

EGYPT

IN THE HISTORY OF OUR SALVATION

“OUT OF EGYPT, HAVE I CALLED MY SON”

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*IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, THE SON AND
THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD
AMEN*

**O LORD,
CHANGE MY INNER EGYPT
FROM LAND OF BONDAGE TO A SANCTUARY OF
GOD!**

In the yearly feast of “The Escape of the Holy Family to Egypt” almost I feel as if the gates of the Holy Bible are opened before me. I enter through them, and I hear a divine call addressed to me personally to attain the Bible’s depth and discover the exceeding greatness of the divine grace that worked in Egypt, and in my heart as my own inner Egypt.

Among all the nations of the Gentiles we do not find a single nation in which the word of God is interested like Egypt. Egypt was mentioned directly in the Old and the New Testaments more than 550 times.

We can divide the history of Egypt as mentioned in the Bible into three stages, that resemble the three stages of our situation as redeemed people, and children of God.

The first stage: Egypt at the era of the Patriarchs that resembles our first parents in the Garden of Eden. The Patriarchs, such as Abraham, Jacob, his sons and grandchildren came to Egypt seeking for food, as they had famine where they lived (Gen. 13:1; 42:1-3; 46:7; 47:27; Ps. 105:23; Acts 7:15). The sons and grandchildren of Jacob felt that they were at home when they started as a nation in Egypt, and the first leader of Israel, Moses the Prophet was born in Egypt.

The second stage: Egypt at the time of Moses the Prophet till the first advent of the Incarnate Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. It resembles man in his slavery to sin. The exodus from Egypt under the guidance of Moses the Prophet was a shadow of our new exodus under the guidance of our Savior Jesus Christ. It is the core of the Old Testament. God repeatedly introduced Himself to His people as their God who redeemed them from the slavery of Egypt. Egypt was a symbol of our bondage to the sin and to Satan and his soldiers.

The third stage: Egypt as the refuge of the Child Jesus. God foretold His people that the Incarnate Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ would come to Egypt (Isaiah 19), as a Child with His Mother the Virgin Mary and Joseph. They escaped to Egypt after the angel of God appeared to Joseph in his dream, asking him to take the boy and his mother to the land of Egypt. Herod the king was after the new born male Hebrews (Matt.2:3). This stage resembles the believer, who after being enslaved to sin, receives Christ his Savior. He changes his inner man into a holy sanctuary

I hope that we discover our inner Egypt, asking God to accept it as His own refuge, and to change it into New Jerusalem.

EGYPT AND THE PATRIARCHS

It was the site of many important events of the history of religion. It was referred to as a historical land where many of the stories of our early fathers lived and experienced their relationship with the Lord our God.

"Like the garden of the Lord"

Egypt at one time was so beautiful, well watered that Lot when he described the plain of Jordan, resembled it as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. (Gen. 13:10)

It was rich by its crops

When ever there was famine, Egypt had abundance of corn. There was always bread., and it attracted all those that sought to be fed. Jacob sent his sons to get food. (Gen. 45:18)

Who came to Egypt?

Abraham (Abram), with his wife Sarai, and Lot came to Egypt, seeking food, as they had famine where they lived. (Gen. 13:1)

Joseph son of Jacob, was sold by his brothers to strangers and was brought down to Egypt. (Gen. 37:36)

Jacob sent his sons to buy food from Egypt, after he also faced the result of the famine in his time. (Gen. 42:1,2 &3)

Jacob later came to Egypt with his sons, his sons' sons, his daughters, and his sons' daughter, and all his seeds. (Gen. 46:7) With Jacob's came also his sons' wives, when Joseph his son sent for him to come to Egypt. All the souls who came with him were threescore and six. (Gen. 46:26) Then his seeds dwelt in Egypt, grew, and multiplied exceedingly. (Gen. 47:27) & (Ps 105:23) & (Ac 7:15)

EGYPT AND THE EXODUS

Egypt was mentioned in the Psalms of David, as well as in the prophecies of the prophets. It was referred to it as the place of terror at one time, when the Pharaohs turned against the Israelites in Egypt, after over four hundred and thirty years living in Egypt as their home.

God have saved Moses and his people from the land of their slavery, and freed them from the Egyptians who were punished severely for their acts. The freedom of these people became the theme of the Glory of God in keeping his word.

