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“House of Bondage”:

Can We Reconcile the Biblical Account of Hebrew Slavery with Egyptian Historical Records?

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April 19, 2002

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I. Biblical Background

“So they . . . lifted Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty shekels of silver. Thus they brought Joseph into Egypt.”¹ Through this decision, Joseph’s brothers sought to rid themselves of the annoyance of their father’s favorite son. Little did they realize the repercussions of their decision—that by selling Joseph into slavery they were effectually selling all of Israel into slavery. Little did they know that because of their one decision, Israel would sojourn in Egypt for generations until the exodus finally freed them from that “house of bondage.”² From our youngest days, many of us assumed the veracity of these Bible stories, as indeed we should if we hold to the divine inspiration of the Bible. Yet can the familiar biblical narratives of Israel in Egypt withstand the light of historical scrutiny? What does history tell us about slavery in Egypt, and does it support or contradict the Bible’s assertions? In sum, can we reconcile the biblical account of Hebrew slavery with Egyptian historical records?

“And Joseph died, and all his brothers and all that generation. But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them.”³ Generations passed, and indeed, the Israelites did increase greatly and fill the land of Egypt. For while Egypt had a population of not more than eight million at that time, the Israelites numbered roughly two million.⁴ As the Israelites multiplied, many Egyptian pharaohs

¹ Gen. 37:28. All biblical citations are from the New American Standard Bible (NASB).

² Exod. 20:2.

³ Exod. 1:6, 7.

⁴ This figure is based on Exod. 12:37: “Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children” and confirmed by the census figure of men—603,550—in Num. 1:46. Adding women and children to six hundred thousand men brings the total to at least two million Hebrews. There are obvious strategic problems with an exodus of this magnitude, and alternative views that suggest smaller numbers

and even dynasties rose and fell.⁵ And even as our attitudes toward immigrant groups fluctuate according to the current political climate, so the treatment of the Israelite foreigners in Egypt varied from dynasty to dynasty. Our surprise that Joseph, a foreign slave, rose to second in command of all Egypt is certainly justified. But to assume that such a magnanimous attitude toward the Hebrews would persist—especially considering their burgeoning numbers—would be unreasonable and erroneous.

History suggests that when a group that is racially “other” proliferates, the indigenous population often feel resentful and even intimidated. So it was in Egypt: “Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, ‘Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply and in the event of war, they also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us, and depart from the land.’ So they appointed taskmasters over them to afflict them with hard labor.”⁶ According to Exodus, God called Moses to be His instrument to deliver His people from their miserable plight. God broke the will of the stubborn pharaoh by sending plagues upon Egypt, and the cry “Let my people go!” was finally heeded. The “mighty hand and outstretched

abound. Yet these views are ridden with their own problems, and for the purposes of this paper I have chosen not to delve into them here.

⁵ The Hebrews were in Egypt during at least the seventeenth and eighteenth dynasties, if not the eleventh through eighteenth dynasties. For those interested in a general overview of pharaonic Egyptian history and chronology, I recommend Alan H. Gardiner, *The Egypt of the Pharaohs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966). The entry “Egypt, land of” in Merrill C. Tenney, ed., *Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1976) provides a succinct overview. At the end of this entry, there is also included a specialized bibliography of ancient Egyptian history for those who desire further study.

⁶ Exod. 1:8-11.

arm” of God released the Hebrews from their Egyptian “house of bondage.”⁷

This is what we read in the Bible. But again, does it match the historical context? Is there evidence of slavery in Egyptian records? And specifically, can we reconcile the biblical account of Hebrew slavery with Egyptian historical records?

II. Did Early Israel Exist?

The exodus and the circumstances leading up to it are some of the most controversial topics in biblical history and archaeology. These events cannot be substantiated conclusively through archaeology, and thus far we have found them narrated only in the Bible. This lack of empirical evidence has led scholars to various conclusions. Some maintain the veracity of the Exodus narratives because of their staunch belief in the Bible’s inspiration. Others assert that it is mere aetiology—that is, a story told as history in order to explain a present reality. In other words, Israel found itself as a nation, or at least a distinguishable people group, and felt that it had to account for its origin. To fill this need, the stories of the Egyptian sojourn and exodus were created. Yet they need not be pure myth, even if prominent archaeologists affirm that there is absolutely no Egyptian evidence of the exodus.⁸ For others believe that there is some truth in the exodus narrative—a “historical kernel” of truth at the core of the story. The fact of one Hebrew family’s migration to or escape from Egypt, for example, may have triggered the elaborate

⁷ Exod. 6:6; 20:2.

⁸ William G. Dever, “Is There Any Archaeological Evidence for the Exodus?” in *Exodus: The Egyptian Evidence*, ed. Ernest S. Frerichs and Leonard H. Lesko (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1997), 75.

aetiology recorded in the Pentateuch.⁹

But before we debate the existence of Hebrew slaves in Egypt or the historicity of an Egyptian sojourn and exodus, can we even assume something far more basic—the existence of early Israel itself? Many scholars have denied the historicity of Israel in the early periods that the Bible describes.¹⁰ A major reason for this was that no reference to Israel (before it was well established as the “kingdom of Israel”) had been found in the sources that give archaeologists their knowledge of the ancient Levant. Thus many historians refused to accept the existence of an Israelite people group if only the Bible documented it.¹¹

Recently, however, archaeology has brought to light early artifacts that contain the word “Israel.” One of these is the Merenptah Stele. Dated to 1208 B.C.E., it is a monument stone carved with reliefs that commemorate several battles in which Pharaoh Merenptah had been victorious. When a team of epigraphers deciphered the inscription that accompanied the relief,

⁹ See Ernest S. Frerichs, “Introduction” and William A. Ward, “Summary and Conclusions” in Frerichs and Lesko, *Exodus*, 11-3, 109-11.

¹⁰ James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 4. Hoffmeier comments on these attitudes and includes a quote from Robert B. Coote in his *Early Israel: A New Horizon* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990). “The writers of ancient Israel knew little or nothing about the origin of Israel, although the Scriptures can provide much information relevant to the investigation of early Israel. The period under discussion, therefore, does not include the period of the patriarchs, exodus, conquest, or judges as devised by the writers of the Scriptures. These periods never existed.”

¹¹ Yet this argument is not free from error. While historians value corroborating evidence from multiple primary sources, they must remember that the standards are necessarily different in the realm of ancient history. Many events are accepted as historical fact even when they are mentioned by only one source. Even as late as the Roman Empire, we have only one primary source asserting that Nero committed suicide, and yet this “fact” is usually accepted without much question. See Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 21-22 for a discussion of this issue in biblical history and archaeology.

they made one of the most important discoveries in the field of biblical archaeology. Some of the etched hieroglyphs spelled the name “Israel”! In the stele’s listing of the various nations that Egypt had conquered, this phrase is included: “Israel is laid waste. His seed is not.”¹² This evidence showed that Israel not only was established in Palestine, but that it was established there by the time of the stele—1208 B.C.E.

