

The Historical Moses

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Who was Moses?¹ Aside from scripture, is there any historical evidence that he was a real person? The answer to these two seemingly straightforward questions is not correspondingly simple. Although the name Moses is well known throughout the world, the man Moses² is something of an enigma. However, newly correlated archeological discoveries, combined with other historical materials, reveal a tantalizing possibility, almost overwhelming in its implications, and it is to this point that this paper has been prepared.

Background

For those whose faith in the Old Testament's inspired accuracy is absolute, they seek no physical evidence of Moses as a man of history.³ On the other hand, for those who are familiar with the collection process of the numerous and various ancient manuscripts that were eventually compiled into the biblical record, it would be of significant value to know more about the person who is accredited with producing the first five books of the Christian Bible. The first five books of the Old Testament constitute the Jewish Torah, and they also provide much of the source material for elements of the Islamic Holy Book known as the Qur'an.⁴

By way of background, it is helpful to know that the process of compiling what we universally refer to as the Bible, took place some three hundred years AFTER the crucifixion of Jesus. This statement is not disputed by scholars or theologians of

¹ "He is known as the legendary Hebrew liberator, leader, lawgiver, prophet, and historian. In the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam, the life of Moses (*Musa*) is narrated and recounted more than any other prophet recognized in Islam. Although the Qur'an reiterates what was available and currently present in Jewish scripture, slight differences can be found." Source: Wikipedia

² "Modern translations of the Old Testament took the name Moses from the Greek translation of the Bible where it is rendered as Mosis. This in turn was taken from the books of the Hebrew Tanak, where it appears in its original form as Mose." Source: Graham Phillips, *The Templars and the Ark of the Covenant*, Bear & Company 2004, p51. The Egyptian translation of the word "Mose" is "son." Mose is frequently used in Egyptian in conjunction with another word to indicate that one was a son of a god or indicating the birthright son of royal lineage.

³ Sigmund Freud in his book *Moses and Monotheism*, (1939) made this summing remark about Moses: "And since we know that behind the God who chose the Jews and delivered them from Egypt stood the man Moses, who achieved that deed, ostensibly at God's command, I venture to say this: It was one man, the man Moses, who created the Jews."

⁴ Moses occurs 136 times in the Qur'an, more than any other prophet. The first five books of the Christian Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) are widely considered to be the five books of Moses. These same five books constitute the Torah (meaning "the law") for the Jews. Interestingly, Muslims, Jews, and Christians, virtually all agree that Moses is the author of these first five books.

virtually any particular religious affiliation and there is extensive and irrefutable evidence to validate this fact.

The ancient writings that were eventually combined into what we refer to as the Old Testament were drawn exclusively from an index of textual materials revered by Jewish scholars around the time of Christ. Emperor Constantine, the pagan dictator of Rome, commissioned the first standardized reproduction of this compilation of ancient manuscripts in 325 AD.

The writings accredited to Moses are from a period of at least fifteen hundred years before Emperor Constantine, who in turn lived almost seventeen hundred years prior to us. The Moses' books trace stories covering a period of at least another twenty-five hundred years prior to the time of the Exodus⁵ of the twelve tribes of Israel from Egypt, which is the pivotal event in time for which Moses is particularly remembered. It should also be recognized that many of the stories found in the book of Genesis have mirror elements in the legendary and mythological records of ancient civilizations. Some of these writings, theoretically,⁶ pre-date Moses by significant periods of time. Rather than viewing these archeological discoveries as somehow undermining the authenticity of the Genesis record, the widespread integration of these story motifs in the lives of ancient heroes actually adds creditability to the historicity of these events.

Finally, it should be noted that the Bible as it now comes to us, has endured multiple changes over the years. It was first compiled at the time of the organization of the Roman church and represented a reproduction of ancient writings venerated by Judaism, which were together coupled to a representative group of Christian writings to become what we now know as the Bible.⁷ It is from the Bible that we first learn of Moses, although other references, stories, quotations, and details on his life are contained in the Talmud (Judaic scriptural laws not included in the Bible), the Qur'an, and in a number of other ancient manuscripts that are not part of the modern Bible.

⁵ "Exodus is the second book of the Torah (the Pentateuch) and also the Tanakh (the Hebrew Bible), and the Christian Old Testament. The major events of the book concern the Exodus, a departure of Hebrew slaves from Egypt, under the leadership of Moses. The Septuagint designates the second book of the Pentateuch as "Exodus", meaning departure, or out-going." Source: Wikipedia.org

⁶ Some historians claim that the birth story of Moses comes from a much older Mesopotamian birth myth of Sargon the Great, one of the earliest of the world's great empire builders. Sargon lived approximately 2300 BC, or about a thousand years before Moses. However, upon closer examination, the story of Sargon's birth was not actually written until 700 BC, or about six hundred years AFTER Moses lived.

