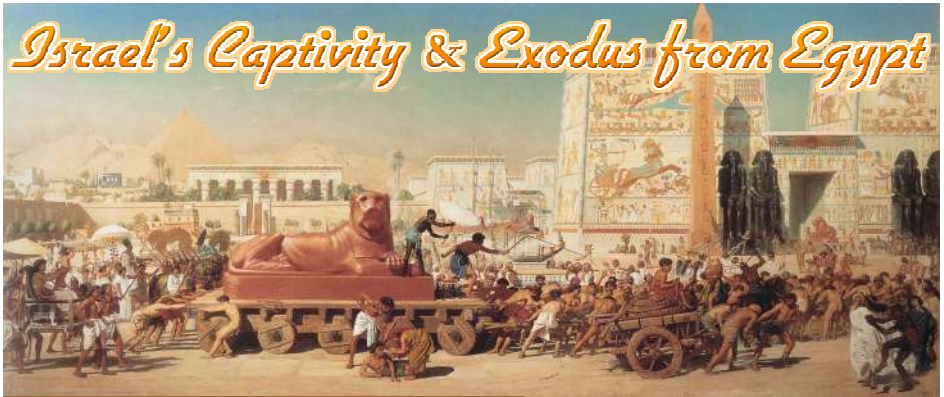


ANCIENT ISRAEL IN EGYPT



The Evidence Validates Scripture

Israel's Captivity & Exodus from Egypt



Definition

Ramesses (ræ'mɛsɪz or ræmɛsɪz), also commonly spelled Rameses or Ramses (ræmɛsɛs, ræmɛsɛs, or ræm-sɪz), is the name conventionally given in English transliteration to 11 Egyptian Pharaohs of the later New Kingdom period. Other variants of the name include Ramose and Paramessu; these various spellings could be used to refer to the same person.

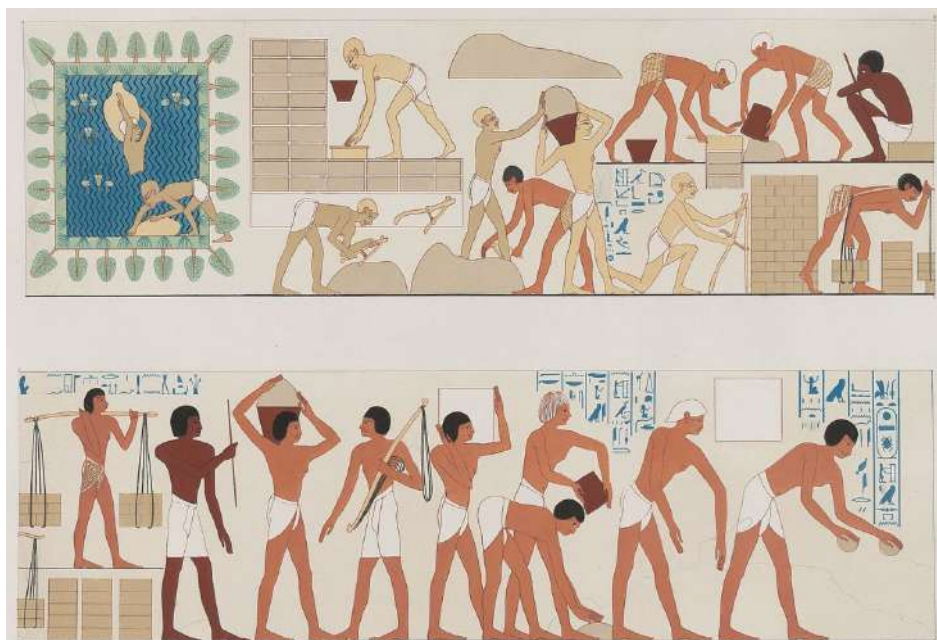
The various forms are based on the Greek (Ραμεσσης: Ramessus), Latin (Ramesses), all based on the Ancient Egyptian form: rꜥ-ms-sw "Ra [is] the one who gave birth [to] him".

The name (Raʿamses, Raʿmeses) occurs in the Hebrew Bible, not as the name of a king but rather the name of one of the two cities built for the Pharaoh of the oppression by the forced labor of the Israelites (Exodus 1:11), the other such city being Pithom. Thus, the name was known to Jews and Christians long before the advent of modern Egyptology. The city is now commonly identified as Pi-Ramesses (House of Ramesses), the new capital founded by Ramesses II.

The convention of numbering kings who had the same name did not exist in Ancient Egypt. The numbers of the various pharaohs called Rameses were provided by modern scholars.

Largely, mainstream scholars dismiss the events found in the book of Exodus. They say there isn't any archaeological evidence for an Exodus since the Jews were never in Egypt in the first place. They thus discredit the validity of the Holy Scriptures because the subject of the Jewish captivity in Egypt and their deliverance by God is one of the central themes of the Old Testament. It was God Himself who predicted that the Jews would not only be in Egypt for 400 years, but that they would also come out and eventually inherit the land of Canaan.

"Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land *that is* not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth genera-



Images from the Tomb of Rekhmire, an ancient Egyptian Noble and Governor of Thebes, Egypt. Here is an ancient depiction from a burial tomb showing a labor force of Semitic (Jewish) people engaged in a brick-building campaign in Egypt. [1] The Egyptian slave masters are shown with dark skin, holding a rod; the Semites are pictured with lighter skin, doing the work.

tion they shall come hither again” Genesis 15:13-16.

Is there any historical record outside of the Bible that could corroborate the events found in the book of Exodus? Do any of the ancient Egyptian inscriptions make reference to a Jewish presence in Egypt? Such a find would not only validate the Word of God, but this would also legitimize Judaism and Christianity.

The story of Israel's journey, captivity and deliverance from Egypt is one of the most fascinating and important truths in all the Bible. This remarkable history begins in Genesis 12:10 and continues throughout Exodus and beyond. In more than 80 references, but most from the Pentateuch, the history of Israel's captivity is repeated in Scripture (Joshua 24:17; 1 Samuel 12:8; Psalm 78:12-16; Jeremiah 34:12-14; Acts 7:6, 34; Hebrews 11:21-27).

In fact we are told the seventh-day Sabbath was not just a memorial of Creation. It also commemorates the deliverance of God's people from Egypt: “Remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day” Deuteronomy 5:15.

Ancient City of Pi-Ramesses

"Therefore they did set over them [Israel] taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they [Israel] built for **Pharaoh** treasure cities, Pithom and **Raamses**" Exodus 1:11.

The Bible says the treasured cities of Pithom and Ramses were built by Israeli slave labor. The ancient capital of Egypt was called "Pi-Rameses" or the House of Rameses. The very name "Raamses" and "Pharaoh" given in Exodus 1:11 is describing Ramesses II, one of Egypt's most illustrious Pharaohs who indeed had a royal residence-city called Pi-Rameses on the Nile Delta. [2]

In its time, Pi-Rameses was considered the greatest city in all of Egypt. It was from this city that the Hebrews left Egypt on their way to Canaan:

"And the children of Israel journeyed from **Rameses** to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children" Exodus 12:37.

