13 And when they had departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be you there until I bring you word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: -Matthew 2

However, while Egypt was often a place of safety for Yahweh's people, those who remained there eventually found themselves in bondage. After Jacob brought his family to Egypt, they stayed on with no plans to return back to the land that Yahweh had promised through Abraham to give to them. They became slaves:

13 And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor:

14 And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor. -Exodus 1

However, after Israel had been in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years, Yahweh used Moses to bring them out of that land:

10 Come now therefore, and I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. -Exodus 3

Yahweh called Israel out of Egypt, as His own son:

1 When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. -Hosea 11

After Yahshua went to Egypt as a child, Yahweh called Him out, as His own son, fulfilling the prophecy of Hosea:

15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. -Matthew 2

While there may be a time to go into Egypt, there is also a time to come out of that place. After Abraham, Jacob, and Yahshua went into Egypt, they all came out.

When Yahweh tells us to stay out of Egypt, we must hear and obey His instructions. He specifically told Isaac, who was the son of Abraham and the father of Jacob, that he must not go into Egypt for refuge during a famine:

1 And there was a famine in the land, besides the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar.

2 And Yahweh appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell you of:

3 Dwell in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you; for unto you, and unto your seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swore to Abraham your father; -Genesis 26

Nevertheless, the greatness, power, and splendor of Egypt offered temptations that were difficult for Israel to resist. Even King Solomon, in all of his wisdom and knowledge, succumbed to the temptations of Egypt. As he was preparing to build a house for the name of Yahweh, Solomon had horses brought to him from Egypt:

16 And Solomon had horses brought out of Egypt, and linen yarn: the king's merchants received the linen yarn at a price. -2 Chronicles 1

As the King of Israel, Solomon directly disobeyed Yahweh's instructions concerning horses from Egypt:

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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16 But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as Yahweh has said to you, You shall henceforth return no more that way. -Deuteronomy 17

While building the house for the name of Yahweh, Solomon married the Egyptian Pharaoh's daughter!

1 And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of Yahweh, and the wall of Jerusalem round about. -1 Kings 3

That marriage to the Egyptian woman opened the door for Solomon to take many more foreign wives and concubines. His continued disobedience to Yahweh concerning these women opened Solomon up to the worship of other gods and goddesses, in addition to Yahweh:

- 1 But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites;
- 2 Of the nations *concerning* which Yahweh said to the children of Israel, You shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: *for* surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clung to these in love. -1 Kings 11

Yahweh had also given clear instructions to kings concerning wives, as well as silver and gold:

17 Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. -Deuteronomy 17

Solomon's disobedience led to the destruction of the united kingdom of Israel (see 1 Kings 11:31-33). After Solomon's death, his successor over the northern kingdom of Israel, Jeroboam, had just returned from living in Egypt. He brought with him the Egyptian religion, as he rejected Yahweh in favor of the worship of calves made of gold:

- 28 Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said to them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt.
- 29 And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan.

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30 And this thing became a sin: for the people went to *worship* before the one, *even* unto Dan. -1 Kings 12

In Egypt, the cow represented the goddess, Hathor. Her name means "the estate of Horus." She was also identified with the Egyptian goddess, Isis, who was said to be the mother of the god, Horus (see "Hathor." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Encyclopædia Britannica Multimedia Edition. Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011; "Isis." *Ibid.*). This means that the northern kingdom of Israel fell back into the Egyptian religion from which Yahweh had delivered them many years earlier.

This goddess worship and the associated practices were called the "sins of Jeroboam," which led to the destruction and captivity of the northern kingdom of Israel by Assyria:

- 22 For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them;
- 23 Until Yahweh removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day. -2 Kings 17

The southern kingdom of Judah adopted the religion of Israel, which was characterized by goddess worship and practices known as the "sins of Jeroboam."

19 Also Judah kept not the commandments of Yahweh their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made. -2 Kings 17

The people of Judah knew the goddess as the "Queen of Heaven." After the destruction and captivity of Judah by the Babylonians, the remnant of Judah which fled into Egypt for protection continued to worship her there. They were in Egypt when they told Jeremiah:

- 16 *As for* the word that you have spoken to us in the name of Yahweh, we will not listen to you.
- 17 But we will certainly do whatever thing goes forth out of our own mouth, to burn incense to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto her, as we have done, we, and our fathers, our kings, and our princes, in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem: *for then* had we plenty of victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. -Jeremiah 44

The people of Judah that had escaped into Egypt continued in disobedience against Yahweh by worshipping the "Queen of Heaven" there. Therefore, Yahweh gave this prophecy to Jeremiah concerning His name among the people of Judah who lived in Egypt:

26 Therefore hear you the word of Yahweh, all Judah that dwell in the land of Egypt; Behold, I have sworn by my great name, says Yahweh, that my name shall no more be named in the mouth of any man of Judah in all the land of Egypt, saying, The Lord Yahweh lives. -Jeremiah 44

(Continued in Part 2)