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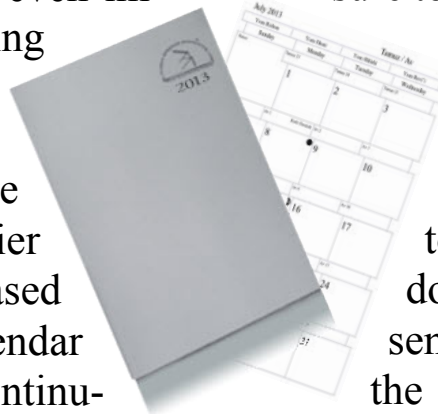
*“Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.”
Colossians 2:8*

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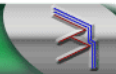
For the fifth year, Living Springs Institute has published a daily planning calendar that gives you the Biblical calendar alongside the Gregorian calendar we are all familiar with. This planner is a Biblical education as well as useful in organizing a person’s daily life. We think this is an exciting teaching product; and this year, we have even improved the calendar by printing the interior pages on a much better quality paper. This year's calendar pages are brighter, crisper to read, easier to write on, and it has increased the durability of the calendar overall. Best of all, we are continuing, by the grace of God, to offer these calendars for FREE!



form, and you can type your mailing information into the lines provided on that form. If you are using e-mail, send your request to: resources@shaqah.com. If you’re using regular mail, write to us at: Living Springs Institute, P.O. Box 271, Loveland, CO 80539. Just tell us you would like the 2013 calendar; be sure to give us your physical mailing address, and it will be on its way!

On that note, I would like to remind everyone that it does save us on postage to send more than one calendar in the same package. So, if you and your spouse and/or a friend would each like one, or you know of others you would like to give one to, please don’t hesitate to order the total number of calendars you would like, all at once! Now, if you are a regular mail subscriber to this publication, you should have received one of these calendars with this issue of *Shaqah*; but, you may still want others to share. Please,

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For those of you who may never have ordered anything from us before, I want to make it clear that when you order from Living Springs, giving us your name, mailing address, and/or e-mail will not put you on any mailing list! Living Springs Inc. does not share your personal information with any other organization(s), and you will not receive constant mailings from us. We are happy to send people only what they request. Thus, we also want to remind everyone that by the mighty hand of The Lord, we offer, not only this calendar, but other teaching products as well, and all for free! If you would like a free subscription to this publication (*Shaqah*), don't forget to make that request when you write! Extra copies and/or back issues of *Shaqah*; our book - *A Sabbath By Design*; and other free materials are all available to order. If you are using our online Resource Shop, and the form will not allow you to order the quantity you need, please make your request for extra copies in the comment box at the end of the order form.

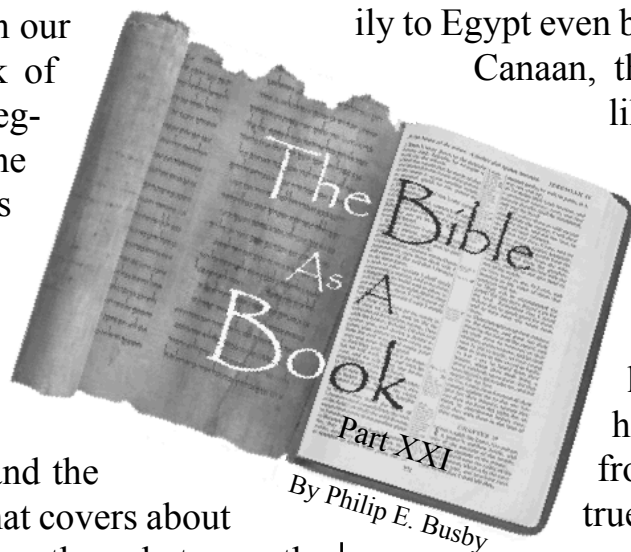
Of course, for those of you who have

access to a computer and the internet, we want to remind you that we produce a PDF version of this calendar (as well as many other materials in PDF), which you can download from our website if you like. This is a very printer friendly version of the calendar, giving individuals the chance to print out their own calendar(s). In doing this, you can play with the size the calendar is printed, put it in the folder or binder of your choosing, use just the pages you want, etc. You can even download previous years of the calendar for study and reference purposes. All the information about what the PDF calendar is, more tips on how to use it, and even the ability to share your own useful tips about how to make it what you want, can be accessed by visiting the Calendar Project page of our website! You can find the link by visiting www.livingspringsinstitute.org, clicking on "Learning Center," then "Calendar Project."

In closing, I just want to say thank you again to all those who have taken part in this ministry! Please remember to share Living Springs Institute with others, so they too may learn and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ! May God bless you all; and as always, we pray you will be blessed by this issue of *Shaqah*!

Last time, we began our discussion on the book of Exodus, and in that segment we calculated the amount of time Exodus covers. That time period is about 216 years. However, as we also discussed, there is an overlap between the last words of Genesis and the first words of Exodus that covers about 71 years. These years are those between the time Jacob moves his family to Egypt and the death of Joseph. To give us some perspective as to where the book of Exodus comes in terms of our modern Gregorian calendar, it is probably most helpful to note Joseph's death, which took place about 1606 B.C. The birth of Moses would be 64 years later in about 1542 B.C. Moses would be 80 years old when God told him to go to Pharaoh and begin the process that would see the children of Israel set free from Egypt. With this, we have a good idea of where Exodus is from where we live today, and we can begin our overview of the book of Exodus.

The first six verses of Exodus brings us through the fact time moves forward and life unfolds. What changed for Israel is all those who could be considered patriarchs of the nation truly pass on. They were now a group of people who would move forward as a body of people, promised by God to form His chosen nation. Any of them who did not want to be a part of that would be free to go their separate way. There were no longer forefathers or a group of brothers to say, "We are a family." The fact this day was coming is a large part of the reason God brought the fam-



ily to Egypt even before the death of Jacob. In Canaan, the children of Israel most likely would have been absorbed into the culture and people of the land. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were a running father, to son, to grandson, line of one family which had the distinction of being from another land. They were true strangers. Jacob had even went back and lived in Mesopotamia for a considerable time, and all his wives and sons - save one - had been born there. When Jacob returned to the land of Canaan, he was to the Canaanites a stranger returning to take over the house of his father, which they already understood was a transplant from a foreign land. On the other hand, the integration of his brother Esau's family into Canaan had already begun. Yes, Esau's house would rise to be a nation of its own, but there would be no true distinction in the world for them, nor in their personal genetics, which could give them unique qualities throughout history, easily distinguished from other Canaanite peoples.