Egypt was hit hard by Divine punishments, but later it was the land of people who were referred to as the " Blessed be the people of Egypt". That was Egypt that the Incarnated God came as a child with the Holy Family to hide from Herod the King, and then returned to Jerusalem to complete what God planned for the salvation of the world.

Egypt was promised to have a Temple for God in the middle of its land, and that the people will know God. It was mentioned all along from the First Book of the Old Testament " Genesis " to the last Book in the New Testament " Revelation "

The study shows how God supported his people, protected them, promised them a land, and they were ungrateful to Him. It shows how God is merciful, Who tolerated the people who were always ready to abandon Him, regardless of the wonders He did for them. At times God also was angered by their behavior.

The writers are Egyptians themselves, who find pride in their effort to put together the verses in the Holy Bible where their own mother country was mentioned and to try to give some comment about it. The mentioned verses are only those which contain the word " EGYPT ", but there are hundreds of verses referred to the events in Egypt, in continuity to the verses.

◆ Moses, who was born in Egypt, went to his ancestor's place in Midian, to visit his father in law, but the Lord ordered him to return back to Egypt. (Ex 4:19)

◆ Our Lord Jesus Christ came to Egypt as a child with His Mother The Virgin Mary and Joseph They fled to Egypt after the angel of God appeared to Joseph in his dream asking him to take the boy and his mother to the land of Egypt, Herod the king was after the new born male Hebrews. (Mt 2:13)

Who was asked not to come to Egypt?

The famine Abraham faced during his life, and his need to come to Egypt to buy food, was repeated at the time of Isaac. Egypt was known to have corn and it was logical then to Isaac to prepare himself to go to Egypt to get corn as his father did before him. But God appeared to Isaac and asked him not to go. (Gen. 26:2)

On another occasion, Johanan, the son of Kareah and all the officers of the army who were with him, the remnants of Judah, planned to go and live in Egypt. Jeremiah the prophet, through the word of God ordered them not to go to Egypt, or " my wrath be poured out on you when you go to Egypt" (Jer 42:18)

Egypt was a sanctuary

• Hadad, at the time of King David, had to flee to Egypt. He was afraid of David that he may kill him. Later when he heard that David died and the captain of the army Joab was dead, he returned back home again from Egypt. (I Ki 11:21)

• Jeroboam fled to Egypt, when he thought that Solomon was about to kill him. He stayed in Egypt till he heard of the death of Solomon. (I Ki 11:40)

• Urijah, was afraid of Jehoiakin the king, so he fled to Egypt. (Jer 26:21)

• Our Lord Jesus Christ, was brought to Egypt by Joseph and His mother the Virgin Mary hiding away from Herod the

king. They remained in Egypt till they knew that Herod was dead. (Mt 2:19)

Who left Egypt ?

* Abram, his wife and Lot. (Gen. 13:1) They came because of the famine and to buy food.

* Joseph's brothers went back to bring with them their father Jacob and his family. (Gen. 45:13)

* The body of Jacob. Jacob made Joseph his son to swear that he be not buried in Egypt. (Gen. 47:29)

* Moses left Egypt temporary and went to visit Jethro, his father in law, but he returned later to Egypt, when God told him to be with His people. (Ex 4:18)

* The Children of Israel, after they lived in the land of Egypt 430 years as strangers. (Ex 12:40-41) God punished the Egyptians for not letting the Israelites to leave Egypt. (Ex 11:4 ; 12:17 ; 12:41)

* Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary and Joseph after the death of Herod the king. (Mt 2:14)

God's promise to the Abraham and his seeds

God promised that the land between the Nile and Euphrates to be for the children of Israel. (Gen. 15:18) God also promised them to be a great nation. (Gen. 49:3)

Did God Change his covenant ?

In the New Testament, in the Book of Hebrews: It was stated that God found fault with the people " The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Juda, It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they did not remain faithful to my covenant" (Heb 8:8-9).

