

02-Understanding Ancient Faiths to Understand Exodus

Exodus (Names) – Changing the World
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Exodus Assumptions

- We looked at the Ancient World, now we will look at the whys
- The “whys” that explain Exodus
 - Why Egypt?
 - Why at that time?
 - Why in the manner demonstrated in Exodus?

Underlying Assumptions

- These assumptions are my own but seem necessary to understand the role of the individual and government
 - There is NO government (society) without individuals
 - Individual and/or collective actions affect society
 - There is a tension between government and individuals for control that is accentuated in the modern age
 - Societal values are rooted in and reflected by its religion

My Philosophy of Governments

- Antediluvian Governments – Pattern (Judah & Israel)
 - Abel and Seth – Government (?) Aspects mirrored by Cain
 - Cain – Government began, enforced by nephilim (Gen 4:16-17)
 - Built first towns/cities which implied
 - Organized society requiring laws
 - Enforcement – Internal, External
 - Religion (System of values) – Here, Hereafter
 - Expansion – Territory for growing population

My Philosophy of Governments

- Postdiluvian Governments (Empires)
 - Root Government – Babel/Nimrod
 - First Gen [Copper Age] – Akkadian/Sargon
 - Second Gen [Pivotal Age, Bronze Age] – Hatti, Mitanni
 - Third Gen [Axial Age, Iron Age] – Greece, Persia
 - Fourth Gen (Modern Age) – Christ to today
- Egypt – **only** kingdom to span three generations

Babel – Nimrod

Cain

- Murderer
- Developer of society
- Society anti-God
- Worship a *higher* god to become basis of all false postdiluvian beliefs

Nimrod

- Killer
- Developer of society
- Society anti-God
- Worship forms basis for Gnosticism worshipping *higher* god for all men

Root Govt Distinctives

- Ruler is:
 - Embodiment of god on earth to reach spiritual god
 - Ruler is the intercessor for salvation of society via rituals
- Nimrod & wife were gods leading society to *spiritual god* to avoid severe consequences such as worldwide destruction (Flood, global warming) and spiritual damnation (accepting the error of God's salvation)



Aftermath of Babel

These are the major people groups after God intervened
Nimrod follows receding waters to build Nineveh, Babylon

Copper Age Distinctives

- Ruler is society - One is intimately linked to the other
- Ruler is god acting as mediator between society and god(s) - maintaining the harmony for societal peace
- Priestly caste assists ruler in his godly duties
- Warrior caste assists ruler in re-unifying man under "one" society, in obedience to god(s) to obtain salvation



Sargon Follows Nimrod's Path

Sargon conquers Mesopotamia
 Egypt (Old Kingdom) is isolated
 Egypt is building the Pyramids & conquering southward along the Nile River

Bronze Age Distinctives

- Ruler is the agent of the god(s) but not a god himself
- Ruler is preserver of the *truth* of the society (synonymous with religion) against those who would destroy its truth
- Priestly caste guide ruler (empire) in understanding its truth and worshiping its god(s)
- Warrior caste preserves empire from outside contamination while extending its "truth" over others (sword evangelism)



Early Bronze Age Cultures

Kingdoms extending, expanding
 Fighting for "truth" & control
 Egypt extends control into Levant
 Abraham migrates in this period



Late Bronze Age Kingdoms

Greece: Minoan culture gives way to Mycenaean culture
 Mycenaean destruction of Troy begins the decline of these kingdoms
 These empires cannot effectively concentration power and control societies...evolution

Axial/Iron Age Distinctives

- Same principles as the Bronze Age with these additional points
- Raising up of bearers of truth (prophets) outside the traditional governmental and priestly castes
- Emphasis on individual morality to influence overall morality of society - Unknown concept before Exodus

Birth of Truth Apart from Govt

- Four major forms of The Truth developed
 - Zoroastrianism - Persia
 - Hinduism - India
 - Buddhism - India
 - Confucianism & Daoism - China
 - Hellenism (Gnosticism) - Greece
- These faiths preserved the old ways in new ways
- Hellenism combined the old ways into a new way

Hellenism – Synthesis of Faiths

- Pythagoras traveled to all the Axial kingdoms, except China, synthesizing a truth system
 - Secular form advanced by Socrates and continued by Plato (some modifications by Aristotle & others) becoming the basis of Western culture – the “birth” of *democracy*
 - Mystic forms became the “mystery religions” of the Bible



Axial Faiths & Kingdoms

Pythagoras could easily have traveled to the contiguous realms
 He began the merging of their faiths into one faith - Gnosticism
 This contaminated Judaism and Christendom
 This will be the unifier of all faiths

What Caused These Faiths?



- Persia - Zoroaster
- India
 - Hinduism
 - Buddhism
- China
 - Confucius
 - Lao Tzu
- Greece - Plato

Their Origins Trace to Egypt



- This graphic illustrates God's work with Egypt and the Hebrews formed the foundation that became today's world
- Without the events in Exodus, none of this would have occurred

Who Influenced Whom?

- Since the beginning of the Modern philosophical era, Renaissance to today, every effort has been made to show how the Hebrews copied from other cultures to form *their* vision of God and oppress others (Demiurge)
- The reality is quite the opposite; God, through Israel, has influenced all the nations and revealed Himself while they rejected the truth and changed it into the Lie (Ro 1:18-23 ESV; 2Th 2:11TV)

The Word – Source of ALL Truth

- God is the major influencer through the events of Exodus in preparing people to receive the truth of the Gospel
 - Rituals via the ruler were the means of societal harmony
 - Axial Age is about individual morality influencing society, an idea began by God with Israel, influencing the major cultures
 - The slow transition to personal morality and individual salvation prepared men everywhere to understand and receive the Gospel message when it came to them

I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the *elementary principles of the world*. But when the **fullness of time had come**, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

(Galatians 4:1-7 ESVST)