Jacob's family would have that distinction, but they still would be taken to another place to solidify that distinction, both genetically and historically! This is why it is important to understand their time in Egypt saw them truly living there, not going back and forth to Canaan. As the process of time moved forward, Jacob and all his sons died, leaving a nation of people still clearly known to be distinct from the Egyptians. In Egypt they were never considered Egyptians, nor were they considered Canaanites; thus, the designation of be-

ing known as “Hebrews” solidified. Israel also settled down in the land of Goshen in a way that made them think of that place as their home, as apposed to being just a part of the larger nation of Egypt. There Israel did not languish, fade, and/or begin to die out. They became a vibrant people, which God continued to bless with fertility and strength until verse 8 tells us, “...the land was filled with them.” This is all good news, but the book of Exodus is thus named because it is vastly important, after understanding all God needed to do in order to solidify them into a nation, there would also be need to pull them out of that situation in order to carry on with the plan. While Israel needed a land to grow in that did not see them become Canaanites, Egyptians, or just some part of an existing group, this situation held the danger Abraham worried about when it came to Isaac. If a place and circumstance other than what God had called them to ultimately be in became too comfortable, they would not return and/or fulfill God's plan for their existence! They needed separation and comfort to grow in Egypt, but also a reason to make an exit!

On that point, it is important to remember when the land was going through the drastic seven years of famine, which Joseph had been put in charge of dealing with, everyone in the region felt the impact and had to turn to Joseph and Pharaoh in Egypt for help. This included the actual inhabitants of Egypt, who sold everything to receive the food they needed to survive. The only two groups who survived this famine without having to sell out to Pharaoh were the priests of Egypt's false religion - because Pharaoh gave a consistent ration of support to them - and Israel. Israel was cared for by Joseph; while the famine is what ultimately brought the family to Egypt, Joseph's power and position was what sus-

tained them. (Gen. 47:12-27) Thus, when we are told they waxed exceeding mighty, we know this reference is not just to their ability to be a strong people in physical health and number, but also in their possessions!

Then came the point God knew evil hearted men could be depended on to bring about, which would deal with the fact Israel had become too comfortable in Egypt. You see, while it is true Pharaoh and his house did not own the Israelites, nor had their wealth been drained, the Israelites did not live on land that belonged to them! The land of Goshen was the place Pharaoh told Joseph his family could live on, by virtue of telling them they could occupy any land in Egypt which they chose. This put Israel in a unique and powerful position, while at the same time there were obvious roadblocks to them staying there permanently. Also, the fact they were herdsmen solidified the idea they would not rise to power in Egypt through political circumstances. (Gen. 46:31-34) Even Joseph had not joined them in Goshen after they moved there, but remained separate and lived as royalty in Egypt proper. After his death, the respect by Egypt's government toward Israel was simply that Joseph had been a revered ruler in Egypt, and not because there were any further inroads made by Israel into the government. Even Joseph's sons were made a part of Israel, in spite of the fact they were the sons of Pharaoh's daughter. Joseph made sure they did not remain or solidly become part of the royal house, by bringing them to Jacob before his death, to see them blessed in Joseph's place. This is why there is not a tribe of Joseph, but two half tribes named for his sons. This helps us understand that while there is only about 64 years between the death of Joseph and the birth of

The Bible As A Book continued on pg. 21

A Matter Of Life And Death

Part VI

From Living Springs' Questions and Answers

“Does the spirit leave the body at the time of death? Then Jesus comes at the end of time and takes the soul home to heaven.”

In our last segment we talked about the fact our mind and spirit, upon death, not only leaves this physical body which is currently a part of us, but it never returns. Contrary to classical human thought, this also leaves us with no ability to interact with, and in this physical universe. Thus, we cannot get back to this world from some other realm, and we are not going to be able to look down on it from above or the like. This, in no small part, is because our physical form is what also connects us to time itself as God created it for this universe. All this brings us to more of the heart of the question about where do we go after death, and that is what we are going to discuss in this segment of “A Matter Of Life And Death.”

In truth, the Bible tells us there are only three places in existence where we can reside, aside from the fact we will all stand directly in the presence of God on Judgment Day. Those places are: here in this universe where we were created to be; the place Jesus said He was going to prepare for those who want to be eternal-

ly with God; and the place we most often simply refer to as “hell.” Now, there are a couple of stories in the Bible, people like to point to, which they feel muddies the water a bit on this point, but I disagree.

The first story is truly that - a story. One day as Jesus walked this earth, He told a story about a rich man and a poor beggar. The beggar was sick and lay at the gate of the rich man's estate, hoping he could get some assistance from just what the rich man threw out, but the rich man cared not for anyone. When the rich man dies he goes to a place of torment, which can certainly be called hell. The poor man also dies; and in the story, the rich man can see the poor beggar on the other side of a great divide, in a place which is termed “Abraham's bosom.” This is a place of comfort, and many would simply call this heaven. The story tells us, being in these places of comfort and suffering are truly a reverse from the way these two men had been in life. Thus, the rich man asks if it is possible for the beggar to give him some water, even if it's just the wetting of his finger touched to the rich man's tongue. The rich man goes on to also request that the beggar go back to earth and warn the rich man's relatives they need to change so

they do not come to this same place he is in. Neither of these requests can be fulfilled, and the rich man is told the point of warning his relatives is moot because they, just as he should have, should believe the prophets God has sent. They should not need a specific messenger from beyond the grave, nor would it truly help! (Luke 16:19-31)

This story causes some to say there must be a place where people who serve The Lord go, where they are comforted until the time of the resurrection. This seems to some to be further supported by the second story, which is not just a story, but an actual happening. For that one, we look at what happened the day Jesus died on the cross. On that day, there were criminals hung on both sides of Jesus. The gospel of Luke tells us one of these criminals takes the opportunity to scoff at Jesus much like the crowds did that day, but the other did not. Instead, he took the opportunity to scold the scoffing criminal and remind him that they both deserved the punishment they were suffering, while Jesus had done no wrong. The humble man then asked Jesus to remember him when Jesus entered His kingdom. This man was truly turning from the sin he had done in life, and was requesting of Jesus, mercy and forgiveness. Jesus grants the man's request by simply saying, "To day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43

Both these stories tell about a place which could be talking about heaven;

and many people simply believe when those who serve God die, they go directly to heaven. The problem with this is, Jesus made it very clear He was leaving this world to go and prepare a place for us, so that we may be with Him for eternity. (John 14:1-3) This means a place, other than this universe, was not prepared for us at creation. This universe was to be our home, and God did not set us up to fail or with failure in mind. Even when the Bible says Jesus is The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, it's not indicating God planned on us failing from the foundation of the world. What it is saying, among other things too deep for us to get into here, is Jesus was always The One Who would have to do the necessary work, and be our giver of life if we did fail. This is because our flesh is the part which mirrors Jesus, and that is the part which was made temporal. Because of our design, Jesus has always been The One Who would have to be prepared to give His life for our sake. This is why we are told in the Word of God that the book which contains all the names of those who will go to the place Jesus is preparing - which is that place we often generically refer to as heaven - is The Lamb's Book of Life! (Rev. 13:8, 17:8, 21:27)

A fact which goes hand in hand with this is also one we should look at, and that is, as we go through the Word of God, the word "hell" is not really a place so much as a concept. In truth, it has more of a relationship with the word

“grave,” and the simple fact we die. At some points it just refers to the fact someone is in misery. Now, at the risk of being a bit gruesome, let me just point out, not everyone is laid in a grave when they die. Some people's bodies are never found. Some people are eaten by animals, or their bodies are destroyed by any number of means. Saying something such as, “hell and the grave,” is an attempt to cover the fact not everyone is seen as resting in peace, in a grave, as we would traditionally like to place them.

