

Exodus: Wheel-tracks of Abuse, 14-22; Doc. of Fear: Preface

The Hyksos knew not Joseph and as a result, the Israelites were no longer blessed by association with him. Leon J. Wood gives us insight into what happened next:

Wood, Leon J. A Survey of Israel's History, rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986; p. 91:

Now matters changed. A rigorous servitude was imposed on the dwellers of Goshen. Exodus 1:8, Exodus 1:9, Exodus 1:10 records the reasons. First, the new ruler "did not know about Joseph"; that is, he did not have historical knowledge of Joseph, nor did he have reason to respect it if he had. He headed a new dynasty of foreign rule, so that former allegiances or obligations were of little consequence. Second, Israelites were seen to be more and mightier than the Hyksos. The Hyksos were never of great number and Jacob's family could have outnumbered them easily by this time. The new ruling family would not have wanted a strong, unified, foreign group to continue unchecked as a potential source of trouble. Third, the deposed Egyptian rulers, whose dynasty had befriended this group of people, might now call upon them for support in reestablishing the status quo.

Accordingly, a decision was made to enslave Israel. Their potential for trouble would be removed both by restricting freedom of movement and employment and by placing "slave masters" over them to make sure that all energy was expended in hard labor. This would not only keep them in control but also provide valuable labor for building projects, such as the cities of Pithom and Raamses, the new capital.

The Hyksos did gain in labor contributed and they also prevented any alliance between deposed Egyptians and Israel. But they did not succeed in curtailing Israelite population growth. Exodus 1:12 states that "the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread." Population growth was necessary if Israel was to become nation-size by the time of the Exodus.

In time another measure was instituted to curtail this growth: all male children were ordered to be killed.

Exodus 1:22 - Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, "Every son who is born (to the Israelites) you are to cast into the Nile, and every daughter you are to keep alive."

Other writers give us a little more detail about the harshness of the Hyksos and subsequently Egyptian treatment of the Israelites, in their period of oppression during the XVIII Dynasty.

Harrison, R. K. Old Testament Times. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970, pp. 122-23:

... the ancient city of Pithom was built by Hebrew slave labor for an Egyptian pharaoh. Some of the massive brickwork is still in evidence, and shows that the walls of Pithom were made of "brick without straw" such as were employed in the Israelite slavery.

Biblical chronology identifies Thutmose II as the Pharaoh of the oppression and Amenhotep II as the Pharaoh of the Exodus. Both were cruel and hostile toward the Israelite population of Egypt. The incident regarding the manufacturing of bricks without straw is mentioned in:

Exodus 5:1 - Moses and Aaron came and said to Pharaoh, "Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, 'Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.'"

Exodus 5:4 - But the king of Egypt said to them, “Moses and Aaron, why do you draw the people away from their work? Get back to your labors!”

Exodus 5:6 - The same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters over the people and their foremen, saying,

Exodus 5:7 – “You are no longer to give the people straw to make brick as previously; let them go and gather straw for themselves.

Exodus 5:8 - But the quota of bricks which they were making previously, you shall impose on them; you are not to reduce any of it. Because they are lazy, therefore they cry out, ‘Let us go and sacrifice to our God.’”

Harrison gives us some extrabiblical insight into the brutality of the Egyptian taskmasters towards the Israelites.

Harrison, R. K. Old Testament Times. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970, p. 128:

A mural in the tomb of Rekhmire, the visier of Thutmose III, depicts a brick-making scene, where slaves are moistening lumps of Nile mud, adding sand and chopped straw, and placing the mixture into molds for baking in the sun. The mural carries an inscription reminiscent of advice given by the taskmasters to the enslaved Hebrews, “The rod is in my hand; be not idle.”

The Hyksos-Egyptian oppression lasted almost 300 years and such activities as are depicted here—slave labor, impossible requirements on production, beatings, and occasional mass murders—built up wheel-tracks of bondage in the neural networks of the Israelites.

Promised freedom by Moses, these Israelites find themselves trapped between the Devil—Pharaoh’s army—and the deep blue sea—Little Bitter Lake.

Constellations of previous conditions of servitude rush into their conscious minds—the beatings, the long, hot, days of endless labor, the murders, the threats, the brutality.

In their mind, all they have done is infuriate Pharaoh and, once recaptured, their horror and misery will only be amplified by his anger. Consequently:

Exodus 14:10 - Now when Pharaoh had caused his army to approach, the sons of Israel lifted up their eyes and behold, the Egyptians were advancing after them. They were extremely frightened and consequently the sons of Israel screamed in panic to Jehovah.

Fear trumps faith! In order to appreciate how the Jews have set themselves up for a disaster, we need to stop and take a look at the emotion of fear.

B. Doctrine of Fear Preface

All of us are experts on fear, having spent so much time practicing it, so all we need do is simply organize our thoughts on the subject. But the problem in doing so is found in one of the basic principles of the doctrine: fear cancels the ability to think. And so, one must be trained to insert parentheses of thought within an ongoing lifestyle of fear. The major way this is accomplished is by attending Bible classes. Once here the parenthesis in which we organize our thoughts is constructed by activating the two power options: rebound and the filling of the Holy Spirit. Over time these two options are developed into three spiritual skills: (1) consistency of fellowship, (2) the teaching ministries of the Holy Spirit, and, (3) when under pressure, the application of thought to life, thus eliminating fear as a wheel-track.

Problem is, most of you seem to be wandering in your own, self-created, *jornada del muerto*— you do not consistently attend Bible classes; therefore, you have not parlayed the two power options into the three spiritual skills. There is no question that you can activate the two power options while away from church. But you cannot consistently activate the three spiritual skills away from church or the tape recorder. And the better of the two is church if it is available. Very few believers, whose spiritual growth is dependent upon tapes, would not prefer to attend live Bible classes given the option.

Nevertheless, many of you are apparently incapable of organizing your lives in order to consistently get to Bible class and thus meander, wander, and mill about on an anfractuous *jornada del muerto* in which you are incapable of distinguishing between oases and mirages.

The *Jornada* has both. Sometimes the mirage is mistaken for the oasis. Sometimes the oasis is mistaken for the mirage. Only discernment can tell the difference. Discernment is gained through knowledge of the Eternal Logos which results in wisdom.

Bible class is the oasis! You may come here and be satisfied provided you have a hunger and thirst for the Word. It is an encapsulated environment. There are no distractions here—except for crying babies on Sundays, Pepe's squeaking wheels during the week, and your own inability to concentrate. The mirages are beyond the swinging doors. Some of those mirages are misinterpreted as the oasis. They are not! Due to your inconsistency of attendance, some of the things found here at the oasis are assumed to be the mirage. They are not! Those who isolate the distractions and consistently grow in grace at the Grace Doctrine Oasis are able to distinguish the mirages when they leave. Those who are inconsistent inevitably encounter the mirages of the Angelic Conflict, assume them to be more than they can bear, and, rather than apply the biblical problem-solving devices, opt instead for fear and panic.

It is to this bedraggled contingent of our congregation that this doctrine is dedicated. For those of you who have maintained a momentum to your spiritual growth, the study will provide for you a close look at the mirage by which your fellow parishioners have been deluded and neutralized, and from which you should wish to organize your thoughts in order to avoid.