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Tsiyon News

Tsiyon Messianic Radio Newsletter - Vol 9.08 - 12/28/6013 TAM - 02/28/14 AD



Infidelity Flash Point

Exodus 32

Infidelity Flash Point



When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we don't know what has become of him."
Shemot / Exodus 32:1

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From Eliyahu

A love relationship requires something more than love alone. It also requires trust. The marriage covenant normally assumes the love of the parties for each other. The marriage covenant is really more about trust, assuring each marriage partner of the full commitment of the other to the core requirements of the marriage. Once the two enter into the marriage covenant together, good intentions on the part of both parties are usually assumed, which facilitates the healthy and enjoyable relationship that makes for a happy and productive life together.

But what happens in the case of infidelity to the marriage covenant on the part of one of the parties? In that case trust is broken, and harmony quickly gives way to emotional devastation, anger, bitterness, and a crisis that throws the future of the entire relationship into doubt. This is a terrible experience in any marriage, but when this scenario occurred in the marriage between YHWH and Israel at Sinai, before the honeymoon was even over, it brought with it a flash point of repercussions so serious the entire nation could have been lost. This is the story of the Golden Calf Affair, found in Exodus 32. Don't miss it - it's the subject of our latest Midrash.

Blessings and Shalom!

Eliyahu ben David
www.tsiyon.org

Apis the Bull



Apis in the Louvre Museum

Did Israel sacrifice their children to this idol?

This painting depicts a small bronze statue which was a votive offering and was an expression of devotion from the worshipper who was hoping for a blessing. The sun disk between the horns represent divinity. The ancient Egyptians believed that Apis, the sacred bull of Memphis was a manifestation of Ptah upon the earth.

Was Apis the Golden Calf of the Exodus?

Whenever an Apis bull died in Memphis it was embalmed and mummified. Each bull had its own huge sarcophagus and its birth and death were recorded, carved onto the walls.

After the Israelites were delivered from Egypt, Moses came down from the mountain and found Aaron had set up a golden calf or young bull, that the people might worship God in this form. When the northern kingdom of Israel divided from their brothers in the south, Jeroboam introduced bull worship and set up two idols, one at Bethel and the other at Dan.

"And all the people brake off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them unto Aaron. And he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." - Exodus 32:3,4

The Apis Bull god discovery is important in the study of Biblical Archaeology. It confirms that bull/calf worship was prevalent in the ancient Near East and these little statues were the idols used in ancient Israel.

"Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan." - 1 Kings 12:28-29



Bronze figure of Apis, the sacred bull.

Bronze figure of Apis, the sacred bull
From Lower Egypt
Late Period, about 600 BC
Length: 16 cm
Width: 6.13 cm
Height: 20.5 cm
Department of Ancient Egypt and Sudan (study collection)
Item: EA 37448
Location: British Museum, London

British Museum Excerpt

An offering to Ptah

Many animals play a part in the religious life of ancient Egypt. The sacred bull of Apis is one of the best known. The Apis bull had a cult centre at Memphis and was seen by the Egyptians as one of the manifestations on earth of the god Ptah and Osiris.

When an Apis bull died, it was embalmed. The large tables used for embalming the bulls have survived near the modern centre of Memphis. The mummified bull was buried at Saqqara. From the New Kingdom (1550-1070 BC) onwards, burials took place at the Serapeum, a maze of large underground caverns in the desert. Each bull had its own huge sarcophagus, which was placed in one of these underground chambers. The dates of each bull's birth and death were recorded, and the information has often survived, carved on stone stelae set into the walls of the burial place.

A prospective new Apis bull was required to have a white crescent on one side of its body or a white triangle on its forehead, signifying its unique character and its acceptance by the gods. Once the Apis bull was chosen, its mother was also honoured, and buried in catacombs at Saqqara set aside for the purpose.

This bronze statuette is a votive offering, presented to the god as an expression of devotion, with the hope that the god would look kindly on the donor. The statuette might have been deposited in the Serapeum and the sun disc and uraeus on the bull's head show the divinity of the animal.

"Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Bethel, and the other put he in Dan." - 1 Kings 12:28-29

*Ye shall make you no **idols** nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up [any] image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I [am] the LORD your God. Leviticus 26:1*

*But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their **idols** which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils. And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the **idols** of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. Psalms 106:35-38*



Egyptian King Kneeling Before the Apis Bull

Apis in Egyptian mythology

"In Egyptian mythology, Apis or Hapis (alternatively spelt Hapi-ankh), was a bull-deity worshipped in the Memphis region.

According to Manetho, his worship was instituted by Kaiechos of the Second Dynasty. Hape (Apis) is named on very early monuments, but little is known of the divine animal before the New Kingdom. Ceremonial burials of bulls indicate that ritual sacrifice was part of the worship of the early cow deities and a bull might represent a king who became a deity after death. He was entitled "the renewal of the life" of the Memphite god Ptah: but after death he became Osorapis, i.e. the Osiris Apis, just as dead humans were assimilated to Osiris, the king of the underworld. This Osorapis was identified with the Hellenistic Serapis, and may well be identical with him. Greek writers make the Apis an incarnation of Osiris, ignoring the connection with Ptah.

Apis was the most important of all the sacred animals in Egypt, and, as with the others, its importance increased as time went on. Greek and Roman authors have much to say about Apis, the marks by which the black bull-calf was recognized, the manner of his conception by a ray from heaven, his house at Memphis with court for disporting himself, the mode of prognostication from his actions, the mourning at his death, his costly burial, and the rejoicings throughout the country when a new Apis was found. Mariette's excavation of the Serapeum at Memphis revealed the tombs of over sixty animals, ranging from the time of Amenophis III to that of Ptolemy Alexander. At first each animal was buried in a separate tomb with a chapel built above it. Khamuis, the priestly son of Ramesses II (c. 1300 B.C.), excavated a great gallery to be lined with the tomb chambers; another similar gallery was added by Psammetichus I. The careful statement of the ages of the animals in the later instances, with the regnal dates for their birth, enthronization, and death have thrown much light on the chronology from the Twenty-second dynasty onwards. The name of the mother-cow and the place of birth often are recorded. The sarcophagi are of immense size, and the burial must have entailed enormous expense. It is therefore remarkable that the priests contrived to bury one of the animals in the fourth year of Cambyses." (Wikipedia - Apis (Egyptian mythology))

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