In the book of Revelation, when we are told about the Day of Judgment, we are told even more than just hell and the grave give up their dead. This is not said because the oceans, hell, and the grave are all actual holding places for the dead. This is because God wants us to be crystal clear, no matter who we are, no matter how we die, no matter what religion or belief system we subscribe to or not, we will stand before Him! When that happens, those who have not cared for the things of God will be cast into a place Jesus describes as outer darkness (which is a reference to the aspect we will be separated from the presence of God for eternity), and everlasting punishment! (Matt. 25:30-36) In the book of Revelation, the place is called “...the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:15; and what Jesus tells us in Matthew 25 verse 41 is that this is also not a place made by God because humans were expected to fail.

The lake of fire is a place which was prepared for the devil and those angels who followed him. It will only be used for humans because they have made the same choice the devil made: and that is to rebel against God's will!

Getting back to our two stories, we should see that on the cross, Jesus did not have time - such as we are taking here - to explain what exactly was going to be the sequence of events upon the criminal's death, nor can just everyone truly wrap their head around all the information. However, that's alright because it's not necessary for salvation that we understand all the dynamics. Understanding dynamics is something which is beneficial for those of us living and needing to be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks us about our faith. (I Pet. 3:14-16) The man on the cross next to Jesus was only hours, at best, from his death, and very limited in what he could do with the time he had left. Thus, Jesus simply comforts the man on the cross by confirming to the man he would find himself that very day, with Jesus, in a much better situation. That is why we simply see the word “paradise.” Paradise is not a place as Jesus uses it, it's a simple explanation of what would come next, which the man could, in his agony, easily grasp.

Now, when it comes to the story of the rich man and the beggar, it needs to

be simply understood, Jesus was telling what we call a "parable." Jesus told many of these stories, and they are intended to be illustrative of the truth, not a literal description. For example, Jesus tells of ten virgins, five of whom had prepared their lamps with enough oil to wait as long as it took to meet the bridegroom, and five who had not been so vigilant. When the five foolish virgins wanted to share the oil of the five who had prepared ahead of time, they were turned down because that would bring the possibility none of them would make it. While the five foolish were gone to the market to buy oil, they missed the coming of the bridegroom. When they returned to the place where the marriage supper was to be held, they were denied entrance on the basis the bridegroom did not know them. If they had truly wanted to be a part, they should have been prepared to be there and go in when the bridegroom came. (Matt. 25:1-13)

This story tells of those who know Jesus is coming, but who do not care enough to prepare their lives to meet Him. However, all the imagery of women needing a lamp to wait by a door or the side of a roadway to meet a man coming to get them, in order to go inside a house and have a traditional middle eastern marriage celebration, is all illustration. In truth, there isn't any literal door or road for us to get an oil lamp and wait next to, and salvation is not just for women! This is also true of Abraham's bosom. It is not a literal place, nor is the

story's purpose to teach us what heaven and hell will literally be like. The story is about the fact someone who dies and finds they missed out on heaven will be very miserable, and if given the chance, they would want relief from the misery of that mistake. They would even hope for the ability to warn their family and friends. However, stories just like this one show us it will be too late at that point to change your mind, and they warn us of what a big mistake it would be to wait!

The fact of the matter is, it is on Judgment Day that we are told those found in The Lamb's Book of Life will be welcomed into the Kingdom of God, as well as those who are not in the book will be cast into the lake of fire. (Matt. 25:31-46, Rev. 20:15) Judgment Day is the day God will separate the sheep from the goats. There are not places prepared for people to go who are followers of God versus other places prepared for those who are not, in order for people to be separated until the resurrection. The fact people believe there are other places is why some end up believing there is hope for praying their loved ones into heaven after they have died. Some people even believe there are different levels of heaven and hell which the dead can be prayed into or out of, or which the dead themselves can achieve or earn by doing works of one kind or another. Once you've jumped the rails from what

Following the Biblical Stream:

By Philip E. Busby

We ended last time by starting to look at Genesis chapter 11 verse 7 and the fact God specifically took action to confound the languages of men. As we touched on last time, many people think of this story as if one day people were working away and suddenly they found they did not understand each other anymore; thus, they simply left off building the tower and city. However, verse 7 includes God's statement, "...let us go down,..." This makes it clear that God specifically came down to confound the languages, and it was not this sudden, odd occurrence like so many think. I suppose the reason many people think it was a sudden unexplainable event is that if it was not, we are left with the question of, how did it take place?

To take a look at that, we need to go deeper into two of the thoughts we touched on at the end of our last segment. First, is the truth that there is a difference between language and speech. Second, God did this work in a way that affected our whole being. Starting with the language versus speech truth, we must remember that language is what can be defined as the set of words we use to communicate our thoughts, along with a set of rules about how we put those words into combinations to form sentences and so on. Speech, on the other hand, has to do with strictly the vocalization of the language, which as we discussed earlier in this series can be very different even when we claim to be speaking the same language another person speaks.

The speech truth is why many of us are taught in school that there are rules for how to spell words, and many of those rules simply do not end up applying when we go to spell a great deal of our words. We are told when learning to spell that we should just sound out the word. Then we find there are letters in the word that we do not make a sound for when pronouncing the word, or that the sound one person believes they're making is not consistent with what another thinks. In some cases, we are told there are certain letters included, not because they are to make a sound themselves, but when in combination with others they cause certain sounds, such as one vowel making another long instead of short. However, we find with many words this idea, again, does not ring true when actually saying the word in speech; and overall, we are stuck with the simple fact a great deal of spelling comes down to simply remembering how a word is spelled! As frustrating as this can be, the truth is, it's possible in times past certain word's vocalization did follow the "rules," but after the change time brings to actual human vocalization of words, they no longer do. Another issue is that many words in a language can be borrowed from another language. This truth may bring an explanation for why certain letter combinations make different sounds in different words, but this again is something which must be known and memorized. The point is simply this, no matter how much we want to read and write, there is, in reality, a glaring difference between what is put down on paper

according to the rules of any particular language versus what actually comes out of each individual's mouth when speaking.