"And they departed from **Rameses** in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month; on the morrow after the Passover the children of Israel went out with an high hand in the sight of all the Egyptians. For the Egyptians buried all their firstborn, which the Lord had smitten among them: upon their gods also the Lord executed judgments. And the children of Israel removed from **Rameses**, and pitched in Succoth" Numbers 33:3-5.

The Hebrews departed from **Rameses** with all the "spoils of Egypt" which included "gold, silver, jewels and raiment" (Exodus 12:35, 36). They left Egypt with "flocks and herds, even very much cattle" Exodus 12:38.

The Timing of the Exodus

There is significant archeological evidence for a Hebrew presence in Egypt and for the Exodus. The problem lies with dating the event. Some say it never happened, while the majority of scholars who do believe in an Exodus wrongly apply the date to 1200 - 1300 BC where you will never find the evidence. However, if you go with the date given in the Bible, placed at around 1500 BC, you will find sufficient evidence.

"And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD" 1 Kings 6:1.

If we follow the Bible, the Exodus took place 480 years before the construction of the Temple of Solomon. According to the 1st century Jewish historian, Josephus, Solomon began building the temple in 1052 BC. [3] So 1052 + 480 = 1532. Does history or archeology reveal

Semites Depicted in Ancient Egyptian Tombs

**“And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses”
Exodus 1:11.**



Pharaoh Ramses II at the British Museum in London, England.



Ancient ruins of Pi-Rameses today in Lower Egypt by the Nile Delta.



An artist's rendition of what Pi-Rameses might have looked like.

a group of non-Egyptian Semites (Jews) leaving Egypt around 1500 BC? Yes!

Evidence of an Egyptian Expulsion (Exodus)

The Bible tells us that with the passing of time the Hebrews' influence, strength, properties and numbers increased "exceedingly." The Bible says "they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly" Genesis 47:27. The Israelites' prosperity was so great that a succeeding Pharaoh expressed the following about the Hebrews:

"Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we" Exodus 1:9. Apparently, the blessings and prosperity of Israel became a perceived threat to the rulers of Egypt. The historical question that we have to ask is this:

"Is there any evidence of a powerful Semitic people who lived in Egypt during the time that the Bible says the Hebrews were 'in the land of Rameses' (Genesis 47:11)?"

Modern, secular, non-biblical scholars do acknowledge that a powerful "Semitic" people from the land of Canaan did in fact live in Egypt, who became wealthy, influential and self-governing. However, they refuse to acknowledge that these people were the children of Israel. Instead they call these Semites the "Hyksos" or foreigners. [4] [5]

These so called experts tell us that Hyksos (Semites) were foreigners from the land of Canaan. They immigrated into Egypt and grew rapidly in number. The Egyptians soon saw them as invaders and entered into a series of wars or extermination methods which led to their "expulsion" from the land of Egypt. Interestingly, the children of Israel also suffered expulsion from Egypt's land. Are they not the same people?

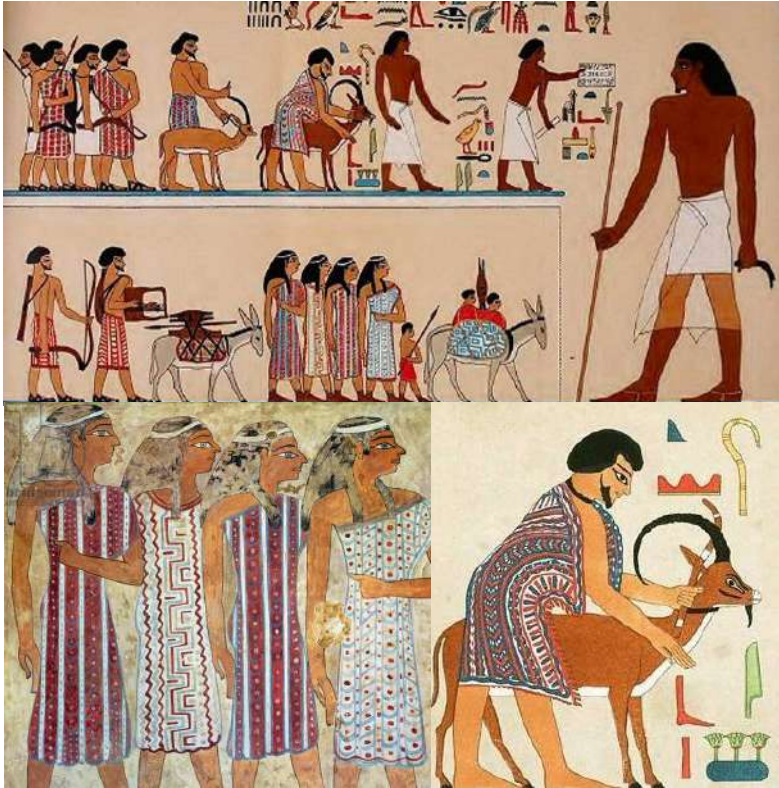
The Bible says in Exodus 12:39 that the Hebrews didn't even have time to prepare food for their departure from Rameses because "they were thrust out of Egypt, and could not tarry." This is evidence that the children of Israel left Egypt through "expulsion." This is very significant when you consider that the only other people who were thrust out of the land of Egypt were the Hyksos, or the Semitic people, also known as Israelites. [6]

Semites in Egypt

Beni Hasan is an ancient Egyptian burial site for royalty. There are 39 tombs located there and only four of them are accessible to the public. One of the most decorated burial sites in all of Egypt is that of Khnumhotep II who was an ancient Egyptian Great Chief under Pharaoh Amenemhat II and Senusret II. These Pharaohs lived long before Ramesses II and existed during the time that Joseph would have

Semites Depicted in Ancient Egyptian Tombs

“And Joseph dwelt in Egypt, he, and his father's house” Gen. 50:22.



Above: Images from the tomb of Khnumhotep II, located in Beni Hasan, an Egyptian burial ground. Here is evidence that Semitic (Jewish) people coexisted peacefully with Egyptians in the land of Egypt—at least for a while. You can see a clear distinction in their clothing. The Semitic men and women wore colorful clothing with distinct patterns. These tomb depictions date roughly to the period of Jacob’s family arriving in Egypt. The darker skin are Egyptians; the lighter skin are Semites. **Below:** The typical Egyptian dress is depicted on these images found in the Tomb of Nakht located at the Theban Necropolis.



brought his family to live with him in Egypt.

In the tomb of Khnumhotep II you will see colorful murals depicting both Egyptians and Semites (Jews). You can see a distinction both in skin color and most importantly, in clothing. These images of clothed people are not Egyptians. You can see the traditional Egyptian dress by workers in the Tomb of Nakht located at the Theban Necropolis, on the west bank of the Nile. The distinction is quite striking. Generally, Egyptian clothing was white or sometimes nude.

If these were only Semites who traveled to Egypt for trade, as some would suggest, why would they take their women and children on "business" trips which were dangerous?

However, if these Semites were living in peaceful co-existence in Egypt hundreds of years before Ramesses II, as the murals suggest, then are these not the children of Israel living in Egypt before they were made slaves?