Other evidence of Israel’s existence also began appearing as historians, archaeologists, and theologians dug deeper into historical records. In several documents, and especially in the Amarna letters—letters to the pharaoh from Canaanite entities loyal to Egypt—they found frequent reference to a people called the *Habiru* or *Apiru*.¹³ An etymological and contextual study of this word led many scholars to believe that it is the Canaanite rendering of “Hebrew.”¹⁴ We even have records of the *Habiru/Apiru* residing in Egypt during the New Kingdom, the period of Hebrew slavery according to biblical chronology. One example is the chronicling of captives from a campaign of Amenophis/Amenhotep II, a fifteenth-century pharaoh. It lists “3,600 ‘Apiru’ among other people groups that were brought back to Egypt.”¹⁵ As prisoners of war, these

¹² “Hymn of Victory of Mer-ne-Ptah (The ‘Israel Stela’)” in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, ed. James B. Pritchard (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969), 378 (hereafter cited as *ANET*). See appendix 1.

¹³ Pritchard, *ANET*, 483, 486-90.

¹⁴ For a recent evaluation of this issue, see S. Douglas Waterhouse, “Who Are the Habiru of the Amarna Letters?” *Journal of the Adventist Theological Society* 12:1 (Spring 2001): 31-42.

¹⁵ “The Asiatic Campaigning of Amen-hotep II” in *ANET*, Pritchard, 247. This document also includes 15,200 *Shasu* and 36,300 *Kharu* in its list of captives. Pritchard explains that the *Habiru/Apiru*, the *Shasu*, and the *Kharu* were all Asiatic groups. However, the fact that they are listed in separate categories indicates that the Egyptians viewed these three groups as distinct, non-overlapping entities within the broader “Asiatic” designation. If the *Habiru/Apiru* were not the Hebrews, they would have been the closest of the three Asiatic groups to the Hebrews. The

Habiru/Apiru were most likely enslaved in Egypt, perhaps being dedicated to a particular god or goddess to serve forever in his/her temple.¹⁶ More recently, however, scholars have begun doubting that the designation *Habiru/Apiru* applies strictly to the Hebrews. They affirm instead that the Hebrews were part of the larger *Habiru/Apiru* ethnic group. In Abraham Malamat's words: "every Israelite is . . . an 'Apiru' even though every *Habiru/Apiru* might not have been an Israelite."¹⁷ Yet although many questions still surround the origin and development of Israel, we now know that "at least it [Israel] is real," and that is a huge step.¹⁸

But who were the Israelites? Despite the Bible's testimony that the Hebrews were not ethnically Canaanite, many scholars believe that the Hebrews and the Canaanites were related—either closely or distantly.¹⁹ One theory is that they probably were just members of the Canaanite peasant class who revolted and in time formed their own nation. This is called the "peasant revolt theory." Another popular explanation is the "peaceful infiltration" theory. According to this view, the Israelites were not so closely related to the Canaanites, but infiltrated

Shasu are usually described as bedouin-nomadic people who wandered with their flocks in the region south of Palestine. The *Kharu* were probably a settled people in Syria/Palestine. For the primary-source list of "Asiatic Countries Under the Egyptian Empire" from the eighteenth to the twenty-second dynasties, see Pritchard, *ANET*, 242-3.

¹⁶ Christopher J. Eyre, "Work and the Organisation of Work in the New Kingdom," in *Labor in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Marvin A. Powell (New Haven, Conn.: American Oriental Society, 1987), 190. Antonio Loprieno, "Slaves," in *The Egyptians*, ed. Sergio Donadoni (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 205.

¹⁷ Abraham Malamat, "The Exodus: Egyptian Analogies" in *Exodus*, 18.

¹⁸ Ward, "Summary and Conclusions" in *Exodus*, 112.

¹⁹ Until the Egyptian sojourn, the Hebrews had minimal intermarriage. Abraham came from the Ur of Chaldees, and if we consider him the first Jew, the Hebrews would then be racially Chaldean (modern-day Iraqi).

Canaan from surrounding people groups that resided in Moab, Ammon, Edom, or elsewhere. They may have formed their own nation, but according to the “peaceful infiltration” theory, the biblical record is probably just an exaggerated account of their history. While the Bible does have Abraham coming from outside of Canaan to settle within it, most scholars who accept this view believe that the “peaceful infiltrators” came from neighboring nations. Yet the Bible asserts that Abraham came from far away—the Ur of Chaldees on the other side of the fertile crescent.²⁰

III. Chronology

Assuming the existence of an Israelite people, we now turn to their involvement in Egypt. To begin, the biblical story of Joseph seems to be historically very probable, even commonplace. History documents a lively slave trade during this time, and Egypt was one of the largest markets in the region.²¹ So we have a logical explanation for how Joseph arrived in Egypt. Additionally, we find historical precedents for Canaanite groups that journeyed to Egypt to buy food in times of famine.²² Thus the scenario of Joseph’s desperate brothers traveling to Egypt is also historically plausible. But when would these events have taken place? When would Joseph have entered Egypt, and when would his many descendants have left generations later in the exodus? To answer these questions, we must first understand the basic chronology and divisions of Egyptian history.

First is Predynastic Egypt, which is conventionally dated from c. 8000 to c. 3100 B.C.E.

²⁰ For a good overview of these theories and their developments, see Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 4-7.

²¹ Loprieno in *The Egyptians*, 202-3.

²² Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 58.

The Archaic Period then began the dynastic period of Egypt's history with Dynasties 1 and 2, dating from c. 3100 to c. 2700 B.C.E. However, this paper will focus on the later periods of Egypt's history. What follows, then, is a chronology of these relevant kingdoms and dynasties, including various significant figures and/or events:²³

Old Kingdom	Dynasties 3-6	2700-2200 ²⁴	first pyramids built
First Intermediate Period	Dynasties 7-10	2200-2150	possibly the beginning of the patriarchal period
Middle Kingdom	Dynasties 11-12	2150-1785	possibly the beginning of (1) the Egyptian sojourn or (2) the patriarchal period
Second Intermed. Period	Dynasties 13-17	1785-1570	the "Hyksos"; possibly the beginning of the Egyptian sojourn
New Kingdom	Dynasties 18-20	1570-1080	Israelite exodus
Eighteenth Dynasty		1570-1315	
Ahmoose		1570-1558	possibly the pharaoh who "knew not Joseph"

²³ Much of this chronology is drawn from Tenney, *Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, vol. 2, 231-2.

²⁴ Dates are all B.C.E. and approximations.