These facts have to do with the truth God affected our whole being and not just our mind, in order to confound our languages. Now, I want to emphasize that God did not want to, nor did He reprogram us like a machine of some kind. Staying away from changing the nature of who each individual was is exactly why God did what He did in the way He did it! I ended last time by saying our mind, our body, and our spirit would be affected by God's direct action in this matter, and "affected" is the key word. Of course our physical would be affected in that it is our physical form's job to do the interacting with other things and individuals. This is why it is so easy for us to get caught up on living in the flesh only. Our flesh is how we interact with this world and other people in what we call the tangible, therefore obvious ways. When it comes to human interaction, the most intentional part of our complex interactions comes through speech. I say intentional because there is much we say with what is called our "body language," but it is not always intentional as much as it is simply part of who we are whether we like it or not. There is also the perceptions of others, which we can do nothing about. People will have emotions about us based on how we look. People will look at all kinds of things such as ethnicity, whether they find our appearance attractive or unattractive, the fact we may remind them of someone in their past which they did or did not like, and the list goes on and on. These are all complex parts of human interaction, but all things we have little to no control over in most cases. However, we can be very inten-

tional in what we say, at least from the aspect of what we are intending to convey. The question is, are we actually conveying what we intend to say in a way the other understands?

It is easy to see how our physical was affected by the confounding in that the physical act of vocalization had to be touched for us to have what we have today. There are sounds in some languages, which, if you did not learn from a child, are very difficult, if not impossible for some people to master. For example, when talking about those who speak English, there are those who just can't get down the technique of rolling the "r" sound which is necessary to speak the Spanish language, at least in its proper form. The Hebrew language has a vocalization to it which comes from deep in the back of the throat. Not only is this hard for many English speaking people to accomplish, it causes some people to downright choke and cough because it uses muscles and parts of the throat they just don't normally use in making sounds! The accent thing we talked about in an earlier issue is directly connected to this point. When people grow up with a certain accent, they often can do little to nothing with their speech to hide or change that accent. This is certainly true of most people who learn a language that is not one they grew up with. When we hear people speak, if we are familiar with where a certain accent comes from, we can almost immediately tell where the person is from. People with very good sound discernment can even tell what area of a specific country or even city some people come from just by the way they vocalize their words.

When we talk about God affecting our

physical forms, we need to be reminded once again, that before the confounding of languages, this did not happen. The vocalization of words may have been vast and more complex than anyone alive today could even begin to think of as being all one language; but one way or the other, the ability to control vocalization would have been much better. If it had not been, there would be no way for man to continue in one language and speech as they did before the confounding. In ways we may never be able to grasp, especially since we can not truly know what language was like before the confounding, God changed our ability to control verbalization in a way that causes us to migrate into different sounds over time. All these sound variations we see today are part of that overall effect, and it is what causes groups of people who once spoke the same language to end up speaking what is considered entirely different languages as time goes on!

Now, the affect to our mind would have been the most obvious change, but again, not because God affected those thought patterns that make us who we are. The change would have been directly to the thoughts that affect how we put our words together in order to speak them. This along with the eventual vocalization migration is what truly creates different languages. We need to understand that in verse 7, God specifically says He is going to confound our language, for the purpose we would no longer understand each others speech. Before this confounding, there was in the human mind a common understanding about how to phrase and structure speech, which, even as man grew in his understanding of the universe,

would have given men the tools to communicate new experiences to one another using new words to describe things others had not yet seen. Today almost nothing of this is left. However, a small hint of what we are talking about does still exist. That sliver of common perception is what makes it possible for two people with entirely different languages to be stranded on a deserted island together and still figure out how to communicate, at least on a basic level. This commonality is what makes it possible for people to enter a new, to them, area of the world, knowing nothing of the native language and over time learn to understand it, if not fluently speak it. In truth, being immersed in a language where people all around you are speaking it, and you have no choice but to learn it or be shut out, is one of the best ways to learn a language. This is because in this situation you are surrounded by the commonality that causes that language to be what it is. The speech of people who were once foreign to you, more readily becomes something that makes perfect sense to you in more ways than just understanding each word and its technical definition.

These truths are hints into what it might have been like before the confounding of our languages. What God did is touch something in our mind that changed this commonality, not completely, but just enough that while we still perceive many basic things very much the same, there is no longer a natural flow to how we communicate our thoughts. Another way to understand the loss of this commonality is looking at our attempts to translate languages one from another. Many languages use very different

combinations to express thoughts. Some of the simplest examples, again, exist between languages such as English and Spanish. Between these two languages the structure of a sentence is very similar in that they use many of the same words, in spite of the fact they sound different. At the same time, one of the hardest things to follow when you do not know the other well is that often things such as adjectives and the noun they describe are reversed in the order the other language puts them.

While a person who knows each language well can easily understand what is being said and translate it back and forth, the person on each side of this language barrier is going to see the other as being opposite of the way they should be in phrasing things if the translator simply did a direct word for word translation. This is why we can't literally translate many written things from one language to another, word for word. Not only does there have to be an understanding of what each individual word would translate into, but work has to be done to bring the phrasing into the proper order and context according to the new language's rules. If it is not, certain things will simply not be understood in the new language, especially with any kind of ease. This work also must be done by someone who understands both languages; again, not just in that they pick out what individual words mean from one to the other, but the intent behind putting them in the arrangement they are in, and using one word or inflection instead of another within certain context. All this complexity in language is what the people at the tower saw the beginnings of, and all this is a key part of understanding what actually

took place at the tower, as well as how it would have felt to be in the situation.

The affect God put into the minds of man did not so much create a situation where one day a person began to say something to another and the other said, "I didn't understand a word of that!" The affect would have been more gradual and progressive! It is not likely that what happened was one began using vocalization which belonged to one language (as we would see it today), and another started using a different language. For lack of a better example, it is not as if one person was speaking English, and another began speaking Hebrew, and another Greek. Then because of this, people just laid down their tools and walked away from the tower and city project, as well as each other. What happened after the confounding took place was there arose these situations where one person was telling another what they needed or what they wanted to do, and the other likely understood the vocalization, but the context began to be lost. More and more the phrasing needed a bit of interpretation as they spoke to each other. This brought about hardship in two distinct ways. The first way was that people understood they did not understand each other. This caused there to be a stoppage in work on the tower because they had to take the time to say to each other, "I'm just not getting your point." The process of getting each others point was going to take significant time away from the building of the tower. As the problem persisted, it became obvious there was need to stop working on the tower altogether and concentrate on battling this new truth of not being able to have free flowing understanding between all the builders about what needed to be done.

