

XXX. THE THEBAN REVOLT.

THE Shepherd Kings built their capital city at Av-ar'is, in the Delta, and it was a great city, and strongly fortified; with room for over two hundred thousand households, and covering over eight square miles of land. Although the Cushites completely subjugated Lower Egypt; from Upper Egypt they received loyalty and tribute; and were there considered overlords. Native Egyptian princes ruled Upper Egypt, under the eye of the Cushites, from their capital city at Thebes (theebz).

Over time, the princes of Thebes had acquired honor, arms, expert leaders, and wealth, due to the successful campaigns they had undertaken against the E-thi-o'pi-ans (who were themselves a branch of Cushites) to their south. The Cushite Pharaoh, who reigned in the Delta, must have felt either threatened, or jealous, of the growing power of the The'bans; for he sent delegations to the Theban court, each one containing more humiliating demands of absolute obeisance than the last. Now the Theban prince, whose name at this juncture was Ra-sek'en-en, had not transgressed his fidelity to his overlord in any way, if his own account of the matter can be believed.

Thus the Thebans, in silence and in great dismay, did not know how to answer the Cushite delegation, for good or ill; for rebellion was not their aim, nor absolute slavery. However, they were driven to take up arms against the Shepherd Kings at last.

At first Rasekenen was only able to match the armies of the Cushites, battle for battle; but soon he began to gain on them. City after city, and district after district, was slowly freed from the Cushite yoke, until nothing remained to them but their capital city of Avaris in the Delta.

In the course of these wars, Rasekenen was killed, but his son Ka-mo'sis assumed the lordship of Thebes, and the leadership of the Theban rebellion. He was able to accomplish little, however, for he too was killed shortly thereafter; and his brother, A-mo'sis, took up the Egyptian cause.

Amosis raised the standard of national independence, and sent a call to arms to all parts of Egypt. He was able to field an army of four hundred and eighty thousand men, with which he mounted a new assault on Avaris. He also built a fleet of ships at Thebes, which he sailed down the Nile to aid in this assault; for Avaris was surrounded by moats in some places, and lagoons in others, and Amosis perceived that a combined attack by both land and sea might produce the desired result.

However, Avaris was strongly fortified, and neither the city nor the Cushites succumbed to this first attack. Four more assaults, in fact, were mounted against the capital of the Shepherd Kings; and at last the defenders were wearied out; and being seized by a panic, they hastily made terms; and left Egypt.

But Amosis, not trusting them to honor their word, or to settle anywhere nearby to his borders, lest they be tempted again to invade the country, pursued them as far as southern Palestine. The Cushites turned and gave battle about twenty miles south and west of Beersheba, where Isaac and Jacob pitched their tents.

Amosis won the victory in this battle with a great slaughter, and the Cushites suffered such a humiliating defeat that they did not dare advance against Egypt again. The survivors, Josephus tells us, were the first to build Jerusalem.



XXXI. JOSEPH IN EGYPT.

JOSEPH, as you have heard, came into Egypt as a slave (1728 BC), probably after the expulsion of the Shepherd Kings from the land. The Bible does not tell us the names of the Pharaohs who reigned while Joseph was there, but scholars, who have made these questions their life's study, believe it must have been one of the Pharaohs of Amosis' family. The Egyptian historians tell us that Amosis' family, or dynasty, ruled for two hundred and fifty years following the expulsion of the Cushites from Egypt.

Now that the native Egyptians were again ruling in their land instead of the Shepherd Kings, they did not return to the simple way of life which had previously been theirs. Instead, they retained all the kingship, court, manner, customs, and religion which the Shepherd Kings had introduced among them, for by long practice they did not know any other way.

Pot'i-phar, the captain of Pharaoh's guard, purchased Joseph from the Ishmaelite merchants. Now you must not imagine that "Potiphar" was the man's name, for this was a common title of honor, which meant, "noble of Pharaoh." As this man had a high position in Pharaoh's court, the house and lands which Joseph entered as a slave were great and well-appointed, requiring many slaves to maintain.

Thus Joseph began a new chapter of his life. He did not, however, spend his time lamenting his change of fortune, but rather applied himself so faithfully and so well in