Egypt was the land of slavery to the Jews

The Jews lived in Egypt for 430 years. They lived an easy life when Joseph was the ruler of Egypt, and second only to the Pharaoh. Joseph raised the status of his father and his brothers and gave them the best land in Egypt. (Gen. 47:6 & 11) But the time did change when another king came, after the death of Joseph and he did not know Joseph nor his people. Since then they lost their prestige and gradually were used by the Egyptians and became their servants. (Ex 2:23)

To start, Joseph himself was sold as a slave, by his own brothers was abandoned by them. The Medianites merchant men sold him to the Ismaelites for twenty pieces of silver and brought him to Egypt. Potiphar, Pharaoh's captain of the guards bought him. Later he was put in prison, but when he successfully explained to the Pharaoh, his dream, he was raised by the Pharaoh to be the ruler of Egypt. He saved Egypt from seven year famine. Later they became poor in the land of Egypt. Egypt became the prison and the house of bondage to the children of Israel. (Ex 13:3 & 14) & (Dt 5:6 ; 6:12 ; 13:10)

The Israelites became strangers in the land of Egypt. (Ex 23:9) & (Dt 10:19) & (Ac 13:17)

The Jews mixed with the Egyptians

The Bible stated that some of the Israelites married Egyptians. Joseph did not only get an Egyptian name, but also married an Egyptian girl. He was given the name "Zaphnathpaaneah" by the Pharaoh, who also gave him a wife called Asenath. The bride was the daughter of the priest of On, an Egyptian God. (Gen. 41:54)

We noticed that Joseph and his wife got two children, but were given Hebrew names, Manasseh and Ephraim, in an effort to keep his Hebrew identity. (Gen. 46:20)

Solomon married the daughter of the Pharaoh himself. (I Ki 3:1 ; 9:16) It was mentioned that the wisdom of Solomon excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. (I Ki 4:30)

The Bible mentioned, in different places about children who were born to an Israeli mothers and Egyptian Fathers. (Lev 24:10)

Nice things mentioned about Egypt

"Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God". (Ps 68:31) One may notice that the church in Ethiopia is a Coptic Church.

Many Miracles and wonders did happen in Egypt. (Ps 78:12 & 43)

That Egypt had the best linen and tapestry of the time. (Pr 7:16) & (Eze 27:7)

There will be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. (Isa 19:19) The Lord will listen to the cries of the Egyptians from the oppressors, and that God will be known to all the Egyptians and they will acknowledge the Lord. (Isa 19:20-22)

God will heal the Egyptians after he smites them. (Isa 19:22)

Egypt will have a highway to Assyria and they will be friendly, later Israel will join them and it would be a blessing to the world. (Isa 19:24)

The Lord blesses Egypt, by saying "Blessed be Egypt my people" (Isa 19:25)

The Lord called his Son from Egypt. (Hos 11:1)

The Lord calls himself "I am your God from the land of Egypt" (Hos 12:9)

Egypt was the sanctuary for our Lord when He fled from Herod the King. (Mt 2:13-14)

Here again our Lord says : "Out of Egypt have I called my son. (Mt 2:15)

God listened to the cries of his people when they were in Egypt

The children of Israel suffered in Egypt, after the death of Joseph and when another Pharaoh came to reign. The Israelites were used as servants and became slaves to the Egyptians. On many occasions the children of Israel wanted to leave out of the oppression of the Egyptians, but the Pharaoh refused. The Israelites cried to God asking for His help and He did listen.

God ordered Moses to relay to his people that God did hear them. (Ex 3:16) He promised to take them out of Egypt and lead them to a land "flowing with milk and honey. (Ex 3:17)

Moses and his brother Aaron spoke with the Pharaoh, who refused to let the children of Israel to go and leave Egypt. (Ex 6:27) However God hardened the heart of the Pharaoh, to show his wonders in the land of Egypt. (Ex 7:3)

God showed His strong hands to release them from the house of bondage. (Ex 13:14)

The severe punishment to Egypt

God's anger was great when Egypt refused to let His people go. He hit Egypt with severe punishments in support to His oppressed people. The Pharaoh's heart was hard that God struck Egypt with powerful revenges, stretching His hands without mercy. (Ex 3:20 & 7:4)

The water of the rivers and the ponds turned blood. (Ex 7:19) The Frogs crept all over the land. (Ex 8:5&6) There was dust everywhere and the men and the beasts were covered by lice and flies. (Ex 8:17 & 24) The cattle died. (Ex 9:9)

There was heavy rain and hail that never before did Egypt see. (Ex 9:18-22) Then the locusts came and ate every plant and there was no greenery in the land. (Ex 10-12-15)