The second hardship was that people did not understand they did not understand. This is actually what caused the people the more immediate damage. To understand you don't understand is to stop and try to get it sorted out. To not understand that you don't understand, is to go about your way and do the work incorrectly. There is no telling how many of the tower's elements began to be done just a little bit wrong, and when it came time to join elements together, they did not lineup or fit. If certain structural elements were not built at just the right angle or with the right materials, there would have eventually been collapses taking place. This is not only dangerous, but time consuming in that you can't just build again, you have to clean up what collapsed, tear down what needs to be removed to correct what caused the problem, and repair any surrounding structure that may have been damaged. Then you can begin to rebuild. Small misunderstandings between workmen on a modern house can cause major problems, but on a large structure such as this tower, small mistakes would truly be a killer!

In the end, it was not just that they spoke different words and they did not want to take the time to learn each others new words. It was that the entire project became one gigantic mess, and it became obvious the effort needed to get back on the same page with one another was going to be a major project in and of itself. In that time, the weeds began to grow, and the tower was no longer a shining symbol of what man could achieve, as much as it was a symbol of man's failure. Little by little people began to give up on the idea that the tower and city would ever be completed, much less serve

its intent. It would start with those who did not truly desire to build it in the first place, but who were doing so because it was what family and/or friends were into. Those who did it because it was the thing to do, would not stand around and wait for the solution to this new found problem. When the tower was no longer what everyone was focused on, these people would begin to pursue more personal interests. In fact, the pull would begin to go in the opposite direction from what it had been. Those who had a zeal to build the tower would begin to feel pressure from others to go ahead and give it up. The argument would begin to gain ground that this tower and city was impractical and a waste of people's lives for them to sit around waiting for the project to get back on its feet, especially in light of the fact no one knew if it was even possible for that to ever happen!

Even those who were in the leadership roles, the ones who got the people to do this project in the first place, and who would not so easily walk away, would not be such a tight group anymore because of this confounding. They could not be certain they were side by side in what they wanted to do because they too would be having trouble communicating. This is where the real wedge would be driven. Without an ability to feel they were working together in perfect unity, there would be bickering and disagreement even on points they did not truly disagree on. There would be fear in not knowing if certain leaders understood the other's position, and if that were true, certain ones would fear they may lose their authority and standing in the group. These kinds of divisions meant there were not even leaders anymore who were able to

stand shoulder to shoulder and cry for the people to stay and work this out, or to make the argument there was a way to work it out!

All this brings us to the point of the affect God put on our spirit. To understand the affect that was put on our spirit, one needs to simply understand that God does not change. God is perfect and He does not need to change. Man, on the other hand, is not perfect and needs to learn how to change his ways in order to grow in perfection. (Matt. 5:48, Rom. 12:1-2, James 1:2-4) Unfortunately, man often uses the fact he needs to change as an excuse for the ways he is changing due to sin. People love to use the idea that we are more “enlightened” than we used to be; therefore, we can accept things we did not accept before. This could not be further from the truth! It is only an excuse for men to follow their own sinful desires to please the flesh, instead of seeking the will and plan of God; and in doing so, go right down into a state of uselessness. God does not have this problem and that is why He is always trying to lift us up out of what we see as “enlightenment,” in order to show us the ways many people like to argue are “archaic,” simply because they are the truths God created us to live by from the very beginning.

Just because something is old fashioned does not mean it is archaic and its time has passed, any more than it automatically means something is the right thing because it is what people have believed for a very long time! Only God can show us the truth, and one way He does that is through His Word. He also sent His Word in flesh form so The Word could show us through physi-

cally walking with us day by day what is right and God's plan for ultimately saving us from the fact we are so wrong! (Matt. 1:22-23, John 1:10-14) At His first appearing, The Messiah accomplish a task which would make clear the process we must all go through in order to be saved. This process includes the death of our flesh, so we can be clothed, or “born again,” in new forms that are not corruptible. (John 3:1-10, I Cor. 15:51-54) This was confusing for many who had read The Word of God and became very excited about The Messiah's work, being that He would someday come and rule this world in righteousness from the city of Jerusalem. They could not understand how this work could be accomplished by a man who was willing to give His life on a cross. They did not understand the words Jesus spoke to His disciples that night He was to be arrested. Jesus said, “ Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.” John 14:1

Jesus was saying, before I came, you believed in God and His plan to not only rule this earth someday through The Messiah, but also someday take all those who truly desire to be with Him to a place where there will be eternal peace, safety, and life. Jesus reminds them that before He ever came they knew about this place and the way to get there! “And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” John 14:4 He also tells them if they had been wrong in believing in this place, He, as The Messiah, would have taken the time to tell them it was untrue. “In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you....” John 14:2 However, it was necessary that Jesus perform the work on

the cross He was sent to do, and then leave to complete the work of preparing that ultimate place, before He could return to do the work they were excited about The Messiah doing! "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2-3 Jesus was saying, you believed in this before I came, because you believed in the promises of God, now that I am about to do something you don't understand as fitting into that plan, instead of being discouraged by it, seek to understand it because I am, by doing what I'm doing, working on and fulfilling that plan!

All this was something the disciples still did not grasp that night. They did not as yet even grasp what Jesus was about to do, which they would not understand to be part of the plan they already understood God had! Even after Jesus died on the cross and they realized He was no longer in the tomb where He had been laid, they did not truly understand. As the days passed after Jesus' resurrection, they did not understand in what part of the plan they now lived. Because of this, some of the disciples simply went back to the occupations they had done before they followed Jesus. (John 21:1-17) When the day came that Jesus actually left this world and returned to His Father, they simply stood there stunned as if it was all over. They just couldn't wrap their heads around how the part of God's plan they all expect The Messiah to accomplish would be accomplished if He was going to leave altogether. Then angels came down to get them on their way to following a fact, an instruction that had to do with how it would move ahead, which they were currently failing to

follow. It was time to go and wait for the promise Jesus had told them to seek after. (Acts 1:1-12) You see, Jesus had told them He was going to leave; but now that they had known what it was like to walk directly in the presence of God, He was not going to leave them void of that ability from now until the time He returned. In His place, He would ask that The Father send to them The Holy Ghost! The Holy Ghost would not speak of Himself, but remind them of everything Jesus had already taught them. (John 14:25-26, 16:1-16) One of the main purposes of this was so they could understand deeper than they ever had or could, just how true the promises of God were/are, through the fact they had just witnessed a direct part of its fulfillment!