Amenophis/Amenhotep I	1558-1539	
Thutmose I	1539-1520	possibly the pharaoh before Moses fled from Egypt
Thutmose II	1520-1504	possibly became pharaoh because Moses did not
Hatshepsut	1520-1482	possibly princess who rescued Moses from Nile
Thutmose III	1504-1450	possibly pharaoh of the exodus; imports Asiatic slaves
Amenophis/Amenhotep II	1450-1425	pharaoh who continues importing Asiatic slaves
Thutmose IV	1425-1408	
Amenophis/Amenhotep III	1408-1372	religious reawakening
Amenophis/Amenhotep IV	1372-1354	“Akhenaton”: monotheistic
Smenkhare, Tutankhamun, Ai, Haremhab	1354-1314	
Nineteenth Dynasty	1315-1200	
Ramses I	1315-1312	
Seti I	1312-1290	
Ramses II	1290-1224	pharaoh of exodus, assuming a thirteenth-century date
Merenptah	1224-1200	Merenptah stele

Twentieth Dynasty	1200-1085
Ramses III	1198-1166

While we do not have definitive textual or archaeological evidence for a large number of Israelites residing in Egypt, it still remains plausible, from studying the historical background, that Israel was in Egypt. Egypt's historical background, in fact, is what we must study since we do not find conclusive evidence of Israel's existence in Egyptian historical records. Our first step, then, is to formulate a chronology of Israel in Egypt based on biblical records. First Kings 6:1 is a crucial text in this process: "Now it came about the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord." We know that the fourth year of Solomon's reign would have been c. 966 B.C.E. According to the text, then, this would be the date for the four hundred and eightieth year after the exodus. A quick calculation brings the date of the exodus to c. 1446 B.C.E., when "the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt." Such a date corresponds with Judges 11:26, which indicates that Israel had already been in the land of Canaan for three hundred years before the time of Jephthah the judge. Adopting a date later than the fifteenth century for the exodus would raise a serious problem, for the period of the Judges would then be forced into the period of the united monarchy.

Next, we must determine a date for the beginning of the Hebrew sojourn in Egypt. If we add together the years of the patriarchs' lives as they are recorded in Genesis, we reach a total of two hundred and fifteen years.²⁵ But how long was Israel in Egypt after the patriarchal period and

²⁵ Gen. 12:4; 21:5; 25:26; 47:9.

before the exodus?²⁶ Exodus 12:40 seems to say that the Israelites lived in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years (see also Exod. 15:13; Acts 7:6-7; Gal. 3:17). But on closer examination it may indicate merely that the duration of the sojourn was four hundred and thirty years. And what exactly does the “sojourn” include? The Israelites at times linked their stay in Egypt with the patriarchal period and referred to both as their sojourn, for in both periods Israel was not yet established as a nation in the Promised Land. If Joseph entered Egypt four hundred and thirty years before the exodus, the inception of the patriarchal period would be placed at c. 1876 B.C.E. (c. 1446 B.C.E. minus 430 years). But if we consider the two hundred and fifteen years of the patriarchal period to be included in the four hundred and thirty years of sojourning, then the date for Joseph’s entrance into Egypt—for the ending of the patriarchal period and the beginning of the Egyptian sojourn—would be c. 1661 B.C.E. (c. 1446 B.C.E. minus 215 years).²⁷

²⁶ See William H. Shea’s article, “Exodus, Date of the” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, ed., Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1982), 230-238. See also “The Historical Background of the Patriarchal Period” and “The Chronology of Early Bible History” in *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, ed. Francis D. Nichol (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1978), 133-148 and 174-196. These articles were of considerable aid to me.

²⁷ This “short chronology” of the sojourn in Egypt seems to be supported by the Septuagint (LXX), by Josephus, by rabbinic tradition, and by some early church fathers (e.g., Tertullian). It is the view propounded by Beitzel, which Alfred J. Hoerth discusses in his *Archaeology and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 59-61. Yet there is also evidence for a “long chronology” based on an analysis of the Masoretic text (MT), ancient text variants, and other early church fathers (e.g., Hippolytus). This is the stance that Paul J. Ray, Jr. takes in his well-researched article “The Duration of the Israelite Sojourn in Egypt” in *Andrews University Seminary Studies* 24:3 (Autumn 1986), 231-248. Additionally, he argues that the twelfth dynasty of the Middle Kingdom (long chronology) would be as historically suitable a time for Joseph’s entry into Egypt as the Second Intermediate Period (short chronology). However, for those who accept a thirteenth-century date for the exodus (rather than a fifteenth-century date) as well as a long chronology for the Egyptian sojourn, Joseph would still enter Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period.

IV. Israel in Egypt

Now we must endeavor to reconcile the biblical chronology with the chronology of Egypt's kingdoms and dynasties. If the Egyptian sojourn was indeed two hundred and fifteen years long, then Joseph would have entered Egypt c. 1661 B.C.E., during the Second Intermediate or "Hyksos" Period. If, on the other hand, the period of Egyptian sojourn was the complete four hundred and thirty years, Joseph would have entered Egypt c. 1876, during the Middle Kingdom. What difference does it make? To answer that question we must first understand the dynamics that characterized both of these historical periods.

The Middle Kingdom came on the scene c. 2150 B.C.E. and reunited a kingdom that had splintered due to weak leadership in the First Intermediate Period. Yet even though the Middle Kingdom at first brought stability to Egypt, it too eventually began weakening. The Middle Kingdom consisted of two strong, nationalistic dynasties; yet by the end of the second, it became difficult to find an suitable heir to the throne. This was probably the most significant factor in the Middle Kingdom's demise—and is evidenced by the last ruler being a queen, not a king.

The first two dynasties, at least, of the Second Intermediate Period were probably controlled by ethnic Egyptians, although from a different line than the Middle Kingdom royal families. These were extremely unstable times in Egypt's history, with many new kings rising to power only to be summarily deposed. By the fifteenth dynasty, a group of foreigners took advantage of Egypt's weak position and gained ascendancy to its throne. Actually, they were probably residents of Egypt but with an ethnic heritage from Canaan or other localities north of Egypt. The Egyptians deeply resented their rule, and named them simply "Hyksos," the Egyptian word for "foreign ruler." We do not even know what these Hyksos called themselves. And yet

they made a concerted effort to assimilate into Egyptian culture—dressing like the pharaohs, respecting Egyptian gods, writing with hieroglyphs, encouraging the preservation of texts and art significant to Egyptian history, and adopting many other Egyptian practices. Still this is a time of disgrace in Egypt, and when the Hyksos are finally overthrown and replaced by the indigenous Egyptian New Kingdom, general jubilation ensues. This defeat of foreign aggressors gave the New Kingdom an even greater sense of national pride than the Old Kingdom had possessed. The New Kingdom's "militaristic and imperialistic outlook" caused it to issue the severest anathemas against the Hyksos and to purge all reference of them from their records.²⁸