Darkness covered all the land, followed by the bringing of the plague. (Ex 10:22 & 11:3) & (Jos 24:5) & (Ps 135-8 ; 136:10)

Perhaps the most devastating and heart breaking of all was the fact that every family in Egypt was hit by the death of the firstborn male, for everybody from the king who sat on the throne to the maidservant that was behind the mill. Every first born to the animals also died. (Ex 11:5 & 6) (Ex 12:12-13)

Egypt becomes desolate and waste. (Eze 29:9-10 & 12 ; 32:15) & (Joel 3:19) It drowned by the flood. (Am 8:8 ; 9:5)

The Egyptians lost their gold, silver articles and the best of their garments, when every woman and every man asked to borrow them, from their neighbors the Egyptians, the night they had to flee and were never returned. (Ex 3:22 ; 11:2 & 35:22)

The punishment of Egypt became an example of judgment by God. (Isa 10:24 & 26)

God spoke to Moses in Egypt

God spoke to Moses in Egypt, telling Moses and Aaron that He will pass through Egypt to smite all the first born and execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt. (Ex 6:28 ; 12:1)

In Sinai, God also spoke to Moses and gave him the law and the ten commandments.

The Hebrew midwives refuse to obey the king's orders !

The Pharaoh ordered the Hebrew midwives to kill every born male Hebrew, but the midwives disobeyed his orders. He knew that his order was not executed by them and talked back to them. (Ex 1:77-79)

The freed people of Israel became corrupted

The children of Israel, who were saved by God from the oppression of the Egyptians, and were out of the house of bondage, were not grateful to the Lord who showed wonders and miracles in front of their own eyes.

God's Anger

♠ ♠ God was provoked by them since the day they left Egypt. (2 Ki 21:15) They even made for themselves a molten calf and took it as their God. (Na 9:18) & (Jer 42:18) He had to pour His fury upon them. (Eze 20:8)

Even they spoke against God and were against Him. (Nu 21:5 & 22:5)

They mocked against God and murmured if they can choose a leader to take them back to Egypt. (Nu 14:2)

They followed other gods that provoked God's anger. (Jdg 2:12) & (I Sam 8:8) & (I Ki 9:9)

The children of Israel did sin against their God. (2 Ki 17:7) They laid hold on other gods and worshipped them. (2 Ch 7:22)

The Israelites did not understand God's wonders in Egypt and provoked him. (Ps 106:21)

Daniel the prophet later said : "We have sinned and have done wickedly" (Da 9:15)

They revolted against Moses

♠ ♠ Moses, the man of God who led the children of Israel out of their slavery, was mocked at, saying that Moses found no graves for them in Egypt, so he brought them to die in the Wilderness. (Ex 14:11)

They accused Moses that he led them to die from hunger. (Ex 16:3) He was accused that he brought them to die from thirty, as there was no water for them nor for their cattle. (Ex 17:3)

They were very impatient even when Moses was on the mountain to meet God, they urged Aaron to make gods for them to worship. (Ex 32:1) Aaron obeyed them and make a molten calf for them to be their god. (Ex 32:4 & 32:23)

The Children of Israel looked backwards to Egypt with love

With no faith or little faith in God, the Jews freed from the land of Egypt, the land of bondage and slavery were not impressed. The Lord God stretched his arms and hit the

Egyptians hard, showing miracles and wonders, and saved the Jews but they were ungrateful.. They yearned to their days of prison and captivity and wished that they stayed to serve the Egyptians. (Ex 14:11-12)

They couldn't help but to dream of the old "good" days when they used to eat fish, cucumber, melons, leeks, onion and garlic. (Nu 11:5) They kept asking, why ever they left Egypt where they ate meat. (Nu 11:18) They murmured all the time that it was better for themselves if they return back to Egypt. (Nu 14:3)

They wanted to make a captain, that will lead them to Egypt. {Nu 14:4) They were not contented by coming out of Egypt where they found no figs, vine, or pomegranates, nor water. (Nu 20:5) They thought that the Lord hated them to get them out of Egypt. (Dt 1:27)