The Holy Ghost's purpose is to comfort us by confirming to us the plan of God is true, and educate us in the ways that show us it's true. This is why Jesus also refers to The Holy Ghost as The Spirit of Truth. (John 14:17) Through Him we can live in the uncertain world of today, where true believers are being attacked on every side, knowing that none of it is evidence God's plan has failed or is failing. We know because God has already laid it out in His Word, telling us all these things must come to pass before the part we all look forward to will come. However, The Holy Ghost teaches us this and continually confirms in our spirit that what we are seeing around us is what God prophesied would be the events to precipitate The Messiah's return! That is why, in the flesh, we have sickness and troubles of all kinds, but the fruits our spirit can produce are still those of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. (Gal. 5:22)

The God we know and serve right now, is the same God Who created us, He is the same God Who at the Tower of Babel confounded man's language. Thus, we should see how the way God affected our spirit at the tower was with the instilling of the knowledge that what had come to pass was the work of God! The confounding of the languages was not a confusing mixed up mess of people wandering around desperately trying to find others they could communicate with, as in fear they wondered if they were simply losing their minds! God brought a comfort to their spirit that caused them to know and understand that the transition they were going through was not the losing of their minds, but the work of God to bring about what He planned for them from the beginning!

For some, this event would be a great relief. The fact they had to work long days in the hot sun, wet rains, etc., building a tower they did not really want, was now over. They could pursue those things that interested them instead. For some it was an eye opener. They had not truly taken the time to understand this was not what God wanted for their lives, and was destructive to it. They now knew if God had taken such action to put an end to this project there must be a reason whether they understood it right away or not. Of course, for others there was anger! Those who truly believed in the tower and city idea, those who truly believed they should do it before man had the chance to spread out across the earth, were no doubt very angry that God had directly thwarted their plan. As is the case throughout history, some of them believed God had no right to do it. Some did not care if He did or did not have the right,

they were just angry it had happened. The very thing they hoped to use to keep men together was now an unforeseeable dream. The beast had truly received that deadly wound in its head, and at that time they did not see how they could revive it! (Rev. 13)

You see, God created man with a free will, but He also protects it. Just before this time, the imagination of men's hearts had become evil continually. God preserved man's free will by sending a flood that would destroy the world, but in it all, He gave everyone willing to listen, a change to escape! This time was different. Man's intent in his heart was not evil in all ways, shapes, and forms; but evil men, along with those who simply did not seek God enough to know what a very destructive path looked like, went down a destructive path together, drawing in everyone along with them. What God saw was the ultimate end of man's true free will to think and act as individuals; and He took action that did not change the individual, but nonetheless, broke the ability of men obligating all other men into following one particular path. The choice to build or not build the tower was still up to each person. The difference now was that it would not be so easy to get everyone else to also spend their life doing it. The project would no longer be something that could serve the purpose of those who hoped to keep all people together in one large group which could be controlled from a central location!

Until next time, Shalom!

the Bible teaches, the sky's the limit as to what you can come up with!

Now, if we do not go to some holding place; we are not left to float around here; and we do not stay with our bodies; what is the sequence of events after death? To answer that we want to look at specific points of scripture. Some of these we have, for the most part, already covered; but we want to put them all together, looking at the facts they give us. We'll start with I Corinthians 15:51 where Paul boldly says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,..."

I know the first thing some would point out is Paul's use of the word "sleep," so we had better cover that first. In English, this word is the same as the word we use for going to bed and napping, but in the original language it is not. Probably one of the reasons we do not simply see the translators using the word death here is because there was an effort made (In the translation of the King James Bible) to make the words flow, while maintaining the original content. This is not a bad thing, you simply need to be aware of it, and realize just because the word "sleep" is used here instead of something such as "be dead," this scripture is not confirming a theory such as grave sleeping.

It comes down again to the fact we don't really know how to describe death;

and because throughout time man has seen death to be so much like the process of falling asleep, our words are very related. However, in truth, the word Paul used here comes from a root which does not attempt to even define the loss of consciousness which happens in sleep, or anything like it. The root actually refers to the simple act of being laid out, or to lay outstretched. Depending on a person's sleep habits, this does not apply so much even to the idea of sleep position. Many people do not lie outstretched, they tend to bend their knees, curl their arms, and lie on their side, at least for different periods during sleep. Very few lie for very long, totally on their back, lying out at full length. On the other hand, this is the exact position we put most all bodies in when placing them in the grave or a casket of any kind.

Now, that's the root of the word Paul used. If we look directly at the word he specifically used, we find it means, "to put to sleep." If taken in context, we understand Paul is not speaking at all in terms of where a person is or the state they are in, other than the physical body itself. He is referring directly to death from the aspect of what happens to a dead body. In the tradition of his place and time, bodies were laid out lengthwise and often rapped in cloth. Then because a dead person does not have the ability to move on their own, a person or persons would pick up the rapped body and lay it on a shelf - or stone bed if you will - inside a tomb. This is exactly what

was done with Jesus' body. Even those who could not afford tombs, dug graves, much as we do today, so the body could be laid out lengthwise as it's placed in the hole. Simply put, the word Paul uses here has direct relationship to why nowadays we refer to a person as being, "laid to rest."

Paul says he will show us a mystery. Why? Just as Nicodemus did not fully grasp how a person could be born again, and Jesus tells us it's just like many things in creation - such as the weather - which we do not fully understand, this is something only God can do! Paul is saying, I will tell you a truth that I can not fully explain, which is the fact (And keep in mind Paul is speaking here to those who follow God), just like Jesus, our being laid in the grave is not the end of our existence! This is true in spite of the fact we all know we do not see our grave opened a day or so after we are put in it and find that our body has disappeared, as was the case with Jesus. What we know is something the Old Testament refers to, especially when talking about kings who died: After death it was said individuals, "...slept with his fathers." or was, "...gathered to their fathers." (Judg. 2:10, II Chron. 16:13, 34:28)

These references occur because there was a practice among the ancient cultures, Israel is related to, of laying a

body in a tomb and leaving it there until the body was nothing but dust and bones. Then, to save space and the cost of continually carving new tombs, the bones would be gathered into a box or carved out hollow, under the very shelf the body had been laying on. These holding places often contained the bones of family members who had already gone through the process, and the practice made room for a newly deceased family member to be laid on the shelf. This was truly being gathered, on a physical level, to or with your fathers; and it emphasizes the fact, even those people who were shown to be greatly loved of God - such as King David - were allowed to turn to dust. However, Paul tells us that's alright because we will not need our physical forms which die. We will be in a new form which is different than what we walk in now. "...we shall all be changed,..."; and by changed, Paul is talking in the sense of one taking off clothes and putting on new ones. Again, our bodies will not be transformed as Jesus' body was. Instead, we will put on a new body!

How will this happen? Verse 52 says it will be lightning fast! "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,..." When will it happen? "...at the last trump:..." This is a simple reference to those seven trumpets we see in Revelation. "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The king-

doms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Revelation 11:15 Now, we will come back to this point in a bit, but let's stay with Paul's words for the moment. Paul says, when that trumpet sounds, “...the dead shall be raised incorruptible,...” Which means those who have already died, from Adam and Eve all the way down to the last person who has died before that moment, out of those who have served The Lord, they will be born again!