Suppose that Egyptian history is all we have to guide us in determining the most likely date for Israel's entrance into Egypt. In which period or kingdom would we place such an event? Suppose that our choices were further limited to two periods, the Old Kingdom (given a 430-year-long Egyptian sojourn) and the Second Intermediate/Hyksos Period (given a 215-year-long Egyptian sojourn). Would the differing circumstances and prevalent attitudes of these periods lead us to favor one over the other? Which period would be the most conceivable for the beginning of the Hebrew settlement in Egypt? The evidence seems to point toward the Hyksos Period. Reading the story of Joseph in the Bible, we wonder how he, a foreign slave, rose to the position of second in command of Egypt. Divine intervention surely played a role. But does this not seem to fit better into the context of the foreign Hyksos reign than the nationalistic Old Kingdom reign? The *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* concurs: "The settlement of Joseph and his family in Egypt may perhaps be placed c. 1700 B.C. in round figures, i.e. late 13th

²⁸ Paul Finkelman and Joseph C. Miller, eds., *Macmillan Encyclopedia of World Slavery*, vol. 1 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998), 281.

dynasty passing over into the Hyksos period.” It adds that during this period, foreigners and especially Semites were given positions of authority as officials.²⁹ The Hyksos, foreigners themselves, clearly would not have a great a problem with non-Egyptians gaining such power. Would they not have been more likely than the Middle Kingdom pharaohs to welcome Joseph’s family to Egypt and to give them a choice tract of agricultural land in Goshen?

“But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them. Now a new king arose over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.”³⁰ This passage record two kings and, I believe, two dynasties.³¹ The new king who arose over Egypt certainly would not have “known” Joseph. Moreover, anyone who was friendly with the Hyksos regime was automatically an enemy of the New Kingdom. This view is confirmed by Exodus 1:10: “ ‘Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply and in the event of war, they also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us, and depart from the land.’ ” The New Kingdom pharaohs were still wary of “those who hate us,” presumably the Hyksos. If the Hebrews, a substantial portion of Egypt’s population, was more favorable toward the Hyksos than the national Egyptian government, the pharaoh feared that these two groups would unite against Egypt in times of war. Correlations like these between the biblical text and Egyptian history convince me that the best explanation for fitting the biblical narrative into Egyptian chronology is a patriarchal period that begins c. 1876 B.C.E., an Egyptian sojourn that begins c. 1661 B.C.E., and an exodus from Egypt c. 1446 B.C.E.

²⁹ Tenney, 237.

³⁰ Exod. 1:7, 8.

³¹ Supported by Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 122.

V. Foreigners and Slaves in Egypt

Many people groups populated Egypt throughout its history, especially if we include the prisoners of war from various Egyptian military campaigns. These included peoples from Africa, Asia, and Europe, some of which were the Nubians, Libyans, and Negroes, and the Hittites, Arameans, Syrians, *Shassu*, *Hurru*, *Apiru/Habiru*, Semites, Sea Peoples and Cretans.³²

Foreigners settled in Egypt for many and varied reasons. Famine and drought were natural disasters common in the ancient Near East. During such seasons of privation, people would flock to Egypt, the most prosperous nation of that time, to acquire food. Like Jacob's sons, some simply wanted grain to take back to their own homes.³³ Others, like Abraham and Sarah, chose to stay in Egypt until the famine had ended.³⁴ Some of these settlers indeed returned to their native lands at the end of the drought. But others permanently relocated their families to Egypt.³⁵

Trade is another prime example of the mingling of foreign cultures with Egyptian society. In addition, a semi-nomadic lifestyle of flock herding was typical along many of Egypt's borders. Many non-Egyptian herders often wandered into Egypt and thus interacted with, and sometimes

³² Donald B. Redford, ed., *Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 544-5.

³³ Gen. 42:1, 2.

³⁴ Gen. 12:10.

³⁵ Gen. 45:17-20. This was the case with the relocation of Jacob and his family to Egypt at the request of Joseph and the pharaoh.

settled in, Egypt.³⁶ The slave trade also imported foreign peoples to Egypt, but most of the foreign slaves were prisoners of war captured in a pharaoh's military campaign.³⁷ "Most Egyptian slaves," in fact, "would have been Asiatic prisoners of war."³⁸ The Bible makes an interesting comment when it mentions a "mixed multitude" leaving Egypt along with the Israelites in the exodus.³⁹ Indeed, a "mixed multitude," people from various ethnic backgrounds, would have labored as slaves along with the Israelites in Egypt.⁴⁰ If the exodus story is mere aetiology, why would the storytellers not have focused exclusively on their people?

Once slaves or prisoners of war arrived in Egypt, they were presented to the pharaoh, and then assigned to serve in various capacities. Some were dedicated to an Egyptian god or goddess, to serve for the remainder of their lives in that deity's temples or to be funerary laborers. Others engaged in domestic labor, and since they were likely to work alongside the household servants, they were usually treated less harshly than most other slaves. The majority of slaves, however, were field laborers. Here the foreign slaves toiled along with some ethnic Egyptian slaves and *corvée* laborers. Slave documents frequently referenced not only agricultural slaves, but also

³⁶ "The Report of a Frontier Official" in Pritchard, *ANET*, 259 is a late-nineteenth dynasty Egyptian record documenting the admittance of *Shasu* (Asiatic bedouin) into Egypt so they could benefit from better grazing grounds in the region of Wadi Tumilat in the land of Goshen. Even though this occurrence is centuries after when Jacob's family would have settled in Goshen, it does demonstrate that the biblical narrative is not unique or unusual.

³⁷ Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 61-2.

³⁸ Ian Shaw and Paul Nicholson, *British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* (London: British Museum Press, 1995), 272.

³⁹ Exod. 12:38

⁴⁰ Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 114.

slaves who labored in a particular trade or skill. These skilled slaves included builders, craftsmen, flock herders, grape pressers, fowlers, textile workers, and even brick makers.⁴¹ But even they worked under the constant and scrutinizing eye of harsh Egyptian taskmasters.⁴²

Slaves were an important part of ancient Egypt's economy. We find evidence of those "reduced to servitude" as early as the Old Kingdom.⁴³ But "slavery, strictly speaking, existed between the XVIIIth and XXIIInd Dynasties inclusive [New Kingdom through Late Period], while before and after that period only various degrees of 'bondage' can be demonstrated."⁴⁴

Historians tell us that the New Kingdom—the same time that biblical chronology indicates the Hebrews were forced into mass slavery—was the "most flourishing time of Egyptian slavery."⁴⁵

Before the New Kingdom, a rigid organizational structure of slavery had not existed and it was often difficult to distinguish between slaves and servants. However, the New Kingdom brought not only a proliferation but also a formalization of slavery.⁴⁶

VI. Evidence of Hebrew Slaves in Egypt

So far, we have seen that the biblical account of Hebrew slaves in Egypt can be reconciled with the historical background of Egypt. Especially convincing are the correlations between

⁴¹ Much of this information in this section comes from Abd el-Mohsen Bakir, *Slavery in Pharaonic Egypt* (N.p.: L'Organisation Egyptienne Generale du Livre, 1978).

⁴² K. A. Kitchen, "From the Brickfield of Egypt," *Tyndale Bulletin* 27 (1976): 138, 140.

⁴³ Loprieno in *The Egyptians*, 191-4.

⁴⁴ Bakir, *Slavery in Pharaonic Egypt*, 124.