Similarities Between the Hyksos and Israel

1. Both were from Canaan
2. Both were Semites
3. Both were foreigners in Egypt during the exact same time
4. Both were expelled from Egypt at the same time (around 1,500 BC), that is if you believe the Biblical timing for the Exodus
5. Both lived in the same location while in Egypt

According to modern history, the Hyksos' capital was located in Avaris, Egypt. Avaris was part of the ancient city of Pi-Ramesses.^[7] This is the same city of Ramesses where the children of Israel were living when they departed from Egypt (Exodus 12:37 and Numbers 33:3-5).

Are all these similarities just a coincidence, or are they the same people? If you ask non-biblical scholars, they will tell you they are not, despite the obvious. But notice what the ancient Jewish historian, Josephus says, as quoted in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*:

"The name Hyksos was used by the Egyptian historian, Manetho (300 BC), who, according to the Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus (1st century), translated the word as 'king-shepherds' or 'captive shepherds.' Josephus himself wished to demonstrate the great antiquity of the Jews and thus identified the Hyksos with the Hebrews of the Bible." ^[8]

The Famine Stela & the Seven Year Drought

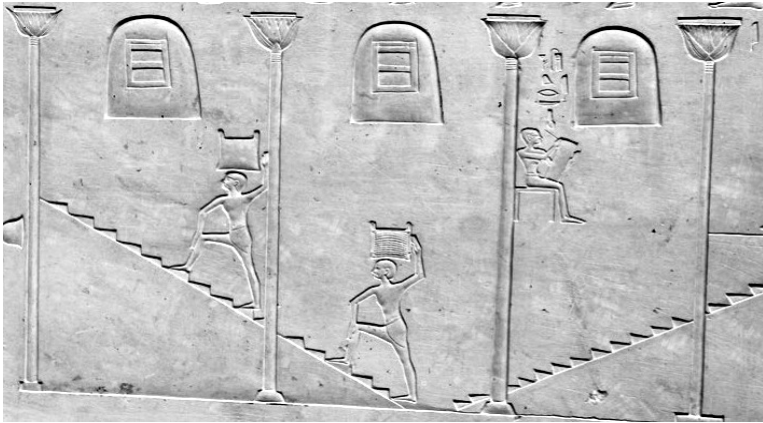
On the Nile River is an island called Sihiel that contains the diaries of ancient king rulers. There are over 550 stone engravings that depict different historical accounts and records. One of the most amazing inscriptions found on the island is the "Famine Stela." This huge stone contains the story of Pharaoh Djoser and Imhotep. This story can be

The Grain Bins of Egypt

“And he [Joseph] gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt” Genesis 41:48.



Grain harvest decoration taken from the tomb of Menna in the necropolis of Sheikh Abd al-Qurna at Thebes.



Underground granaries with scribes taking records, the administrator, men picking up and carrying grain up a stairway. These depictions are taken from the sarcophagus of Queen Ashait, Egyptian Museum, Cairo.



These ancient underground granaries are found in Saq-qara, Egypt, no doubt, built under the direction of Joseph.

linked to the Biblical account of Pharaoh and Joseph.

The inscription describes how the king had a dream. Imhotep was called to interpret this dream. The dream revealed that there would be 7 years of plenty and 7 years of famine. The “Famine Stela” describes how Imhotep became the savior of Egypt because he stored grain during the 7 years of plenty and fed the people during the 7 years of want. [9] [10] [11]

There is no doubt that the “Famine Stela” is a depiction of the story of Joseph. The only difference is that in the Egyptian version Joseph was not a “Hebrew” who saved Egypt; instead Joseph became Imhotep, an Egyptianized prime minister, second only to Pharaoh, who was eventually elevated to the status of a god. This elevation to god status was a common practice among the pagans (see Acts 14:10-13).

Brooklyn Papyrus

The Brooklyn Papyrus is an ancient Egyptian document that dates around the year 1740 BC. This was when the Hebrews would have been slaves in Egypt. It was a business ledger used by Egyptian officials to keep track of their slaves.

This document actually lists slaves who had Hebrew names! The most recognized name was one of the Hebrew midwives, “Shiphra,” as described in Exodus 1:15. Shiphra was one of two who was commanded by Pharaoh to kill all the male Hebrew babies. She would have been a slave during this time because Pharaoh was trying to subjugate the Israelites. But there are several other feminine, domestic Hebrew servants listed in the Brooklyn Papyrus:

“Menahema, a feminine form of Menahem (2 Kings 15:14); Ashera, a feminine form of Asher, the eighth son of Jacob (Genesis 30:13); Shiphrah, the Hebrew midwife prior to the Exodus and already mentioned, (1:15); Aqoba, a name appearing to be a feminine form of Jacob or Yaqob, the name of the patriarch (Genesis 5:26); Ayyabum, the feminine for the patriarch, Job or Ayob (Job 1:1); Sekera, which is a feminine name similar to Issakar, the name of the ninth son of Jacob,



The Brooklyn Papyrus, displayed in New York, is proof that Hebrew slaves were in Egypt.

Evidence of a Great Famine in Egypt

“Egypt and Canaan wasted away because of the famine” Gen. 47:13.



At the Imhotep Museum located in the ancient Saqqara burial ground, near Memphis in Lower Egypt, you will find this limestone which depicts a severe famine and starving Egyptians. [12] The limestone contains about a dozen men, women and children with their ribs exposed depicting the severity of the drought or famine. Notice a tiny child in the hand of the mother on the right. This is evidence that corroborates the biblical account of the great famine of Egypt.



Sehel Island in Egypt, where the Famine Stela exists: it contains over 550 stones engraved by ancient Egyptian kings and rulers.

(Genesis 30:18); Dawidi-huat a compound name utilizing the name David and meaning “my beloved is he” (1 Samuel 16:13); Esebtw, a name derived from the Hebrew word eseb, meaning “herb” (Deuteronomy 32:2); Hayah-wr another compound name composed of Hayahor Eve and meaning “bright life” (Genesis 3:20); and finally the name Hy’b’rw, which appears to be an Egyptian transcription of Hebrew (Genesis 39:14). Thus, this list is a clear attestation of Hebrew people living in Egypt prior to the Exodus, and is an essential piece of evidence in the argument for a historical Exodus.” [13]

This important document has survived millennia and testifies that Hebrew slaves were in fact living in Egypt prior to and at the time of the Exodus.

The Merneptah Stele

The Merneptah Stele is probably one of the most significant mentions of the name “Israel” outside of the Holy Scriptures. This is an important Egyptian monument dedicated to Pharaoh Merneptah that describes the children of Israel. In fact, the Merneptah Stele is one of only two times that the name “Israel” appears in the records of Egypt. The stele is currently located in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.

There is one line on this monument that says: **“Israel is laid waste, bare of seed.”** [14]

The meaning of this statement can have several interpretations—depending on when you date the inscription. As we have already mentioned, many scholars do not agree to the actual dating for many of these historical landmarks. If you date this after the children of Israel came out of Egypt to around 1210 BC, as many have, then this could easily apply to the time of the Judges (Gideon) when Israel had no central government and when they were being oppressed by the Philistines.