⁷ It is sobering to note that the production of the Bible combined with the military and political power of Rome, literally changed the course of human events and has impacted much or even most of human history for the past two thousand years.

The traditional view is that Moses lived around six hundred years after the Patriarch Abraham, and that Moses was personally responsible for condensing records gathered from previous times, in order to create the backdrop against which the Exodus would be understood. Assuming this is correct, it is perfectly logical why many details of former periods are not included in the Bible and why there are various inconsistencies within the text.

Notwithstanding multiple scholastic endeavors to the contrary, the Bible has been vindicated again and again as to its overall historical integrity. In other words, early biblical texts reflect real historical settings, although we usually have a limited view of the cultural and political climate within which many of these vignettes have taken place. Hence, it is generally prudent to accept biblical stories as a valid attempt to record a real event, subject to the writer's personal knowledge of the event, or insofar as earlier source materials have been translated correctly. To this latter point, modern scholarship continues to discover mistranslated words or phrases from earlier textual materials contained within the Bible, but the overall veracity of the scriptures remain intact.

To be able to define with relative certainty the actual time of the Exodus would allow many other biblical stories, both forward and backward in time, to be centered in their particular cultural and political setting as currently understood through secular sources. Thus, it is that over time, both secular and religious scholars, historians, and archeologists, have varyingly argued for different specific dates for the Exodus period. Most have tried to synchronize their thinking with chronologies of Egyptian king lists. Many of these theories have woven their way into our collective subconscious, after all who has not seen the Cecil B. DeMille production of "The Ten Commandments" wherein it presents Seti I as the Pharaoh of the captivity and Ramses II as the Pharaoh of the Exodus. (Close but no cigar!)

Many of these theoretical models have lost their attraction and dissipated over time as new materials have been discovered, translated and correlated. A fresh look at dating the exodus story in concert with a proposal that Moses was actually a well-known historical king is set forth below.

Considerations

All of us view the world through our own cultural lens. So, what does that mean? Simply that we're all wearing cultural sunglasses that shade everything we see through the knowledge we've gained, and our political, social, and religious predisposition. Things are surely not quite as we think they are, but generally speaking our understanding of events and our reaction to them tend to work in our particular cultural setting. We usually think of our immediate response to new things as "logical" or "common sense." But common sense can, and frequently does, elicit a different reaction depending on your cultural bias. In the study of ancient history, it is important to step outside this cultural bias and attempt to view things from the perspective of a person living in that place and

time. (Not an easy task as oftentimes our historical biases come from misinterpreted evidence.)

History is generally learned and regularized as we view it through the lens of written documents, and this is particularly true of Egypt. However archeological contributions must not be ignored, and neither should our understanding of the oft-demonstrated reality that he who wins gets to write history. This statement is disregarded at our peril, inasmuch as historians have repeatedly observed that the successors to a throne, or the winners at war, are the ones most able to record their version of such events.

It is well known that those still reigning at the close of any historical conflict typically produced the historical record in whatever manner seemed to benefit them the most. For example, a major ancient conflict fought between Egypt and Syria was battled to a stalemate, but the monuments and records in these respective countries both portray the outcome as an incredible victory for their own king.

A primary complication with tracking down the man Moses, is that in the ancient world, it was common practice for those of influence to receive a change of name with major shifts in their lives, i.e.: Abram to Abraham, Sarai to Sarah, Jacob to Israel, and so forth. Most new names were title names that referred to new responsibilities or other events. In places like Egypt, administrators collected names throughout their life. Such is also the case of Jesus of Nazareth, commonly referred to as Jesus Christ. The name Jesus has been anglicized from the Hebrew⁸ “Yeshiva,” which is also translated into English as “Joshua,” but more importantly it is the Savior’s given name. However, the name “Christ” is a Greek title name meaning “The Anointed One.”

The use of the “Jesus Christ” moniker is so common many people think “Christ” was Jesus’ second or last name, which it was not! The use of last names did not appear for another thousand years after Christ and was not in common practice for another five hundred years after that. Jesus of Nazareth is in fact known by about fifty title names as diverse as the “The Word,” the “Lamb of God,” the “Good Shepherd” the “Bread of Life,” etc.