⁴⁵ Junius P. Rodriguez, ed., *The Historical Encyclopedia of World Slavery*, vol. 1 (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 1997), 243.

⁴⁶ Bakir, *Slavery in Pharaonic Egypt*, 100. Loprieno in *The Egyptians*, 202-3.

Egyptian and biblical records in the Second Intermediate (Hyksos) Period when Joseph may have been brought to Egypt, and in the New Kingdom when Moses would have led the Israelites out of Egypt. But besides the general climate of openness to foreigners in the Hyksos period or an escalation of slavery in the New Kingdom, do we find any evidence of actual Hebrews being slaves in Egypt during this time period? I believe that there is sufficient circumstantial evidence in Egyptian records to warrant faith in the biblical account. Ancient Egyptian texts and pictures document the existence of Asiatic peoples in Egypt during the time the Hebrews would have been there. We also have evidence that some Asiatics were slaves—and slaves involved in the same type of work as the Bible describes. In addition, Egyptian records from the time of Joseph testify to the likely domestic enslavement of Israelites. I will now discuss a few of significant finds that point to a Hebrew presence in Egypt.

We have much evidence of Asiatics in Egypt, but the picture in Plate 1 provides an especially fascinating depiction of Asiatics bringing eye-paint to the pharaoh.⁴⁷ It comes from a wall painting in the tomb of Khnum-hotep III at Beni Hasan and dates to c. 1980 B.C.E. in the Middle Kingdom. The translation of the painting's hieroglyphic heading reads: "The arriving, bringing eye-paint, which thirty-seven Asiatics brought to him."⁴⁸ What is fascinating is that the Asiatics are wearing striped, multi-colored clothing. We do not find other races wearing such

⁴⁷ To be convinced of the great number of Asiatics in Egypt, one need merely look in the index of Pritchard's *ANET* under "Apiru" or of James B. Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1969) under "Asiatic." Primary-source evidence of their involvement in Egypt abounds.

⁴⁸ "Scenes of Asiatic Commerce in Theban Tombs" in Pritchard, *ANET*, 249.

garments, and it serves as a striking parallel to the biblical story of Joseph's coat of many colors.⁴⁹

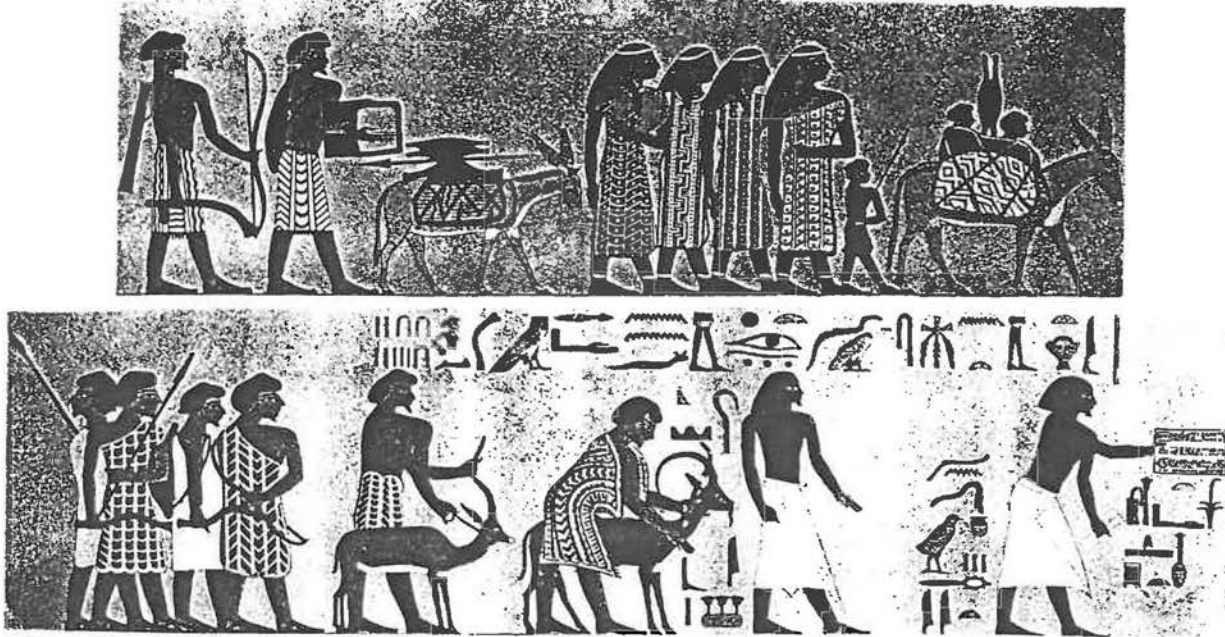


Plate 1. Asiatics with multi-colored clothing (c. 1890 B.C.E.).⁵⁰

So now we have evidence of Asiatics inhabiting Egypt, but do we have any evidence of their enslavement?⁵¹ In fact, Plate 2 shows a tomb wall painting of fair-skinned Asiatic slaves and dark-skinned Nubian slaves laboring in the production of bricks. The scene comes from the tomb of Rekh-mi-Re in the Theban necropolis and dates to the mid-fifteenth century B.C.E., or around the time of the Hebrew exodus. Part of the accompanying hieroglyphic inscription reads: “making bricks to build anew the workshops (of Amun) in Karnak.”⁵² The painting depicts the entire brick-making process. Kenneth Kitchen describes it well:

⁴⁹ Gen. 37:3.

⁵⁰ Pritchard, *Ancient Near East in Pictures*, 2-3.

⁵¹ In addition to the following evidence, see also appendix 2.

⁵² Pritchard, *Ancient Near East in Pictures*, 249.

Workers. . . draw large jarfuls of water from a pool, mix water and clay with their hoes, and mould (or 'strike') row upon row of bricks with a hollow rectangular brickmould. One man measures-off a pile of bricks with his hoe, while others carry off yoke-loads of dried bricks to the building site, shown as a structure reached by a sloping ramp. Among the men, Egyptian overseers (each armed with a slim baton) sit or stroll keeping vigil over the work in progress. While the number of people depicted may simply be adventitious, there seem to be nine or ten men per overseer. In this scene, it is the presence of foreigners from the Levant (like the Hebrews) that has so often attracted