God reminds his people

Our Lord is very patient, even with all the sins committed by the people, He asked them to follow Him and to remember all what He did for them. The people tend to be forgetful and ungrateful and they forgot very quickly. God then found that He had to remind them with all what He did for them. He reminded them that He was their God and He was the one who got them out of Egypt. (Lev 11:45) & (Dt 5:6 ; 6:12) & (I Sam 10:18 ; 12:6) & (Ps 81:10) & (Jer 23:7)

He even reminded them that they were strangers in the land of Egypt and have to love other strangers. (Lev :19:34) He reminded them that they were strangers in the land of Egypt, and asked them to love the strangers accordingly. (Dt 10:19)

God kept reminding them that He was their God ,who took them out of Egypt. (Lev 19:36 ; 22:23 & 43 ; 25:38 ; 26:13 &45) & (Nu 15:41) He also specifically reminded them with the glory and the miracles that He did for them whether in Egypt or in the wilderness. (Nu 14:22)

That they are the people of inheritance. (Dt 4:20) And that they were one day servants to the Egyptians. (Dt 5:15)

In order that they may forget, God reminded them of what the Pharaoh did for them. (Dt 7:18) And how they kept rebelling against Him. (Dt 9:7 & 12 ; 11:3 & 4)

God Almighty swore

God has sworn to Abraham to give him and his seeds the promised land. (Ac 7:17) God told Moses that he is going to give the land that He sworn to Abraham , Isaac and Jacob to their seeds. (Ex 33:1) & (Nu 32:11)

Because God loved His people, He will kept His oath, which He sworn to their fathers. (Dt 7:8)

As God noticed that His people did not obey His voice when they were in the wilderness forty years, he sworn that, none of them will see the promised land. (Jos 5:6) God showed that land to the generation after them, as He kept His covenant. (Jdg 2:1)

Egypt and its enemies in the Old Testament.

It was mentioned that Egypt had many conflicts with the countries in the area, many nations were at odd with her.

King Shihak of Egypt came against Jerusalem. (I Ki 14:25)

The king of Assyria put So the king of Egypt in prison. (2 Ki 17:4) Later, Pharaohnechoh, king of Egypt went against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. (2 Ki 23:29)

The king of Babylon took the land pertained to the king of Egypt. (2 Ki 24:7)

Shishak king of Egypt came against Jerusalem. He took away the treasures from the house of the Lord, even the shields of gold which Solomon made. (2 Ch 12:2 & 9)

It was mentioned too that Necho king of Egypt fought against Carchmish. (2 Ch 35:20)

And finally , the king of Egypt took silver and gold, at Jerusalem.

The king of Egypt made his brother Eliakim, king over Judah and Jerusalem and turned his name to Jehoiakim. (2 Ch 36:3-4)

Was there or will be affinity between Egypt and Israel ?

"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 the Lord and the wall of Jerusalem round about" (I Ki 3:1)

" In that day shall Israel be third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land. (Isa 19:24-25)

That what was mentioned in the Book of Isaiah the prophet and the future will bring the explanation.

The Arabs

It is accepted that the Arab people are the descendant of Ismael. Ismael was the son of Abraham. Ismael's mother was Hagar. Hagar was an Egyptian maid in the house of Abraham.

One can notice that the Arabs then are originally half Jews through the father and half Egyptians through the mother. (Ge 16:1-2)

A prophecy about Egypt

Chapter 19 of the Book of Isaiah is about Egypt.

1-The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rode 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.

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.

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.

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

5- And the waters shall fall from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up.

6- And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defense shall be emptied and dried up : the reeds and the flags shall wither.

7- The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.

8-The fathers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.

9- Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded.

10-And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish.

11- Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counselors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings?

12- Where are they? Where are thy wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the Lord of the hosts hath purposed upon Egypt.

13- The princes of Zoan are become fools, the princes of Noph are deceived; they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the tribes thereof.

14- The Lord has mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof: and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggered in his vomit.

15- Neither shall there be any work for Egypt, which the head or tail, branch or rush, may do.

16- In that day shall Egypt be like unto women: and it shall be afraid and fear because of the shaking of the hand of the Lord of hosts, which he shakes over it.

17- And the land of Judah shall be a terror unto Egypt, every one that made mention thereof shall be afraid in himself, because of the counsel of the Lord of hosts, which he had determined against it.

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

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

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

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

22- And the Lord shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the Lord, and shall be entreated of them, and shall heal them.

23- In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians.

24- In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land:

25- Whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.