

Exodus 1:1-5 HCSB These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob; each came with his family: (2) Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah; (3) Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin; (4) Dan and Naphtali; Gad and Asher. (5) The total number of Jacob's descendants was 70; Joseph was already in Egypt.

These are the names. It does not matter how large a family Yahweh Abba has, He will always know and love each individual. We are never lost in the shuffle, never faceless and never unknown.

It matters not the least whether we are in Canaan, our homeland, or out wandering about with the Lowlanders in Egypt. He tracks us, sees us, and loves us; He has a plan for us.

Total number of Jacob's descendants. Isn't it odd how carefully Hashem keeps count? Of course, this family will end up birthing King David and the Mashiach', but God also tracks the hairs on our head,¹ traces our wandering paths and records our tears in heaven.² God is very concerned about families. Anything that threatens a family threatens the foundation of human society. He even considers a father who, out of moral failure, fails to provide appropriately for his family to be worse than an infidel!³ We should grant honor to our parents and allow filial duty to hold great weight in our lives.⁴ Parents should take care to raise their children in the Way⁵ and ensure that their methods do not exasperate the children⁶ (whether by inconsistent practices, bullying or spoiling) so that each generation will continue to follow the Lord and obey His mitzvot.⁷

In Egypt. We are just like this family. They too were foreigners sojourning in a strange land.

Where they worshipped the one true God, the Egyptians worshipped many.

Where they worshipped an invisible God, theirs were all idolatrous manifestations.

Where they were by nature and habit nomads, the Egyptians (largely formed by the consistent rise and fall of the Nile river) were a very rooted civilization.

Where they did not place much value in huge buildings and ostentatious wealth, the Egyptians were profligate in the construction of vast cities and pyramids.

Where they were focused on the cycles of life, the Egyptian civilization was very much concerned about death.

Brothers and sisters, we too are sojourning in Egypt.⁸ Let us not forget that this world is not our home. We are Ezech', citizens of a high land. If we begin to depend too much on it, this world's culture and civilization will soon attempt to enslave us. Let us firmly retain in the forefront of our minds the Lord's promise that He has made us a nation of royal priests⁹. We hold the keys to the kingdom of heaven, and we hold real authority in both heaven and earth.¹⁰ Let us consider the blandishments of this doomed world to be so much dung, and fling ourselves wholeheartedly into the pursuit of Christ-likeness.¹¹

¹ Matthew 10:30

² Psalm 56:8

³ 1 Timothy 5:8

⁴ Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16; Malachi 1:6; Matthew 15:4; 19:19; Mark 7:10; 10:19; Luke 18:20; John 8:49; Ephesians 6:12

⁵ Exodus 12:25-27; 13:14-15;

⁶ Genesis 31:14-15; Ephesians 6:4

⁷ Genesis 18:19; Deuteronomy 4:9

⁸ Hebrews 11:9-10, 13

⁹ 1 Peter 2:9

¹⁰ Matthew 16:19; 18:18

¹¹ Philippians 3:8