attention.⁵³

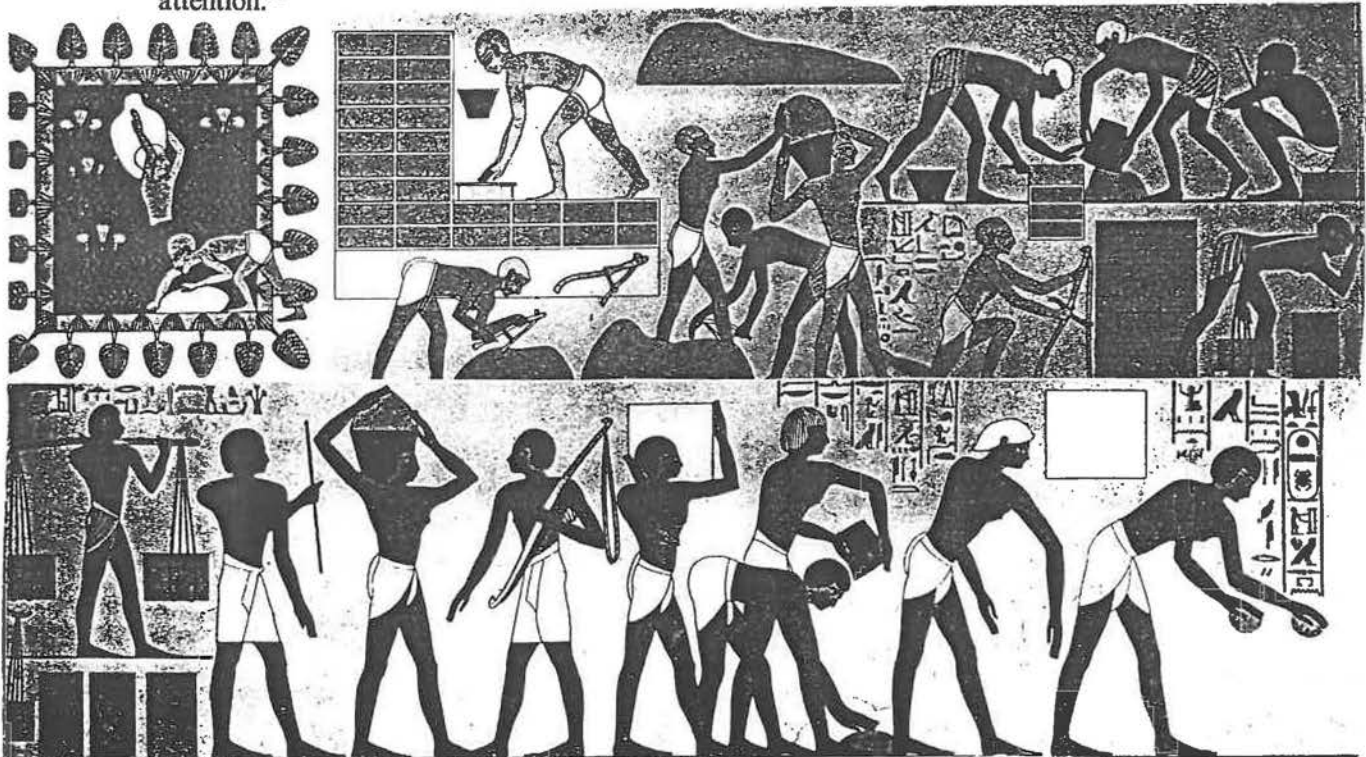


Plate 2. Asiatic slaves making bricks (c. 1250 B.C.E.).⁵⁴

⁵³ Kitchen, "From the Brickfields of Egypt," 140.

⁵⁴ D. J. Wiseman, *Illustrations from Biblical Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1958), 44-5.

Brick making, the task of the Hebrew slaves in the Bible, seems to be a common undertaking in ancient Egypt. Plate 3 shows a tomb model of brick makers from the Middle Kingdom. “The central man digs mud to be placed in the basket once held by the kneeling figure. The third man (left) presses the mud into a frame to form a brick, three rows of which lie before him.”⁵⁵

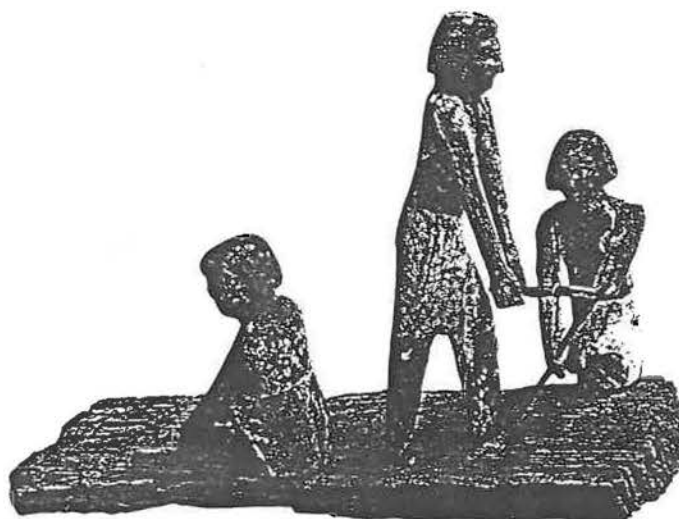


Plate 3. Tomb model of brickmakers (c. 2000 B.C.E.).⁵⁶

In Papyrus Anastasi IV from the New Kingdom papyrus, one royal official complains that “there are no men to mould bricks and no straw in the district.”⁵⁷ Like the biblical narrative says, straw was used to make brick production easier since it acted as a binder for the clay. Archaeologists have discovered such mud bricks that bear straw impressions. Plate 4 is a picture of one of these bricks with the royal stamp of the thirteenth-century B.C.E. Ramses II on it.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Wiseman, *Illustrations from Biblical Archaeology*, 42.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Kitchen, “From the Brickfields of Egypt,” 141.

⁵⁸ Wiseman, *Illustrations from Biblical Archaeology*, 42-3.



Plate 4. Mud brick with straw impressions (c. 1330 B.C.E.).⁵⁹

Thus far we have documented that Asiatics lived in Egypt during the time the Bible records the Israelites being there. Some of these Asiatics were enslaved, and one of their tasks was to make bricks. It seems quite plausible that Hebrew Asiatic slaves could fit into this picture. But do we have any evidence that the Israelites themselves, and not just the more general designation of Asiatics, were in Egypt? Once again we do. A papyrus fragment dating to c. 1700 B.C.E. lists seventy-nine household servants of a Theban family, with over forty of them specifically designated as Asiatic. When linguists studied the names of those listed, they found that a number of the names—Aqaba, Shiphrah, and Menahem, for example—were unquestionably Hebrew.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Pritchard, *ANET*, 553-4. Wiseman, *Illustrations from Biblical Archaeology*, 37, 39. See appendix 2 for the complete list of names.

VII. Conclusions

In this paper, we have identified the most likely dates for the Hebrews' involvement in Egypt. We have studied the political, social, and economic climate of those periods of Egypt's history in which the Israelites would have most likely been dwelling there. We do not have an abundance of evidence that completely validates the biblical record of Hebrew enslavement in Egypt, but we have observed some impressive circumstantial evidence of their presence. Moreover, our study of Egyptian history leads us to believe that the conditions and practices in Egypt from the Second Intermediate (Hyksos) Period through the New Kingdom provide a favorable context for the Bible's narratives of Israel in Egypt.