If the inscription was much earlier, then it can apply to the 40 years of desert wandering or to their hardships as slaves during their captivity. Regardless of when it was, one thing is significant: The Merneptah Stele is a monument that recognizes the children of Israel as contemporaries to the Pharaohs.

The Berlin Pedestal

The earliest reference to the nation of Israel is found at the Egyptian Museum in Berlin, Germany. There are three soldiers found on the Berlin Pedestal who have the inscription on their shields that say “Ashkelon,” “Canaan” and “Israel.” The Berlin Pedestal predates the Merneptah Stele by centuries. [15] This is evidence that ties Israel to the land of Canaan and surrounding nations for centuries during the reign of the Pharaohs.

More Evidence that the Children of Israel were in Egypt

“The time that the people of Israel dwelt in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years” Exodus 12:40.



The Merneptah Stele, an inscription by the ancient Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah discovered in 1896, is housed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo.



The inscription says: “Israel is laid waste, bare of seed.” [\[14\]](#)



Egypt's Berlin Pedestal contains the earliest known inscription of "Israel." [15]



The Pyramid Hawara sits on the banks of Joseph's Canal [16], which feeds Lake Moeris and Faiyum Oasis (below).



Bahr Yussef—Joseph’s Canal

Bahr Yussef (Joseph’s Canal) is an ancient canal dug millennia ago to divert water from the Nile River for irrigation. Many pyramids and ancient Egyptian sites are found on its banks. This ancient canal has had no other name associated to it for thousands of years. Around 1780 BC Amenemhet IV decreed that improvements be made to Bahr Yussef, effectively creating Lake Moeris and the Faiym Oasis—one of Egypt’s most fertile territories. [17] Such an important canal has been given the name of Joseph and was used for growing food.

The Ipuwer Papyrus, An Egyptian Version to the Plagues of Egypt

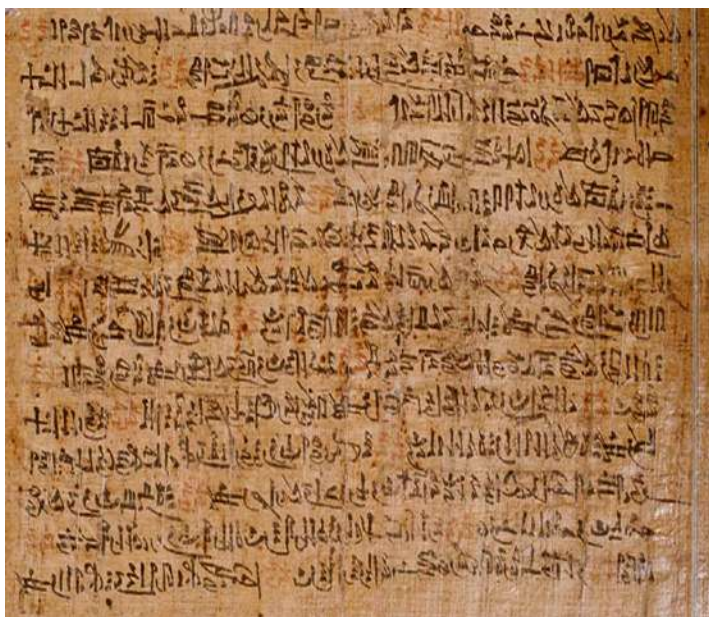
“Never in the history of Egypt have your ancestors seen a plague like this one!” Exodus 10:6 (NLT).

The “Ipuwer Papyrus” pictured below is an ancient Egyptian manuscript from around the 13th century BC that contains a first hand account of the Biblical plagues that fell upon Egypt. This manuscript is on display at the Dutch National Museum of Antiquities. [18]

Ipuwer was a royal Egyptian scribe and he describes in vivid detail the “plagues” which brought absolute desolation to the land of Egypt. There is a striking similarity between Ipuwer Papyrus and the book of Exodus that cannot be dismissed. These two sources describe events which transpired in the same place and time.

There is sufficient evidence in the archaeological records to support the Biblical account of the Exodus. The 10 plagues and the Exodus is not a legend.

We have an Egyptian eyewitness who saw firsthand the punishment and suffering that came upon the land of Egypt. All of this supports what we read in the Bible because there is simply no other historical situation to apply it to. The Ipuwer Papyrus is only one



piece of a very large archaeological picture that validates God’s Word.

Tribute to Ron Wyatt (1933-1999)

New Life Mission wishes to bring recognition to Ron for bringing our attention to the subject of Joseph in Egypt 30+ years ago as an important way of proving the accuracy of the Bible. Many have become Christians due to Ron's research and ministry. Brother Ron awaits the resurrection.

Ipuwer Papyrus [19]

2:5-6 **Plague** is throughout the land. **Blood is everywhere.**
2:10 The river is **blood.**
2:10 Men shrink from tasting - human beings, and thirst after water
3:10-13 That is our **water!** That is our happiness! **What shall we do** in respect thereof? All is ruin.
2:10 Forsooth, gates, columns and walls are **consumed by fire.**
10:3-6 Lower Egypt weeps... The entire palace is without its revenues. To it belong [by right] **wheat and barley**, geese and fish
6:3 Forsooth, **grain has perished** on every side.
5:12 Forsooth, that has perished which was yesterday seen. The **land is left over to its weariness** like the cutting of flax.
5:5 **All animals, their hearts weep. Cattle moan...**
9:2-3 Behold, **cattle are left to stray**, and there is none to gather them together.
9:11 The **land is without light**
4:3 (5:6) Forsooth, the **children of princes are dashed against the walls.**
6:12 Forsooth, **the children of princes are cast out** in the streets.

Book of Exodus

7:20 ...all the **waters** of the river were **turned to blood.**
7:21 ...there was **blood** throughout all the land of Egypt ...and the river stank.
7:24 And all the Egyptians dug around the river for **water** to drink; for they **could not drink** of the water of the river.
9:23-24 ...there was hail, and fire **mingled with the hail**, very grievous.
9:25 ...and the hail smote **every herb of the field**, and broke every tree of the field.
9:31-32 ...and the **flax and the barley was smitten**;
10:15 ...**there remained no green things** in the trees, or in the herbs of the fields, through all the land of Egypt.
9:3 ...the **hand of the Lord is upon thy cattle** which is in the field... and there shall be a **very grievous sickness.**
9:21 And he that did not fear the word of the Lord **left his servants and cattle in the field.**
10:22 And there was a thick **darkness in all the land of Egypt.**
12:29 And it came to pass, that at midnight **the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive that was in the prison.**

6:3 The prison is ruined.
2:13 He who places his brother
in the ground is everywhere.
3:14 It is groaning throughout
the land, mingled with lamenta-
tions
3:2 Gold and lapis lazuli, silver
and malachite, carnelian and
bronze... are fastened on the
neck of female slaves.
7:1 Behold, the fire has mounted
up on high. Its burning goes forth
against the enemies of the land.

12:30 ...there was not a house
where there was not one dead.
12:30 ...there was a great cry in
Egypt.
12:35-36 ...and they requested from
the Egyptians silver and gold arti-
cles and clothing. And God made
the Egyptians favor them and they
granted their request.
13:21 ... by day in a pillar of cloud,
to lead them the way; and by night
in a pillar of fire, to give them light;
to go by day and night.



