

**BY-PATHS OF BIBLE KNOWLEDGE,  
VIII. THE DWELLERS ON THE NILE, OR,  
CHAPTERS ON THE LIFE LITERATURE  
HISTORY AND CUSTOMS OF THE  
ANCIENT EGYPTIANS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649406791

By-Paths of Bible Knowledge, VIII. The Dwellers on the Nile, or, Chapters on the Life Literature History and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians by E. A. Wallis Budge

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**E. A. WALLIS BUDGE**

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By-Paths of Bible Knowledge.

VIII.

# THE DWELLERS ON THE NILE

OR

## CHAPTERS ON THE LIFE LITERATURE HISTORY AND CUSTOMS OF THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.

*most  
revised  
by Thompson*  
BY  
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SECOND EDITION.

THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,

55, PATERNOSTER ROW; 63, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD;  
AND 154, PICCADILLY.

1888.

Isaiah  
7692  
Ref. st.  
not. 22-1422  
gen. felt.

And the spirit of Egypt shall fail in the midst thereof ; and I will destroy the counsel thereof : and they shall seek to the idols, and to the charmers, and to them that have familiar spirits, and to the wizards.

And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up.

And they shall turn the rivers far away ; and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up : the reeds and flags shall wither.

The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks, shall wither, be driven away, and be no more.

The fishers also shall mourn, and all they that cast angle into the brooks shall lament, and they that spread nets upon the waters shall languish.

Moreover they that work in fine flax, and they that weave networks, shall be confounded.

And they shall be broken in the purposes thereof, all that make sluices and ponds for fish.

Surely the Princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish : how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings ?

The Princes of Zoan are become fools, the Princes of Noph are deceived.

*Isaiah xix.*

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## INTRODUCTION.



THE land of Egypt, its people and their history, have been the subjects of the most earnest enquiry both in ancient and modern times. The reason is not far to seek, for apart from its importance to the philologist and profane historian, the nation claims the attention of every Bible reader and student, since it was contemporary with Abraham, and its land was the cradle of the Jewish nation. When the patriarch Abraham found a famine in Canaan, he sought food and life in the land of the Pharaohs; and after Joseph had become 'the ruler of the land,' Jacob journeyed thither that his posterity might fill the measure of their four hundred (or four hundred and thirty) years' captivity. The Jews entered the land 'when they were but a few men in number,' they went out by myriads; they went in as visitors dependent on the good favour of the Pharaoh, they went out with triumph. Egypt was a place of refuge alike for the founder of the race, for the families of the patriarchs, and for their mighty Descendant, 'The Giver of Life,' Who with His mother departed by night into Egypt.

The influence of the Egyptians upon the Jews was

marked and powerful, and there can be no doubt that living for so long a time in a land where civilization had been known for thousands of years, where learning in all its branches was studied and cultivated, and where there was a luxurious and polished system of life, with its magnificent temples and buildings and worship, must have influenced Israel in its infancy for good and for bad. In a good way the influence would show itself by the Jews gathering to themselves some of the learning and wisdom for which the Egyptians were famed among the nations around. The Egyptian education of Moses was never forgotten by the posterity of Abraham, for the martyr Stephen in his dying speech remembered that Moses 'was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.' Much else too would they learn of the arts of the Egyptians: the dyeing of skins, the weaving of cloth, the cutting of precious stones, and the manufacture of 'fine twined linen wrought with needlework,' etc. All this knowledge was put to a glorious use later on in the making of the Tabernacle and the instruments for its service. The whole description of the Tabernacle in Exodus is full of allusions to Egyptian customs: the strict rules for the purifying of the priests, the ephod of the high-priest, the pomegranate decoration of the hem of his robe, his breast-plate and his mitre, all had their counterpart among the Egyptians. And not only was the knowledge gained from the Egyptians sanctified to the service of the Lord, but the mirrors which the Israelitish women possessed, and which had been brought by them