Why is this important to tracking down Moses? For several reasons, the most important being that we would not likely recognize his given name because Moses, or “Mose” in Egyptian, simply means “son,” and is usually a title name

⁸ A Semite is someone descended from Shem, the eldest son of Noah. A Hebrew is someone descended from Heber (or, "Eber"), one of the great-grandsons of Shem. It is thought that Eber was a king of Ebla, the major empire between Mesopotamia and Egypt from 2,400 BC through 1,800 BC, covering an area that includes ancient Syria and Canaan. Hebrews are Semites, but not all Semites are Hebrews. Sunnite Arabs and Jews are both Semites, and Hebrews. Six generations after Heber, Abraham was born to his line, so Abraham was both a Hebrew and a Semite, because he was born of the line of Heber and Shem.

associated with kingship lineage. (Inasmuch as Moses was also a type, or foreshadowing, of the Savior, this title name is all the more significant.) There are subsequent Hebrew meanings for the Moses name,⁹ but let us never forget that Moses was an Egyptian in virtually every sense of the term. The Bible, the Qur'an, and the Talmud, all confirm that Moses was raised from birth as an Egyptian prince and lived in a palace of Pharaoh.

[Name spellings are standardized in the text that follows]

If the common understanding of the Bible notation is correct, which states that the descendents of Israel were in Egypt for 430 years¹⁰ before the Exodus from Egypt, then how could Moses or the common Israelites for that matter, be anything other than Egyptians? At this point, Egypt was their culture, their language, and their life; and they knew no other. This understanding of the Israelites Egyptianess provides important insight as to why Moses was so intent upon teaching his Semitic Egyptians about their ancestry; via the creation of a written record we call the Book of Genesis, a work compiled from earlier sources.

In addition to name changes and title names, the different languages in the geographic area of interest, typically refer to known personages in their own idiom. For example, Joseph, the birthright son of Father Israel, had two sons by his royal Egyptian wife Asenath.¹¹ We know these sons in the biblical record as Manasseh and Ephraim, but their Egyptian names would be "Anen" and "Aye" respectively. Joseph himself was surely known by at least a dozen title-names; the Bible records one of these names as Zaphnath-paaneah. (Genesis 41:45)

One last point about names, neither Egyptian nor Hebrew used vowels or marks of pronunciation during the time frame of Moses. English translations of names coming to us from diverse intermediaries are frequently spelled quite differently. A well-known example of this confusion is what in Hebrew is rendered YHWH, was for four hundred years translated into English as "Jehovah" and has more recently been rendered "Yahweh."

Sources

⁹ Moses or Móshe (מֹשֶׁה, Standard Hebrew Móše, Tiberian Hebrew Mōšeh, Arabic موسى Musa)

¹⁰ Exodus 12:40 indicates 430 years, however contradictory accounts in the Old Testament indicate three options for the period of the sojourn, i.e.: Four generations, 400 years, or 430 years. There is good evidence to suggest the common rendering of the chronology is not accurate and that it was simply four generations, but for the present we shall use the most oft quoted time-frame.

¹¹ Asenath was the daughter of Potipherah; priest of On. (Genesis 41:45) Asenath means gift of the sun god, which in Egyptian lore was the supreme god, or father of all. Asenath's betrothal to Joseph, and subsequent conversion to Judaism, are the subject of the book "Joseph and Asenath," one of the Pseudepigrapha books of the Old Testament area. Copies of this ancient text have been found written in Syriac, Slavonic, Greek, Latin and Armenian.

As we endeavor to track down and identify the Moses of Egypt, our most important historical sources are the writings of Josephus,¹² Chaeremon,¹³ Apion,¹⁴ and Manetho,¹⁵ whose various works are preserved in the writings of Josephus, Africanus, Syncellus, and Eusebius. Other important ancient resources are the Turin king list,¹⁶ and other king lists found engraved on the walls of temples, tombs, and on tablets, as well as information passed on by other ancient historians like Herodotus, Plutarch, etc. In addition to ancient writings, there is a plethora of recent historical analysis and commentary developed by those skilled in the various disciplines associated with ancient Egypt, Canaan, Mesopotamia, and related areas.