Now, what happens to all those who are still putting one foot in front of the other? Paul says, “...and we shall be changed.” Because those who have died cannot hear Paul's words, nor read them from the Bible, the “we” refers to those (Again, only out of those who have served the Lord) who are still alive at the time of the last trump. Those who are alive will also not stay in their current physical forms just because they have not died as yet. They also will, at that moment, leave behind their current physical forms and be born again, into a new incorruptible body! To be clear, I do not believe there will be dead bodies left behind which will need to be buried, or rot. The most plausible thought is that our current forms will simply be shattered in the transition. Visually one might say, the person was there one moment and the next there was just a wisp of dust.

Paul talks about this issue again in

I Thessalonians, which brings us back to the point in Revelation 11:15. In I Thessalonians chapter 4, Paul also talks about the fact, we which are still alive at the moment of resurrection will not, in any way, prevent those who are already in the grave. In fact - and this is important since we are asking about time - Paul says in verses 16 & 17, “...the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:...” Again, how will this happen? In the twinkling of an eye! If all this happens in the twinkling of an eye, why would Paul bother to tell us those already dead in Christ will rise “first”? The answer is that he is covering the time issue of Jesus being The First-fruits, but not the first one to ever die.

As time steps one foot in front of the other, we see that people live and die. Then one day, Jesus came, gave His life, and rose from the dead. From there, people continued to live and die; but just as before, no one raises from the dead. Why have we not seen people permanently raised from the dead like Jesus was? Simply because we have not come to the one foot in front of the other point in the time sequence where that event takes place. However, do you remember what Jesus told the man on the cross next to Him? Jesus said, “To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” Luke 23:43 The true answer to the question we are driving at here lies in the fact death leaves you with no feet to put one in front of the

other; thus, those who are dead, are no longer constrained by time itself!

As we live, we live waiting for that moment when Christ will return, but if our physical form dies before we make it to that moment, there is simply no reason for us to have to wait anywhere! Because we are disconnected from that part of us which constrains us in this fishbowl of time, we get to jump over the events of this world and arrive at the resurrection! This is why Paul says the dead in Christ shall rise “first,” not because their graves will open and they will rise before those of us still alive can be changed, but because they have already left this world, the bodies which connected them to it, and the time it runs on. Paul puts it this way, because those who are already dead have already bypassed those of us who are alive and walking in this universe!

Now, I understand this may seem like a hard concept to grasp, and I know there are those who will never truly wrap their minds around the thought, but it's what we have been talking about all along. Time is no more difficult for God than death. God created life, but He also created our time sequence. He is not constrained by it, but He constrained us in it for a purpose. Even in heaven, we will live in this kind of one foot in front of the other lifestyle; and the fact God wants us to live this way is a main reason

it's necessary for us to have new bodies and a new place to walk in, after sin has brought a total end to the universe we now walk in. Humans simply are not built to hover around, lie in a grave, or do anything else, in a spirit only form.

In our next segment we will talk more about the why this is where true believers in God living on this side of Christ's Second Coming go upon death, and get into the subject of where those who fit into different categories of time and belief go, as well as why. Along the way, we will discuss doctrinal subjects related to the Second Coming of Christ such as the tribulation and what is termed “the rapture.” Until then, I pray you will grow in His assurance and comfort, as you prepare your life to meet The Lord at His return!

***Questions submitted to the Institute,
answered by Philip E. Busby.***

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The Bible As A Book continued from pg. 4

Moses, it was enough time for there to arise, "...a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph." Exodus 1:8

Now a very popular belief is there was a transition in the dynasty that ruled Egypt. Sometimes this was political and sometimes it was because of war. The idea there was a war in Egypt that changed the government from one which respected Joseph and therefore Israel, to a new one that came from far enough outside the circle of Egypt's core it did not know Joseph, is a plausible one. However, I think we should be conscious of the fact this theory is kind of one of those which feeds back and forth on itself. People like it because some scholars believe they have identified in the historical records the event that changed it all. However, one of the reasons this event is identified as the one to coincide with verse 8 of Exodus is because many people like the explanation of a change in dynasty. They like it because it seems to explain the sudden change in attitude toward Israel.

While all this may very well be the case, we should remember the economic situation of Israel being the only people not owned by the house of Pharaoh. The priest did not have to sell out during the famine, but that is because they already were servants of Pharaoh to a great enough extent they were already being cared for by the royal house. Israel was cared for because they were the direct family of Joseph. As the years passed, there was much more than a family living in Goshen. The seventy souls of Jacob who came into Egypt and were cared for by Joseph had turned into a nation of people, none of them, under the true rulership of Pharaoh. To any ruler this could be of great concern. Even today, governments of the world that call

themselves democracy have trouble with the feeling people are not under their direct control. It is simply the nature of government to fear that which it does not completely and evidently rule! When the words here tell us there arose a new king who didn't know Joseph, it may not be talking about a change war can bring or even a new dynasty. It may simply be referring to the idea the latest member of the dynasty was far enough down the family tree, he did not know the time of Joseph and/or Joseph's work personally enough to continue the great respect Egypt had for Joseph's family.

Any time a new king takes power there can always be questions as to whether or not he can hold on to that power. If there are other family members who believe they are more the rightful heirs to the throne, one could have difficulty. Just the simple fact there are other siblings can be a problem. If the people in general, or the core government, don't have confidence in the new leader or feel another is more on their side, there will be trouble. No time is this whole process more unstable than when there is a break with tradition and a grandson or someone further down the line is chosen, or the king has no son and must pick a brother, nephew, or the like. If the king fails to make a choice before he dies, which can often happen if a king dies unexpectedly or in battle, any number of people may claim the throne. This is why on many occasions throughout history the first thing a new king does is kill all those who may be considered a rival!

Any number of scenarios could have been what took place, and we should note there is no mention of the children of Israel going, or being called, to stand in battle with the Egyptians. Nor is there any indication Israel felt

threatened by an entirely new ruler in Egypt and made an attempt to run, or put together a defense against possible hostility, especially since they had been a part of the old administration. Instead, what we see is a king's maneuverings politically, talking to his people about what he sees as a potential problem for them and the stability of the kingdom. He notes the Israelites have outgrown them as a people, and now were possible rivals instead of friends. The king is making the point that they need to get ahead of this situation, and the way to do this is to begin diminishing the freedom Israel has enjoyed in Egypt. The argument was this would benefit the Egyptians directly, and ensure Israel was not able to prepare for war against them!