The Bible and Egyptian records do not clash. If archaeologists were to unearth definitive evidence of the Hebrews' presence in Egypt, it would fit congruently with what we already know of those periods of Egypt's history. It would be a welcome surprise, yet not shocking—it would not contradict any evidence we now have. Bible and Egyptian records indeed run on parallel tracks and thus it is possible to link them historically. We should not be so hasty to deny that connection merely because we cannot arrive at definitive conclusions. To mesh these two accounts—the Bible's and Egypt's—we need not force them together or alter our views regarding Egypt's history in these periods. The two are reconcilable. Furthermore, including the biblical narratives of Israel in Egypt in the stream of Egyptian history would add to our understanding both of the Bible and of Egypt's social structure and culture.

Nonetheless, the question still remains: Why is there no conclusive evidence that will prove forever that there was an Israelite sojourn in Egypt? Let us consider a few explanations for such scarcity of direct evidence. Some suggest that the event of the Hebrew infiltration,

enslavement, and exodus was not significant or “monumental” enough to be recorded in Egyptian annals or depictions.⁶¹ To believe this, however, we must accept the view that the biblical narrative is not historical fact, but that it contains merely the “historical kernel” that we mentioned previously. Obviously, a few families migrating to Egypt in times of drought or a few slaves escaping their masters and running out of Egypt through the wilderness do not warrant a grand inscription. Such occurrences were routine in ancient Egypt.⁶² But if we accept the historicity of the Bible, we must affirm that the Israelite sojourn in Egypt was indeed a major event, and definitely one that deserved to be included in Egyptian historical records.

Then why is it not there? Those who view the Bible as a type of historical fiction have no problem explaining such an absence.⁶³ But I believe that a better answer comes from understanding two points—the nature of historical research and archaeology in the ancient periods, and the attitude of Egypt toward events in which they were not victorious.

Imagine researchers four thousand years from now trying to recreate today’s society by digging through millennia of accumulated civilizations. How accurate would you expect their perceptions to be? How comprehensive their conclusions? In Israel, the hub for biblical archaeology excavations, only a fraction of the sites that could be excavated have been identified, only a fraction of those identified have been excavated, only a fraction of the excavations begun have been completed, and of those, only a fraction of the site has been excavated.⁶⁴ Thus it

⁶¹ Malamat, “The Exodus: Egyptian Analogies” in *Exodus*, 16.

⁶² “The Pursuit of Runaway Slaves” in Pritchard, *ANET*, 259.

⁶³ This is similar to the “historical kernel” theory that we discussed previously.

⁶⁴ Hoerth, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*, 21-2.

follows that we know only a fraction of the information that archaeology can reveal to us. The majority of the evidence remains underground. Further complicating the matter, even if we were to find all the material evidence that remains buried, this still would not give us a completely accurate picture. For only a fraction of material evidence survives for four thousand years, and even material evidence tells us only a portion of what we would like to know about a civilization. Because of this, even though archaeology operates scientifically, its conclusions are usually based more on a creative piecing together of a historical puzzle than on a strict adherence to an unerring formula.

Archaeologists therefore affirm that archaeology cannot truly validate history.⁶⁵ Nor do they support the “argument from silence,” for they are ever mindful that their next spadeful of dirt may turn up a thumbnail-sized seal that would counter the hypotheses they have spent their entire careers formulating and defending. Thus the maxim: “no evidence is no evidence.” Finding no evidence of an event is not evidence that it did not happen. It is simply not evidence at all. So could the Hebrews have lived in Egypt for a few hundred years without archaeologists finding evidence of their existence? Indeed. Who knows what still lies unearthed?

But let us for a moment suppose that there actually is no buried evidence—either written or depicted—of an Israelite sojourn in Egypt. Might the Hebrews still have been in Egypt? Yes. The Egyptian kingdom, like that of most ancient civilizations, worked vigilantly to erase records of historical events that did not portray Egypt in a victorious light.⁶⁶ They methodically defaced

⁶⁵ Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 53. The first chapter of Hoerth’s book, *Archaeology and the Old Testament*, explains that even biblical archaeology is not for the purpose of proving the Bible, but rather to illuminate and confirm it.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 164 and *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, 234.

hundreds of cartouches (royal seals and seal impressions) of pharaohs they wished to forget. They even sought to erase any evidence that the Hyksos had ruled Egypt for over two hundred years—and our records from that period are extremely scanty. Every depiction and description of a battle shows the Egyptian forces, led by pharaoh, vanquishing and smiting the enemy forces and rejoicing in yet another stunning victory. Granted, the Egyptian forces did win many battles, but they lost some too. Yet no evidence in Egypt hints at their defeats that are recorded by surrounding nations. Could there have been an Israelite sojourn in Egypt without us ever finding evidence of it? Certainly—the Egyptians would have been very reticent to admit their powerlessness against the will of their slaves and a foreign God.⁶⁷

So in conclusion, even if we were to find no evidence of Hebrew presence in Egypt, we must not automatically discard the validity of the biblical narrative. But of course we do have evidence. The Bible's story of the Hebrew slaves in Egypt fits well into the context of Egyptian history from the Second Intermediate Period to the New Kingdom. And ancient Egyptian pictures and texts bolster the credibility of the biblical account, making it seem very likely that a Hebrew sojourn in Egypt did indeed take place. So can we trust the Bible stories we were raised on? Can we reconcile the biblical account of Hebrew slavery with Egyptian historical records?

⁶⁷ Here is an interesting fact: We may actually have evidence of Moses in Egyptian records without knowing that it is him. The designation Moses/Mose was a common part of Egyptian names. It is translated “out of,” “drawn from,” or “begotten of.” The prefix to Moses/Mose would be a theophoric element, a name or derivative name of an Egyptian god. Thus we have Ramose, Thutmose, Ahmose, etc. But because Moses believed in the God of heaven, it would have been a sacrilege for his name to be “begotten of [an Egyptian god].” So the Bible only records the suffix of his name, and we assume that he dropped the name of the Egyptian god early on. But we wonder which god his name originated from. With a knowledge of only half his name, we might read about the biblical Moses in Egyptian records without even knowing it! See also the first chapter of Hoffmeier's *Israel in Egypt*.

The evidence demonstrates that we can. I believe that the future will hold even more evidence that will confirm the biblical narrative. Remember that only a fraction of the evidence has been exposed. The earth will continue to speak to us as archaeologists uncover more treasures in time.

Appendix 1



The Merenptah Stele ⁶⁸



Close-up of Stele's Hieroglyphic "Israel" Inscription⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Wiseman, *Illustrations from Biblical Archaeology*, 47.

⁶⁹ James B. Pritchard, ed., *The Ancient Near East. An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), ill. 96.

Appendix 2

Slave/Servant List which includes Asiatics and Hebrews:⁷⁰

(viii 1) The king's servant, Renes-seneb's son, Ankhu—he is called Hedjri—house-man.¹

The maidservant, Iy's daughter, Sat-Gemeni—it is her name—hairdresser.

Her daughter, Renes-seneb—it is her name—child.