The legendary elements of the life story of Moses, although fascinating and clearly representative of a real period of history, are complex and sometimes

¹² Flavius Josephus was born Joseph ben Matthias in 38AD. He was a priest from Jerusalem who became a general in the military and eventually the best-known historian of ancient times. In deference to his patronage of the emperor Vespasian of the Roman Empire, Josephus moved to Rome and spent the latter half of his life writing history. He wrote multiple works that rank above any other accounts that have survived over the ages dealing with the history, topography, social, political and economic life of Jerusalem and Palestine, then called Judea. He was a gifted man, deeply versed in the written sources of his own times and of earlier days. His principal creations are "The Jewish War" in seven books, and the "Antiquities of the Jews," in twenty books that give a more complete and exhaustive record of the history of Israel from Genesis forward, than does the Bible or any other source, or collection of sources.

¹³ Chaeremon was an Egyptian in the first century AD. He was the chief custodian of that segment of the Alexandrian library that was stored at the temple of the merged gods of Osiris and Apis, later known as Serapis. He wrote a number of works including a history of Egypt. He is also known for works on comets, Egyptian astrology, and hieroglyphics.

¹⁴ Apion was a "Greek grammarian and sophist of Alexandria, noted for his bitter hatred of the Jews; born in the Great Oasis of Egypt between 20 and 30 B.C., died probably at Rome between 45 and 48. Apion was a voluminous writer, but few of his writings have been preserved except what is found in the quotations of Josephus, his adversary. His chief work was on Egyptian history, written in close imitation of Manetho's work of the same title, "Ægyptiaca," and embodying the contents of Manetho's other works." Source: JewishEncyclopedia.com

¹⁵ Manetho was a priest of Heliopolis, the biblical On. He was Egyptian by birth and likely in the direct employ of Ptolemy I Soter, who was the king of Egypt after the conquest of Alexander. Manetho wrote a history of Egypt in Greek, which he completed about 271 BC. In his manuscript Manetho attempted to outline all of Egyptian history from mythical times up through the death of Alexander the Great. Manetho had access to the archives of the temple where he served. The temple archives contained a large number of different writings, ranging from mythological texts to scientific essays and official records. It is Manetho that divided the ancient Egyptian kingships into thirty dynasties. The original of Manetho's work was lost. We know of his work because it is quoted by later historians including: Josephus (I AD), Africanus (III AD), Eusebius (III to IV AD), and Byzantine historian George Syncellos (VIII AD).

¹⁶ The Turin King List is a papyrus document written in Egyptian hieratic. It is now in the Egyptian Museum at Turin. The text dates to Ramses II and mentions the names of all Egyptian rulers. It was discovered in Thebes. Its condition had severely deteriorated. Most of the fragments have been reassembled but many pieces to this important document remain missing.

confusing and are made the more difficult by the obvious interpolations by both Egyptian and Jewish scholars of later date, yet still prior to the initial compilation of the Bible in 325 AD.

The Historical Setting

In 1674 BC, Egypt was conquered by an army of Semites¹⁷ evidently from Canaan and Syria, who took control of the capital of Memphis. Egyptian records refer to these people as the “Rulers of the Foreign Lands.” The Greeks later perverted the Egyptian term to Hyksos, by which they are still known today. The Egyptians also referred to the despised foreign rulers by the pejorative “Shepherd Kings,” since the Hyksos were indeed shepherds, and because those involved in animal husbandry were considered an abomination by Egyptians.

They Hyksos kings re-built the Egyptian border fortress city at Avaris, which much later would be renamed Zarw, and later still, renamed Pi-Ramses after the Israelite slaves would re-build and expand on the city complex. Avaris became the capital city of the invaders, as it guarded the beginning of the eastern delta highway known as the “Ways of Horus,” which led from Egypt straight up to Canaan, Syria, and beyond. Over time, the Hyksos embraced Egyptian customs, laws, and their theories of monarchy. They controlled both lower and middle Egypt for a hundred years, until a general named “Ahmose,” born to an influential family in Luxor, raised an army and fought a decisive series of battles driving the shepherd warriors back out of Egypt. Ahmose took the throne and is accredited for founding what later scholars would refer to as the eighteenth dynasty, a golden age of ancient Egypt.

After vanquishing the hated Hyksos, instead of moving his capital city from Avaris back to Memphis, Ahmose positioned his capital south at Thebes, in Upper Egypt. It subsequently became the chief religious center of the nation. It is here that the ruins of the largest temple complex ever built are found at Karnak. Three kilometers away are the ruins of Luxor, widely known as the world’s greatest open air museum. Although the capital and national religious center remained at Thebes, the king’s main residence was at Memphis in Lower Egypt.