We should also note, the words here do not indicate Egypt put Israel into complete slavery overnight! In the beginning of this policy, I'm sure there was a certain amount of obligated pressure put on Israel. The excuse would have been that Israel was getting a free ride in the land: that while all the other people of Egypt, who already belonged to Pharaoh, were working for the good of the state, Israel was doing their own thing. This is why it says they put taskmasters over Israel. A kind of management was put in place that would assign Israel their national responsibilities. This is not to say the labor was not hard, but not as much of an immediate slavery as we often think. During this time of servitude to Pharaoh, he had them build cities that were meant to be monuments to Egypt, and hold the great wealth, which technically belonged to Pharaoh for the most part. However, as Israel did this work, the Egyptians found it did nothing to slow their rate of growth. On top of this, Israel was now gaining knowledge in all kinds of areas of expertise that had been only in the

hands of Egyptians prior to this. It may even have been obvious Israel was becoming the most educated group of people in the entire region. In any case, the Egyptians began to see their plan to weaken Israel had done just the opposite!

It was at that point the Egyptians picked up the pace at which Israel was to work. To do this, they also increased the bondage of Israel, by virtue of demanding they work longer days and in harder ways. Little by little this made the lives of the Israelites more and more about total servitude to Pharaoh. Along with this increase, Pharaoh also decided it was time to do something directly about what he saw as the base of the problem. Pharaoh ordered those who were in charge of taking care of births to literally begin using their position to decrease the strength of Israel's population by killing - upon birth - all the males born to Israel. What Pharaoh did not foresee was that the midwives feared God more than they feared Pharaoh. Thus, they went about their business ignoring Pharaoh's command.

As time passed, it became apparent to Pharaoh there were still male children among the Israelites where there should have been - at the very least - a decreased number. Pharaoh calls the midwives in to ask why this is still the case. By his language it would appear he is attempting to appeal to their national loyalty, by asking them why they would let Israel continue to grow by not following his order. Their answer shows they did not fear Pharaoh to the point of being able to commit direct murder, and they weren't afraid to admit specifically to it. Basically they tell Pharaoh it's bad enough to ask them not to do their job, or not do it correctly, in order to

allow a male child to die at birth. However, the idea of getting to the mother after she has already given birth and be the one who directly kills the child? That was not a line they were willing to cross! One would think this would have been a moment in time where Pharaoh would simply have had any midwife who refused to do the dirty work killed, or punished in some severe way. However, God directs Pharaoh away from that course and protects the midwives.

Instead of dealing with or through the midwives anymore, Pharaoh decides to show his true colors to all the land by putting out a commandment that made it the responsibility of all the people to undertake this gruesome task of killing the male children of Israel. He essentially makes it illegal for any of the Israelites to have a male child; and thus, when they do, it is the responsibility of every good citizen to dispose of that child. He even gives a way to dispose of the child, which no doubt he believed would be more palatable to everyone, especially those who could not bring themselves to kill a child directly with their own hands as the midwives refused to do. Pharaoh's commandment was that the male children be thrown in the river. This not only gave more of an, out of sight, out of mind approach to killing a child, but a way to dispose of the body as Egypt was/is inhabited by water dwelling carnivores, such as the crocodile.

After this decree by Pharaoh, we just can't be sure how many children were murdered. Nor can we know for sure just how many people obeyed or disobeyed the order. However, what Pharaoh knew was there were at least some in his society who would not hesitate to take it up and enforce it. By making it more of a public responsibility, he ensured he

was not just leaving this task in the hands of a few, who may or may not have the stomach or lack of conscience to carry through. By making it a situation where it was out in the open, he gave the chance for those who would follow the order with zeal the opportunity to do more than just kill a newborn. Any infant male among the Israelites could be taken from its parents and killed under the guise it was the order of Pharaoh to do so. Fear was more of the objective. Just how long this went on and how much violence against the Israelites in general this created we don't know. However, there can be no doubt the overall effect on Israel had to be that they simply did what they could to refrain from having children for the most part. This is exactly what Pharaoh hoped for, but it also caused Israel to separate themselves from Egyptian society, even bringing about a desire to escape the land!

Now, as all this began to transpire, there was a certain man from the tribe of Levi who married a woman also from that tribe. They would have two sons and a daughter. One of those sons would be born during the time when, and in a place where Pharaoh's command to kill the male children was of high threat. Somehow the mother was able to hide the child in a way that kept him safe for three whole months. However, children of that age are not quiet. Because she felt she could not hide him in the way she had been for his first three months, she devised a new scheme to keep him as best she could. Her answer was quite ingenious, as she decided to make a basket - of sorts - out of the most waterproof materials she knew of, which was the bulrush plants that grew along the river. She then did what she could to make it waterproof by using other natural materials. She placed her baby inside this ark of safety, and contrary to many of the depictions of this, even she did not

place it in the river, but in the tall plants which grew thick along the edge. This ark would spare the child from water that might come up from the river, and any possible rain or other forms of moisture that would be in that environment. The child was in minimal danger, and he could be noisy, because anyone wanting to follow Pharaoh's order, who might hear the wailing of a child near the river, would assume it was of a child who had already been thrown in. It was likely they would just wait for nature to take its course and think nothing more.

The mother would also leave her daughter, who was in no danger because she was older and a girl, to stay a distance away and keep an eye on the child so anything that happened to the him could be known. It would seem it did not take long for things to develop. It turned out the child had been placed in the very spot Pharaoh's daughter was to come down and wash herself in the river. As she was there, her female servants walked along the bank, and as she was in the water she noticed the ark among the plants at the side of the river. Upon doing so, she had her maid come over along the bank and retrieve the ark so she could see what it was. When Pharaoh's daughter opened the ark, she found the child inside. Of course, she was not unaware of the circumstances, and she immediately perceived the reason the child was there and to what people he belonged!

The child's sister showed she had some brains of her own. In watching these events transpire, she surmised Pharaoh's daughter was not going to do the child harm, but be his protector. Thus, she seizes the moment and approaches Pharaoh's daughter with an offer of assistance, which any good servant of the

king would do! She asks, as if it's just a foregone conclusion it would eventually be done, if Pharaoh's daughter would like her to go and get a proper caregiver from among Israel to do the service of caring for the child? Pharaoh's daughter instructs Miriam to do exactly that; and of course, Miriam goes to get her mother. In giving the child to its mother, Pharaoh's daughter commands the mother become her direct hired servant and take the child to nurse and care for it!

Now, all this would have, very much so, been directed by the hand of God, because no one could have known for sure what direction all this might have taken. However, in it all, one has to wonder just how much of the timing and placement of everything may have been intentional on the part of the mother. It also would certainly seem there is little chance Pharaoh's daughter was not aware of the fact the helpful Israelite girl was no hap-penstance, nor that the nurse she went and found was in all likelihood the child's rightful mother. Pharaoh's daughter would name the child Moses; and in spite of what anyone did or did not know, the child was not only spared but given the chance to be raised knowing his people. Best of all, the chosen people of God, once again, had a man on the inside of the Egyptian royal court!

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