God Invented Historical Records

Contemporary scholars question the historical accuracy of the Biblical account regarding Israel's captivity and Exodus from Egypt. They claim there are no historical records in any of the ancient Egyptian archeological discoveries. What many of these scholars are ignoring is the fact that ancient Egyptians practiced "damnatio memoriae." This is the condemnation of memory and the erasure from public records – any story, event or people who cast Egypt in a poor light. This practice is well known.

Akhenaten was a Pharaoh of Egypt who was forgotten for almost 4,000 years. His image, name and memorials were stricken or erased from Egypt's history by his successors. What was his crime? He introduced a monotheistic religion during his reign that was in opposition to Egypt's long-standing, historical polytheism. [20] His name was completely unknown until the discovery of his tomb in the 19th Century. It



is likely that Ramesses II would have omitted Egypt's greatest embarrassment from their official record. During the reign of Ramesses II Egypt's wealth and glory was at its highest. All this came to an end when a nation of slaves defeated the greatest superpower of its time. Egypt was destroyed both militarily and economically.

It was the Hebrew prophets who invented the writing of history. God commanded them to write down the experiences of His people. This record gave names and years of historical kings and rulers. It was an accurate account that also included the sins and defeats of Israel, unlike the Egyptians. This is one proof of the Bible's inspiration.

The Greek historian, Herodotus (484 BC–425 BC), is considered by the experts today to be the father of history. [21] But he lived about 1,000 years after the Hebrews began writing history. Prior to the time of Herodotus, there aren't any true records of history anywhere on the earth except for the Bible. But real evidence does exist that the Hebrew Exodus is historical and did take place. This should affirm our confidence and affirm our faith in God's Word.



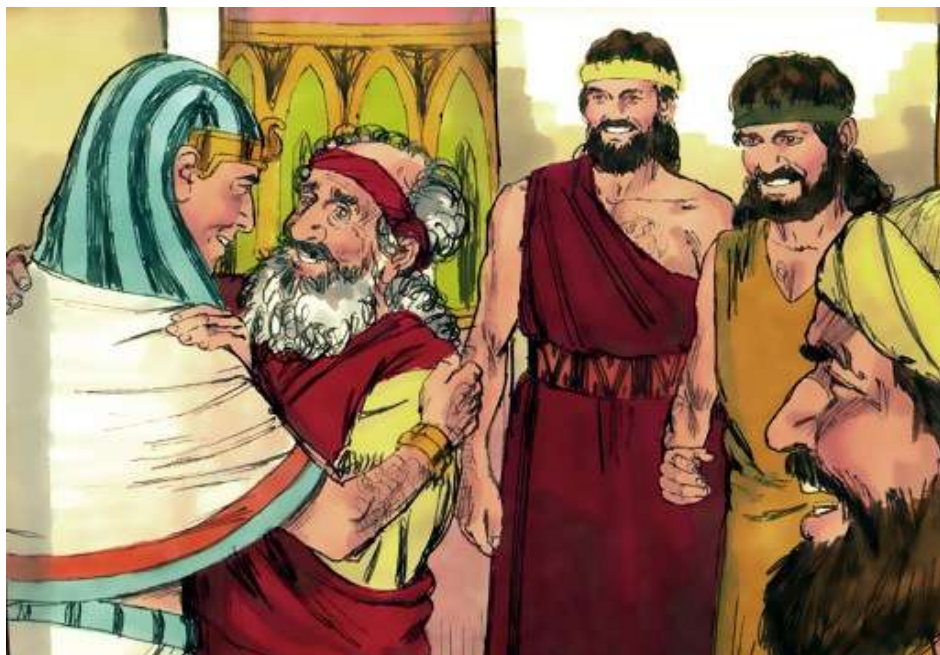
The Imhotep Museum, inside the Saqqara complex which is pictured above, is an archeological museum near Memphis in Lower Egypt. This museum commemorates the real, historical, Egyptian figure called Imhotep. As described on pages 4 and 5, Imhotep and the biblical Joseph share too many similarities for it to just be a coincidence. We believe Imhotep is another name for Joseph. Joseph built the step pyramid, also shown above.

Sources

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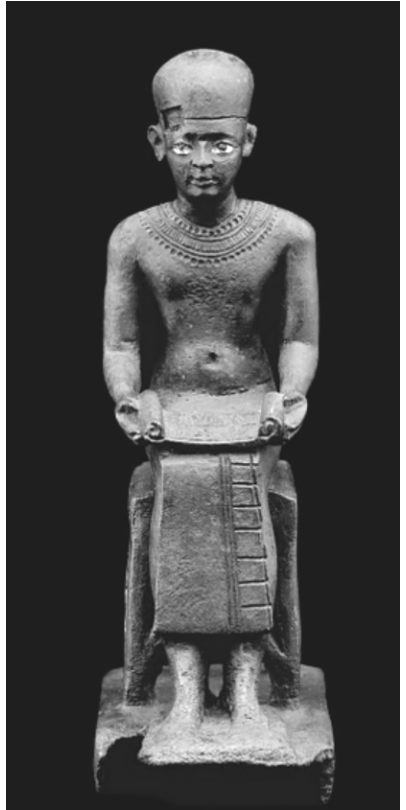


What joy it was for Joseph and his father to meet again after 20 years of separation. See Genesis 46:28-30. How many parents and/or children today long to be reunited with one another as happy families.

Imhotep, the Most Famous Prime Minister in all of Ancient Egypt

The “Vizier” in ancient Egypt was the most powerful position after that of the king. It was equivalent to that of a modern-day prime minister of a nation. The “Vizier” was responsible for the following governmental powers:

- Agricultural – Procedures, practices, settling land disputes
- Financial – Taxation, the treasury and the census
- Judicial – The appointment of the judges and the chief of police
- Military – The appointment of generals and approval of their choices in subordinates
- Architectural – The planning and building of the king's monuments and tomb
- Interior – The planning, construction and repair of roads, dikes, dams and canals
- Religious – The maintenance of proper rituals and traditions and appointment of high priests [1]



The most famous Egyptian Vizier of all time was Imhotep (2667-2600 BC) who served under the Pharaoh King Djoser (2670 BC). Imhotep was a commoner who achieved his success based on God's accomplishments in his own life. [2] Imhotep was also the author of what is considered Egypt's oldest manuscripts, “The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep.” This Egyptian document is often called “The Oldest Book in the World” and was originally written by the vizier in the Fifth (or Third) Dynasty. The Egyptian name of this vizier and the next in command to Pharaoh was Ptah-Hotep. This man was the busiest man in the kingdom. He was all-powerful and only the Pharaoh was over him. He was the chief judge and the most popular man in Pharaoh's government. [3]

Could this document, “The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep,” be a composition of the patriarch Joseph? There are many parallels and similarities between Imhotep and the historical events in Joseph's life. Indeed,

the similarities are so remarkable, that “The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep” could have been revealed to us in the Bible itself. Let us now look at some of the remarkable parallels.

