

Today, the world often looks at Africa and notices two things: its poverty and its deep-rooted faith. Africa is unique—no other continent has such a large population still living with a strong belief in God.

To understand why Africa is the way it is, we must look at the biblical perspective. This will help us see where we, as Africans, should stand in faith and purpose.

1. Misunderstanding African Poverty

Many people who do not know God or read the Bible assume African poverty comes from laziness or ignorance. But the truth is, there are communities elsewhere with people even less industrious, yet they enjoy far greater prosperity.

Historically, Africa was a cradle of civilization. The Bible and history confirm this. For example, the pyramids in Egypt and Ethiopia were built with advanced knowledge that remains unmatched today. This proves that Africans are not inherently ignorant.

2. Biblical Explanation for Africa's Suffering

The Bible shows that God allowed Africa to experience weakness and oppression because of its peoples' worship of false gods, idols, witchcraft, and divination. Isaiah 19 and Ezekiel 29 describe this.

Isaiah 19:3 (NIV) - *"The spirit of the Egyptians within them will become powerless; and I will hand the Egyptians over to a cruel master, and a mighty king will rule over them," declares the LORD.*

When the Bible mentions Egypt, it often represents the African continent as a whole.

Ezekiel 29:12-15 (NIV) - *"I will make the land of Egypt desolate among devastated lands; and her cities will lie desolate forty years... At the end of forty years I will gather the Egyptians from the nations where they were scattered. I will restore the fortunes of Egypt and bring them back to the land of Pathros, the land of their origin. There they will be a lowly kingdom. It will be the lowest of the kingdoms; it will never again exalt itself above the nations. I will make them*

so few that they will never rule over the nations again.”

This prophecy was fulfilled: Africa experienced slavery and colonization for centuries, roughly 400 years, echoing Israel's time in Egypt. God allowed Africa to be “less than other nations” to accomplish a spiritual purpose.

3. Why God Allowed This

God did not act out of hatred or revenge. He acted to correct and redirect. Africa had turned to idols, magic, witchcraft, and divination (Isaiah 19:3), relying on things that cannot save. God deliberately weakened them so they would turn to Him.

Even today, remnants of witchcraft remain. Imagine if God had not intervened—Africa might have reached technological heights, but the spiritual deception would have been disastrous.

God's discipline was meant to bring people back to Him, and it has borne fruit. Today, God's grace is evident in Africa. Many people sincerely seek Him. The experience of slavery and colonization prompted Africans to seek the true God.

Isaiah 19:20-25 (NIV) -

“It will be a sign and witness to the LORD Almighty in the land of Egypt. When they cry to the LORD because of their oppressors, He will send them a Savior and defender, and He will rescue them.

The LORD will be known by Egypt, and the Egyptians will know the LORD on that day. They will worship with sacrifices and offerings, and they will make vows to the LORD and keep them.

The LORD will strike Egypt and heal it; they will turn to the LORD, and He will respond to their pleas and heal them.

In that day Israel will be a third partner with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth, for the LORD Almighty has blessed them, saying, ‘Bless my people Egypt; bless Assyria, my handiwork; and bless Israel, my inheritance.’”

Verse 21 confirms Africans will worship God, offer sacrifices, and be healed. Verse 25 declares: “Bless my people Egypt.”

4. Poverty Produces Faith

African poverty was allowed so people would return to God. Suffering has produced spiritual wealth:

James 2:5 (ESV) - *“Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?”*

God has placed us in these circumstances to test and develop our faith. Some ignore His voice, neglecting the opportunity to dedicate their lives to Jesus. Africa is a land where the gospel is preached openly, yet many take it for granted.

5. Grace Is Temporary

Even this grace will not last forever. The Bible predicts that spiritual favor will eventually return to Israel. Then, nations that once embraced paganism may unite with the Antichrist in the final battle of Armageddon. Grace is temporary, like the sun rising and setting.

But those who have received the grace to believe in Jesus Christ will be spared. Those who cling to worldly desires, continue idol worship, or mock the gospel risk God’s judgment.

We live in perilous times, and the world is changing daily. Judgment could come at any moment. Are you ready? The answer lies in your heart.

Maranatha

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