

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 2)

Judah went back into Egypt in spite of Yahweh's warnings:

- 1 Woe to the rebellious children, says Yahweh, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:
- 2 That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!
- 3 Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt *your* confusion. -Isaiah 30

While in Egypt, Judah became more and more confused about Yahweh. Fulfilling the prophecy that had been given to Jeremiah, they forgot the name of Yahweh, the living God:

- 26b ...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

When men of Judah translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, the name of Yahweh [YHWH] disappeared! They substituted the generic title, κυριος [lord], for His name:

- 26 ...ονομα μου εν τω στοματι παντος ιουδα επειη ζη κυριος [lord] κυριος [lord] επι παση γη αιγυπτω
-Jeremiah 51 (Greek Septuagint)

- 26b ...my name shall no longer be in the mouth of every Jew to say, The Lord lives, in all the land of Egypt. - Jeremiah 51 (English Translation of Greek Septuagint)

His name was soon forgotten in Egypt. Those who claimed to be His people no longer called upon His name. Instead, they called Him by titles, such as "Lord" or "God," the same ones that are applied to every other image of a god or goddess. Under the pretense of sacredness, even these titles became obscured. Having already forgotten Yahweh's name, scribes eventually became convinced in Egypt that even the titles by which they called Him had become too holy to be uttered. Therefore, they removed the vowels from them so that even the titles could not be spoken.

Such practices are clearly shown in ancient Egyptian manuscripts, which were written in Greek. This is illustrated in the photograph below of a portion of a second century A.D. manuscript of Ephesians, Chapter 1:



(Source: University of Michigan Manuscript Collection, Manuscript p46, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Photograph by Kerby Fannin, January 29, 2011)

This papyrus codex, which is written in Greek, was found in Egypt in 1931. It is the oldest known manuscript of this portion of the Bible and is much older than the widely quoted fourth century A.D. Vatican and Sinaitic codices. Notice that the first word of the line, θεος (Theos), which means God, is abbreviated as θς (Ths), with a line above it showing that the vowels were removed. Without the vowels, the title, "God," could not even be said.

Yahweh promised that all but a very small remnant of Judah that had disobeyed fled into Egypt would be destroyed:

- 27 Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that *are* in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there is an end of them.
- 28 Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that have gone into the land of Egypt to dwell there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs. -Jeremiah 44

Nevertheless, while Egypt has been a place of protection as well as a place of confusion of worship for Yahweh's people, Yahweh has a burden for Egypt:

- 1 The burden of Egypt. Behold, Yahweh rides upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it. -Isaiah 19

He says that He is going to do a work in Egypt that will eventually bring them to Him. Here is what He will do:

- 2 And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against his neighbor; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom. -Isaiah 19

**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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As fear comes upon the people of Egypt, they will turn to seek after the spirits of false gods for protection:

3 And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof; and I will destroy the counsel thereof: and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards. -Isaiah 19

That is when Yahweh will turn them over to the hand of “a cruel lord” and “a fierce king:”

4 And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king shall rule over them, says the Lord, Yahweh of hosts. -Isaiah 19

While such a ruler will rule over Egypt, either the same ruler or one much like him will also gain power over the rest of the world. Daniel describes a “king of fierce countenance” that understands things that are hidden from the understanding of most people (“dark sentences”). His great power to “destroy the mighty and the holy people” will come from someone other than himself:

23 And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors have come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up.

24 And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. -Daniel 8

Such a ruler, called “the beast” in the Book of Revelation, is described as receiving his power from the Dragon, which is Satan:

3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power to the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who *is* like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? -Revelation 13

In other words, the kind of terror that will come upon the people of Egypt will also come upon the rest of the world. Satan, however, can do nothing without Yahweh’s permission. Therefore, the setting up of the “fierce king” in the “latter time” sounds much like the way Yahweh set up His “servant,” Nebuchadnezzar, as the King of Babylon:

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5 I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are* upon the ground, by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and have given it to whom it seemed pleasing to me.

6 And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. -Jeremiah 27

As difficult as it is for many of us to comprehend, Yahweh used the fierce King of Babylon for the purpose of humbling His people to bring them to repentance:

10 For thus says Yahweh, That after seventy years are accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place.

11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says Yahweh, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

12 Then shall you call upon me, and you shall go and pray unto me, and I will listen to you.

13 And you shall seek me, and find *me*, when you shall search for me with all your heart. -Jeremiah 29

Likewise, after Yahweh gives Egypt over into the “hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king,” they also will turn to Him:

18 In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to Yahweh of hosts; one shall be called, The city of destruction. -Isaiah 19

After Yahweh has poured out His fury upon Egypt and upon the rest of the world through the power of a harsh ruler, they will turn to Him with a pure language so that they all may call upon His name:

9 For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of Yahweh, to serve him with one consent. -Zephaniah 3

Yahweh will send the Savior (Yahshua) to Egypt and they will believe in Him:

19 In that day shall there be an altar to Yahweh in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to Yahweh.

20 And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto Yahweh because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a savior, and a great one, and he shall deliver them.

21 And Yahweh shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know Yahweh in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yes, they shall vow a vow unto Yahweh, and perform *it*.

22 And Yahweh shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal *it*: and they shall return *even* to Yahweh, and he shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them. -Isaiah 19

Egypt is part of Yahweh’s mighty plan and they will also know that:

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. -Acts 4