Notice what this Ptah-Hotep, the second in command in Egypt, had to say of his life on earth. How long did he live? The answer is given in the concluding statement in the document:

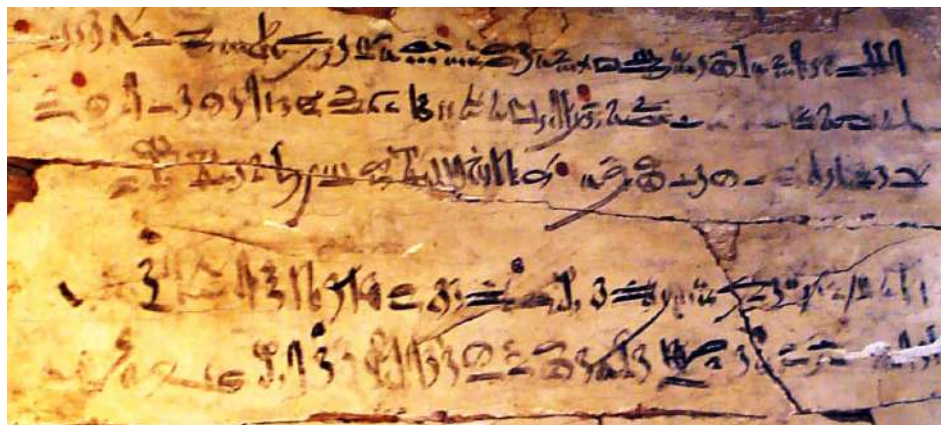
“The keeping of these laws have gained for me upon earth **110 years of life**, with the gift of the favor of the King, among the first of those whose works have made them noble, doing the pleasure of the King in an honored position.” (The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep, Precept XLIV) [3]

This man, with the title Ptah-Hotep, was one who did great construction works. Joseph was supposed to have done mighty works — traditionally, even the Great Pyramid was built through the dole of grain during the seven years of low Niles. And remember, Joseph also lived 110 years (Genesis 50:26) just as did this Ptah-Hotep. But he resembled Joseph in another way.

“If you would be held in esteem in the house wherein you enterest, whether it be that of a ruler, or of a brother, or of a friend, whatever you do enter, beware of approaching the wife, for it is not in any way a good thing to do. It is senseless. Thousands of men have destroyed themselves and gone to their death for the sake of the enjoyment of a pleasure which is as fleeting as the twinkling of an eye.” (The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep, Precept XVIII). [3]

Here again we have Joseph! Even though adultery was the common thing in Egypt (thousands of men were doing it), only one uncommon example shines out in its history — that of Joseph (Genesis 39:1-20). This virtue of Joseph was so strong, that its inclusion into these “Precepts” again may indicate that Joseph had a hand in writing them.

Now look at what Ptah-Hotep says that if the laws of the master



Papyrus from The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep.

were kept, a person's father will give him a "double good," i.e., a double portion. Joseph did in fact receive a part of the birthright, the "double good" (double blessing, Deuteronomy 21:15–17). This birthright blessing is repeated in Precept XXXIX.

"To hearken [to your father] is worth more than all else, for it produces love, the possession doubly blessed." (The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep, Precept XXXIX). [3]

The Moral and Ethical Teachings of Imhotep

There are also many similarities when it comes to the moral teachings of Imhotep and the biblical Joseph:

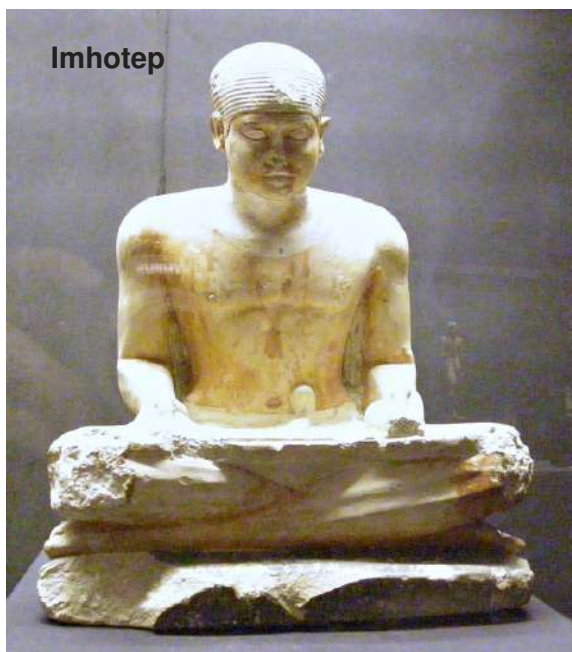
"If you have become a great man having once been of no account, and if you have become rich having once been poor, and having become the Governor of the City, take heed that you do not act haughtily because you have attained unto a high rank. Harden not your heart because you have become exalted, for you are only the guardian of the goods which God has given to you. Set not in the background your neighbor who is as you were, but make yourself as if he were your equal." (The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep, Precept XXX). [3]

The instruction above sounds as if it came from the Bible itself! This and other similar high ethical teachings indicate that Joseph could have written them. There is also, in these Precepts, an emphasis on obedience, especially to one's father.

"Let no man make changes in the laws of his father; let the same laws be his own lessons to his children. Surely his children will say to him 'doing your word works wonders.'" (The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep, Precept XLII). [3]

"Surely a good son is one of the gifts of God, a son doing better than he has been told" (The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep, Precept XLIV). [3]

"When a son hearkens to his father, it is a double joy to both, for when these things are told to him, the son is gentle toward his father. Harkening to him who has hearkened while this was told him, he en-



Ptah-Hotep

- (1) He lived to be 110 years old.
- (2) He lived in the Third Dynasty.
- (3) The name Ptah-Hotep was a title of all Memphite viziers, those second in command to Pharaoh himself.
- (4) Ptah-Hotep was the chief judge in ancient Egypt but had been raised to the highest office.
- (5) Ptah-Hotep was once of no account in Egypt but had been elevated to Prime Minister.
- (6) Out of thousands who went into their neighbor's wives, Ptah-Hotep did not, and taught people not to do so.
- (7) Ptah-Hotep received from his father divine laws; even one of the Ten Commandments was quoted.
- (8) Ptah-Hotep was a monotheist. No idolatry is mentioned.
- (9) Many of Ptah-Hotep's teachings are also found directly into the Bible.
- (10) Ptah-Hotep received a double possession from his father because of his obedience.
- (11) Ptah-Hotep warns those of advanced knowledge, such as he had, to shun being puffed up.
- (12) Ptah-Hotep was the first in Egypt whose great public works made him famous.