The king's servant, Iusni's son, Ashau—it is his name—fieldhand.

(5) (The king's servant), Iy's son, Ibu—it is his name—fieldhand.

The Asiatic, Seneb-Res-seneb—it is his name—cook.

The Asiatic woman, Rehui—she is called Kai-pu-nebi—warper of cloth.²

Her son and Nefu's son, Res-seneb—he is called Renef-res—child.

[The Asia]tic, [A]pra-Reshpu³—[he is called . . .]—brewer.

(10) The Asiatic woman, Haiimmi—she is called . . .—weaver of linen.

The Asiatic woman, Menahem—she [is called . . .]—weaver of linen.

The Asiatic, Su . . .—he is called Ankhu-seneb—cook.

¹ An Egyptian, as always below in the absence of the word "Asiatic." The nickname Hedjri or Hedjru probably meant "Hyena."

² Commentators believe that both names are Egyptian.

³ (The god) "Reshpu Nourishes."

The Asiatic woman, Sekratu⁴—she is called Wer-dit-ni-Nub—weaver of linen.

(The Asiatic woman), Immi-Sukru⁵—(she is called) Seneb-[Sen]-Usert—[weaver of] linen.

(15) (The Asiatic woman), Aduttu⁶—(she is called) Nub . . .—[weaver of li]nen.

(The Asiatic woman), [Se]kratu—(she is called) Sen[eb . . .]—weaver of cloth.

(ix 17) The Asiatic woman, Akhati-mer⁷—she is called Henuti-pu-Wadjet—warper of linen.

The Asiatic, Tuti-uit⁸—he is called Ankh-em-hesut—house-man.

The Asiatic, Qui . . .—he is called Res-seneb—house-man.

(20) The king's servant, Ii . . .—it is his name—house-man.

The Asiatic woman, Shepra⁹—she is called Seneb-henutes¹⁰—weaver of linen.

The Asiatic woman, Sukra-ipyty—she is called Merit-Nub—warper of cloth.

The Asiatic woman, Asher—[she is] called Wer-Intef . . .—weaver . . .

Her daughter, Senebtisy—it [is her name]—child.

(25) The Asiatic woman, An[ath . . .]—she [is called] Nub-em-mer-Kis—weaver of linen.

The Asiatic woman, Shamashtu—she is called Seneb-henut . . .—warper of linen.

The Asiatic Isibtu—he is called Amen-em . . .—sutor.

The maidservant, Wewi's daughter, Irit—it is her name . . .

The Asiatic [woman, . . .]i-huti—she is called Men-hesut . . .

(30) Her daughter, *Dedet-Mut* . . .—[it is her name]—child.

Her son, Ankhu-seneb . . .—child.

The Asiatic [woman], Akh . . .— . . .— . . . linen.

(x 33) The Asiatic [woman], Aduna—she is called Seneb-he[nut . . .]— . . .

Her son Ankhu—he is called Hedjru¹¹—child.

(35) The Asiatic woman, Baaltuya—she is called Wah-Res-seneb—work-staff.

⁴ A name related to Issachar.

⁵ (The goddess) "Sukru is my Mother."

⁶ "Lady."

⁷ Perhaps abbreviated from Akhati-milkatu, "My Sister is Queen."

⁸ "My Beloved is He."

⁹ Related to the name Sapphira.

¹⁰ "Her Mistress is in Good Health."

¹¹ See n 1 above.

Her daughter Senebtisy—it is her name—child.

The Asiatic woman, Aqaba¹²—she is called Res-seneb-wah—warper of linen.

[The maidservant], Senaa-ib's daughter, Ren-seneb—it is her name—gardener.

Her [daughter], Henuti-pu—it is her name—child.¹³

(xi 58) Her son, Ankhu—he is called Pa-Amu—child.¹⁴

The Asiatic woman, Anath . . .—she is called Iun-er-tan¹⁵—warper of linen.

(60) The maidservant; Iiti—she is called Bebi-sherit's daughter, Iit—weaver . . .

The Asiatic woman, Ro-inet—she is called Seneb-h[enut]es—weaver of linen.

The Asiatic woman, Hiabi-ilu¹⁶—she is called Neh-ni-em-khasut¹⁷—workhouse (worker).

Her son, Abi . . . m—he is called Seneb-nebef.¹⁸

(xii 64) [The Asiatic woman, . . .]i-Baal—she is called Netjeri-em-sai—warper of linen.

. . . hau—it is her name—warper of cloth.

Her son, Res-seneb—it is his name.

The Asiatic woman, Sakar—she is called Nub-erdis— . . .

The king's servant, Res-seneb—it is his name—house-man.

The Asiatic woman, Tjenatisi—she is called Peti-menti—workhouse (worker). . . .¹⁹

⁷⁰ Reproduced from Pritchard, *ANET*, 553-4.

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SOUTHERN SCHOLARS SENIOR PROJECT

Name: Marla A. Samaan Date: 1-18-2002 Major: - Religious Studies
- Archaeology (Near Eastern)
- Archaeology (Classical)

SENIOR PROJECT

A significant scholarly project, involving research, writing, or special performance, appropriate to the major in question, is ordinarily completed the senior year. The project is expected to be of sufficiently high quality to warrant a grade of A and to justify public presentation.

Under the guidance of a faculty advisor, the Senior Project should be an original work, should use primary sources when applicable, should have a table of contents and works cited page, should give convincing evidence to support a strong thesis, and should use the methods and writing style appropriate to the discipline.

The completed project, to be turned in in duplicate, must be approved by the Honors Committee in consultation with the student's supervising professor three weeks prior to graduation. Please include the advisor's name on the title page. The 2-3 hours of credit for this project is done as directed study or in a research class.

Keeping in mind the above senior project description, please describe in as much detail as you can the project you will undertake. You may attach a separate sheet if you wish:

" 'House of Bondage': Can the Biblical Account of Hebrew Slavery Be Reconciled with Egyptian Historical Records? "

First, I give an overview of the biblical account and of Egyptian history. Then I give various options of how to reconcile biblical and Egyptian chronology. What setting (historical) would best reconcile the two. I decide on the Hyksos period of Egyptian history as the best option for when Israelite slaves would have been in Egypt, and trace Egyptian slavery in general through this period.

Finally, I give specific examples - evidence from Egyptian ^(primary sources) pictures and text - that seem to support the biblical account that the Hebrews were in slaves in Egypt.

Signature of faculty advisor Byron McArthur Expected date of completion April 2002

Approval to be signed by faculty advisor when completed:

This project has been completed as planned: ✓

This in an "A" project: ✓

This project is worth 2-3 hours of credit: ✓

Advisor's Final Signature Byron McArthur

Chair, Honors Committee _____ Date Approved: _____

Dear Advisor, please write your final evaluation on the project on the reverse side of this page. Comment on the characteristics that make this "A" quality work.

No question about Marla's project — diligent research
and fine presentation of material.

This is the revised
version.

Marla
😊

I approve,

Walter Hill