DO YOU KNOW THE TRUE GOD?

When the Lord first brought the Israelites out of Egypt, He did not find them perfect as He desired. This was because during their time in Egypt, there was no proper system for worshiping the true God (Yahweh). The Israelites had only a shallow knowledge of the God of Abraham. They carried vague traditions — that long ago, God appeared to their father Abraham and made many promises (Genesis 12:1-3). They had heard how God brought famine on the land and revealed future events to Joseph (Genesis 41), but they didn’t fully understand the nature or holiness of God. They only knew He was powerful and would rescue them from trouble.

As the Israelites lived for generations in Egypt without fresh revelation, their understanding blurred. They began to think of the God of Jacob as one of many gods, like the Egyptian pantheon (Exodus 32:1-4). They assumed that God could be represented by idols, as the Egyptians did. Observing that Egyptians sacrificed to their idols yet prospered, they wrongly concluded the God of Israel was similar — sacrifices could be offered without personal holiness or moral transformation.

This misunderstanding was common in ancient times. People often interpret God according to their cultural surroundings. For example, a visitor might expect a family to behave like their own but be surprised when customs differ. The Israelites' mindset was similarly shaped by Egyptian culture and false religious practices.

God knew their hearts were not yet ready. This is why He led them through the wilderness for 40 years before entering the Promised Land (Numbers 14:33-34). The wilderness was a place of testing, teaching, and revelation (Deuteronomy 8:2). It was there God gave the Law — the Ten Commandments and other instructions — to reveal His holiness and character (Exodus 20).

After their miraculous deliverance from Egypt (Exodus 12), the Israelites quickly began to complain (Exodus 15-17). Why? Because they did not yet understand that God is holy and hates rebellion and grumbling (Isaiah 1:13-17). They treated Him like Egyptian gods — distant and powerless to respond to complaints.

They even made a golden calf to worship (Exodus 32), an act of idolatry showing their failure to grasp God's holiness and exclusivity. They thought God could fail them, so they sought alternatives.

Their sins angered God because they showed ignorance of His true nature. They misunderstood that God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is not just another god, but the one true, sovereign, holy God (Deuteronomy 6:4).

It took a long time for Israel to learn this. When God gave them the Law, He declared Himself to be the only God worthy of worship and called His people to be holy as He is holy (Leviticus 11:44-45, ESV: “For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy.”). This call to holiness is central to the covenant relationship — God’s people must reflect His character.

Israel’s gradual understanding shows us how important revelation and obedience are in truly knowing God.

Understanding God in the New Testament

The New Testament continues this call to holiness. Believers are urged to prepare their minds, be self-controlled, and set their hope fully on Christ’s grace (1 Peter 1:13-17, ESV). They must not

return to former ignorance or worldly desires but be holy in all conduct, because God who calls is holy.

Paul also warns in Romans 12:1-2 (ESV) to offer ourselves as living sacrifices and not be conformed to this world but transformed by the renewal of our minds, that we may discern God’s will.

Practical Application

You cannot say you are delivered from sin yet continue in idolatry, immorality, drunkenness, or blasphemy (Galatians 5:19-21, ESV). True conversion involves repentance and holiness (Hebrews 12:14, ESV: “Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord”).

Worldly customs like immodest dress, obsession with appearance, and behaviors rooted in pagan or worldly culture contradict the holiness God requires (1 Timothy 2:9-10).

A Call to Repentance and Faith

If you want to walk with God, repent and seek true understanding. God cares about both spirit and conduct (James 2:14-26). Holiness is not optional for His followers.

Baptism by immersion in Jesus' name is essential as a public declaration of your faith and part of your salvation journey (Acts 2:38, ESV).

In Summary

- God is the one true, holy God, distinct from all false gods.
- His people must reflect His holiness.
- Knowing God requires both faith and obedience.
- The Christian life is a journey of transformation toward holiness.

Prayer

May you come to truly know the God of Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob — the Holy One who calls you to holiness and eternal life through Jesus Christ.

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