Joseph's History

- (1) He lived to be 110 years old (Genesis 50:26).
- (2) The Third Dynasty saw seven years of low Niles.
- (3) Joseph was second in command to Pharaoh. He was the vizier, as all scholars admit (Genesis 41).
- (4) Pharaoh required all Egyptians to submit to the judgeship of Joseph (Genesis 41:41-44).
- (5) Joseph was raised from the dungeon to sit on the very throne of Pharaoh (Genesis 41:14, 41-44).
- (6) Joseph refused to submit to the advances of his master's wife (Genesis 39).
- (7) Joseph was taught the divine laws from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Genesis 26:5).
- (8) Joseph believed only in the God of Israel, not idols.
- (9) Joseph's life was influenced by the word of God.
- (10) Joseph likewise received a part of the birthright, the double possession (Genesis 48; 1 Chronicles 5:2).
- (11) There was none considered wiser in all the land of Egypt than Joseph (Genesis 41:39), but he was also humble (Genesis 45:15).
- (12) Joseph, traditionally, built the Great Pyramid, the Labyrinth, the canal system of Egypt, and many other great public works.

graves on his heart what is approved by his father, and thus the memory of it is preserved in the mouth of the living, who are upon earth.” (The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep, Precept XXXIX). [3]

“When a son receives the word of his father, there is no error in all his plans. So instruct your son that he shall be a teachable man whose wisdom will be pleasant to the great men. Let him direct his mouth according to that which has been told him [by his father]; in the teachableness of a son is seen his wisdom. His conduct is perfect, while error carries away him who

will not be taught; in the future, knowledge will uphold him, while the ignorant will be crushed.”

(The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep, Precept XL). [3]

The emphasis of Ptah-Hotep is that his own greatness depended upon his attendance to the laws of his fathers. He encouraged all others to do the same. This



The Imhotep Museum near Memphis in Lower Egypt.

gave him the reason for recording for posterity these basic laws, and he says that these words of his fathers “shall be born without alteration, eternally upon the earth” (Precept XXXVIII).

Some of those teachings are so biblical and right! It could well be a fact that these principles and good teachings came from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and are here recorded by Joseph, the one respecting the teachings of his fathers. Notice this Precept:

“The son who receives the word of his father shall live long on account of it.” (The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep, Precept XXXIX). [3]

Compare this with the Fifth Commandment: “Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee” Exodus 20:12.

Obviously, many of the laws that became a part of the Old Covenant which God made with Israel at the Exodus were known long before — in the times of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? We are told that the early patriarchs knew of God’s laws (Genesis 26:5). And it is clear from the evidence that Imhotep was aware of the law of God. Why wouldn’t he be? He was instructed by Isaac and Jacob.

Sources

[1] https://www.worldhistory.org/Egyptian_Vizier/

[2] <https://www.worldhistory.org/imhotep/>

[3] <https://www.askelm.com/doctrine/d040501.htm>



Joseph as 2nd in command in Egypt. His brothers bow in respect.



The first ox-drawn plow and the sickle made of bronze were found in Egypt.

Technology and Innovation During the Time of Joseph

Ancient Egyptian civilization was the first of the recorded great world civilizations. So very little is known about other ancient societies that either came before Egypt or that existed at the same time. We know a lot more about ancient Egypt because of their inventions such as writing, ink, record-keeping and accounting.

Under Joseph, Egypt became the leading farming state of its day. This led to massive trade deals with the other nations. The seven years of plenty proved to be a huge undertaking. New farming techniques had to be engineered. Advances in technology were needed. Egypt was known for inventing bronze plows that were pulled by oxen. Grain storage systems and mills for grinding grain had to be created. Massive irrigation systems also had to be engineered to keep up with the demands during the seven years of plenty. This was a period of invention and innovation for ancient Egypt. Notice what God told Pharaoh through Joseph:

“Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, **and**





take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years. And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be for store

to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine" Genesis 41:34-36. (Go back to page 9 to see bins made for grain storage.)

That is accounting and budgeting. One-fifth is 20%. This is what was required to be stored during the seven years of plenty. That was a huge project. The Bible says that they gathered so much food from the fields "in every city" that they had to stop "numbering" or counting:

"And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. **And**

Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number" Genesis 41:48-49.

Joseph was keeping records. He was going to be responsible for selling the stored food to the world through trade



deals. This required a massive accounting system. Is it just a coincidence that accounting was invented by the "Egyptians?" The Egyptians are also known for inventing paper and writing. Ancient Egypt

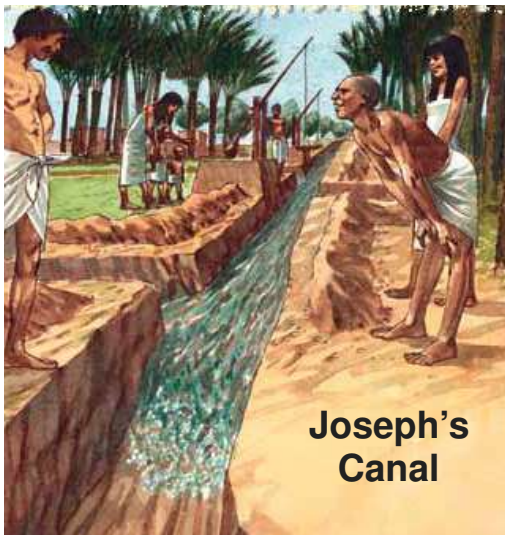


Egyptian scribes keeping records. Egypt invented writing, paper, ink and accounting. Joseph was the likely teacher.

was among the first groups of people to keep detailed records. The earliest form of Egyptian writing was hieroglyphics, which combined other alphabetic elements, had a total of some 1,000 distinct characters. This became the predecessor of most of the scripts in use today.

The Egyptians took the papyrus plant and turned them into sheets of paper that could be rolled into scrolls. Having papyrus to write on would have been of no use without the invention of ink. Egypt is also accredited to inventing ink. They went on to invent mathematics, geometry, land surveying, plumbing and many other technological advances that elevated them far ahead of those that came before.

Ancient Egypt was truly blessed by God for believing His word. Pharaoh came to know and believe in the God of Israel, and showed kindness to Joseph and the children of Israel. This was the secret to Egypt's blessings.



Joseph's Canal

The Egyptians pioneered the use of canals and irrigation channels to direct water from distant water sources to dry land so that they could irrigate their crops. See also page 14, photo of irrigated fields.



Joseph, the First Physician?

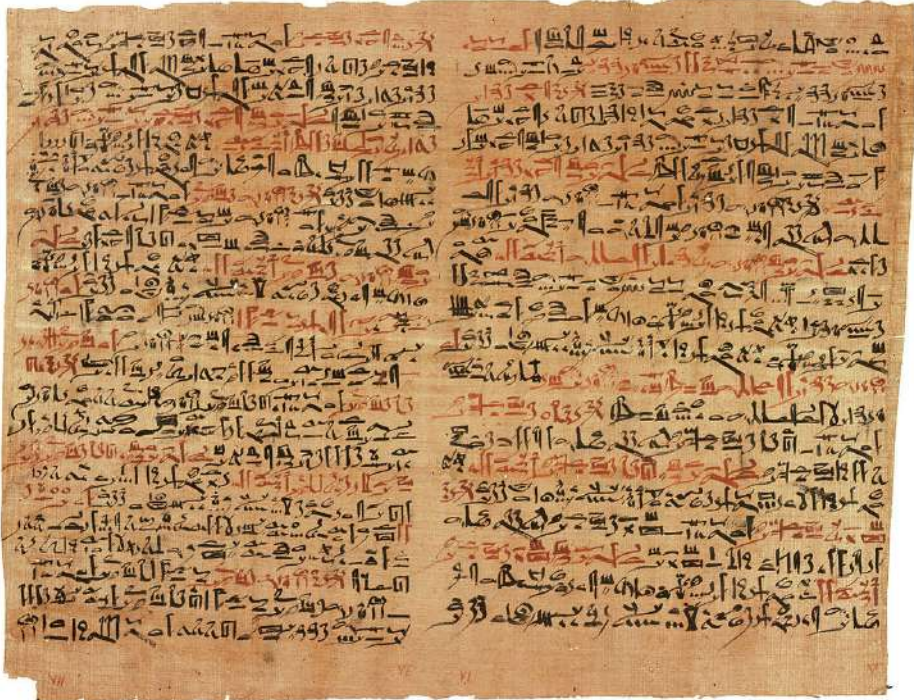
Encyclopedia Britannica makes the startling revelation with regards to the very first physician:

“When the medicine of ancient Egypt is examined, the picture becomes clearer. **The first physician to emerge is Imhotep**, chief minister to King Djoser in the 3rd millennium BCE, who designed one of the earliest pyramids, the Step Pyramid at Şaqqārah.” [1]

The first physician was Imhotep? The famous prime minister of ancient Egypt who was second in command after Pharaoh (see page 20)? Imhotep and Joseph’s lives mirror each other (see page 23). It seems that while the rest of the ancient world was steeped in superstition and their ability to treat disease was primitive, if non-existent, Egypt on the other hand was developing a medical profession, thanks to Imhotep. Imhotep was not just a great administrator (prime minister), builder and architect, it appears he was also the world’s first physician. He regarded disease and injury as naturally occurring instead of being punishments sent by gods or inflicted by spirits and curses.

The famous Edwin Smith Papyrus (named after the dealer who bought it in 1862), is considered by many to have originally been written by Imhotep. This ancient text is the oldest known written manual of surgery and trauma and describes 48 surgical cases of injuries, fractures, wounds, dislocations and tumors, and details the type of the injury, examination of the patient, diagnosis, prognosis and treatment. Injuries were to the head, neck, shoulders, breasts and chest. [2]

The papyrus includes a list of the surgical instruments used during those surgeries, instructions for the stitching of wounds, and descriptions of using swabs and bandages. Written in black ink, with explanations written in red ink, the papyrus even contains a section on gynecol-



Edwin Smith Papyrus is believed to be written by Imhotep and is the oldest known written manual of surgery and trauma.

ogy and one on cosmetics, along with administering prescriptions.

Because Imhotep was a just, moral and godly man (see page 22), it is believed that the medical cases described in the Edwin Smith Papyrus were patients who sustained their injuries during the massive construction projects of ancient Egypt. One can only imagine how many people were in need of medical attention as tens of thousands of men, if not more, erected the wonders of ancient Egypt.

The workers who built the pyramids would have needed emergency medical care. The Edwin Smith Papyrus proves that the ancient Egyptians were capable of performing complex medical procedures in order to alleviate suffering.

The story of Imhotep is a truly remarkable one. A commoner by birth that laid the foundations for the medical profession over 4,500 years ago and over 2,000 years before the birth of Hippocrates, the famous Greek physician. There is no question that Imhotep's medical legacy influenced the civilizations that followed him. And without him, medicine may not be where it is today.

Sources

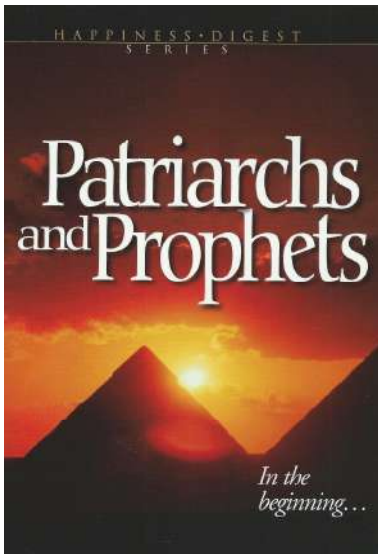
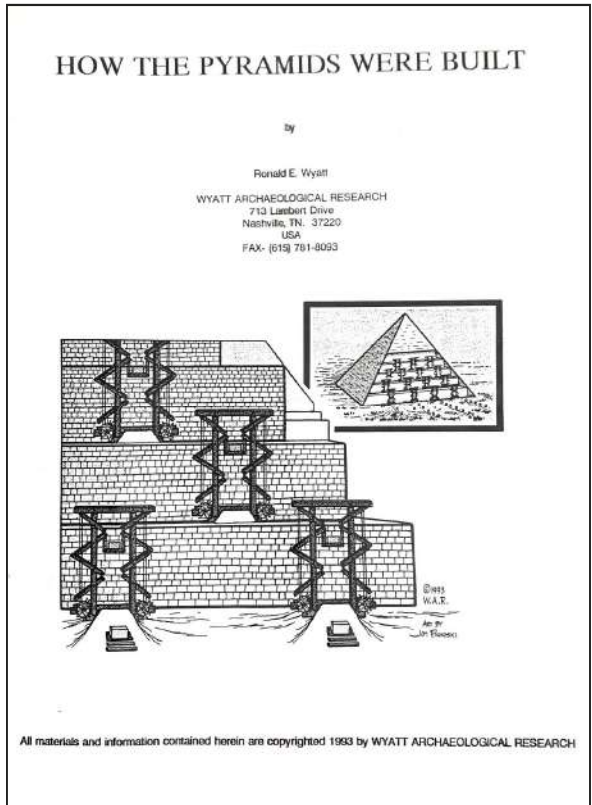
[1] <https://www.britannica.com/science/history-of-medicine>
[2] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2989268/>

How the Pyramids were Built

History tells us that Imhotep or Joseph built the step pyramid pictured on page 18 as the burial site of King Djoser who reigned from 2630-2611 BC. Djoser was the Pharaoh who put Joseph in as second in command in all of Egypt. He was to prepare for the seven-year famine that would follow the seven years of plenty.

Pictured on the right is a booklet that tells exactly how the step pyramid was built. It gives detailed drawings as well as a few photographs. The booklet is in black and white only.

If you would like a copy of this 16 page booklet, please send \$7 which will cover the cost of printing and mailing.



God is love. Every manifestation of His creative power is an expression of infinite love. The history of the great conflict between good and evil, and God's plan to resolve it demonstrates His unchanging love. ***Patriarchs and Prophets*** tells the early part of this ancient and true love story.

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life of Joseph and how he became the second highest ruler in Egypt. If at all possible please send a \$10 donation to cover our cost.

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Jacob's Blessing for Joseph

Joseph is a fruitful bough,
 Even a fruitful bough by a well;
 Whose branches run over the wall.
 The archers have sorely grieved him,
 And shot at him, and hated him:
 But his bow abode in strength,
 And the arms of his hands were made strong
 By the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob.
 From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel;
 Even by the God of thy father,
 Who shall help thee?
 And by the Almighty,
 Who shall bless thee
 With blessings of heaven above -
 Blessings of the deep that lieth under;
 Blessings of the breasts and of the womb?
 The blessings of thy father have prevailed
 Above the blessings of my progenitors,
 Unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills.
 They shall be on the head of Joseph,
 And on the crown of the head of him
 That was separate from his brethren.
 Genesis 49:22-26