The oppression of the Israelites in Egypt is almost universally believed to be somewhere between the latter half of the eighteenth dynasty and Ramses II, the 3rd king of the nineteenth dynasty. This paper argues that the enslavement period is during the reign of Horemheb, the last king of the eighteenth dynasty, and that the Exodus actually took place during the short reign of Ramses I, the first king of the nineteenth dynasty. Under Ramses I, the king’s residence moved

¹⁷ “Semites are those that speak Semitic languages. This includes Arabs, Jews, Aramaeans, and some Ethiopians. In a biblical sense, Semites are people who can be traced back to Shem, Noah's eldest son. Ancient Semitic populations appear to have been pastoral nomads who migrated throughout the Fertile Crescent areas and as far south as Egypt and beyond. Jews and other Semites settled in villages throughout Canaan.

from Memphis to Avaris after it had been rebuilt by the Israelites as Pi-Ramses. This is the area known in the Bible as the land of Goshen, renamed as the land of Ramses at about the time of the Exodus. The geography, the timeline, the residence of the king in the same area as the enslaved Israelites, and the escape route into the Sinai, all fit neatly. But now, there is incredible new evidence to suggest there is much, much more for us to consider.

Validating the Man and the Exodus

The story of Moses is set somewhere around 3,400 years ago. His is a pivotal chronicle of world events and critically important to the belief system of millions, perhaps billions, throughout history. Many scholars have been quite vocal about their disbelief that the man Moses ever existed. But as we have learned again and again, just because archeologists were unable to initially find an obvious reference to a place, event, or person, as recorded in the scriptures, does not mean the record was not true. Literally dozens of times, after hearing from experts that thus and so never existed, the archeologist's spade turned up new evidence to the contrary.

The Israelites were a part of a larger group of peoples known as Semites, a number of whom are known to have come from Canaan and settled in the Nile River delta through about 1350 BC, after which the majority seem to be gone. There are no specific references to the term "Israelites," in Egyptian records but there are many notations to a foreign group of workers called Habiru.¹⁸

Most readers will be familiar with the Bible story of Joseph, who was sold into Egypt but eventually became part of the royal monarchy and thereafter arranged for his father (Israel), and extended family, to relocate from Canaan to Goshen, a fertile area of the Nile River delta of Egypt. From the Bible story we learn that some generations later, there arose a Pharaoh who "knew not Joseph," who proceeded to enslave Israel's large posterity. The biblical Moses story flows from this point in history, elements of which have been preserved in the legendary chronicles of many nations scattered throughout the Mediterranean basin, and as far away as Babylon.

The Talmud, the Qur'an and the Bible, all contain similar stories of Moses, as do the works of a number of Egyptian historians. Most of us have been exposed to the biblical rendition, if only through movie versions, but there are few that will be familiar with the Moses stories recorded by Flavis Josephus quoting the Egyptian historian Manetho, and separate although similar stories by Apion, and Chaeremon. (See footnotes identifying these ancient historians.) These extra-

¹⁸ Habiru is almost surely a phonetically pronounced term for the later rendition "Hebrews." The term is sometimes translated as Hapiru or a close derivative. Habiru is the name given by Egyptian, Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, and Mesopotamian sources that date from prior to 2000 BC to 1200 BC for a people living in northern Mesopotamia, Syria, and south through Canaan to the borders of Egypt.

biblical records are sufficient to validate the reality of the Exodus and the existence of the man we know as Moses, although as we shall see, he may well have been known by many other names, and the story may be much more complex than the simple sketched rendition recorded in scripture.

Writing in the first century AD, quoting the writings of Manetho of the third century BC, Josephus details the story of an Egyptian priest named Osarseph, who leads a revolution against a pharaoh named Amenophis. (Amenophis is the Greek transliteration for the Egyptian Amenhotep, which was the throne name of four pharaohs including Akhenaten¹⁹ and his father, Amenhotep III.) In Manetho's story, the priest Osarseph (this title-name means "leader"), is reported to have taken control of Egypt for thirteen years, changed the religious structure of the nation, and was eventually run out of Egypt. Most scholars recognize the Osarseph story as a not-so-veiled account of pharaoh Akhenaten, the father of Tutankhamen.

Akhenaten is the only pharaoh known, and in fact the only king of the ancient world, to attempt the conversion of his entire nation to monotheism. Josephus quotes Manetho's history as stating that Osarseph, a former priest of Heliopolis, was actually the Semitic-Egyptian Moses and that his followers were a gaggle of leprous, diseased Egyptians.²⁰ More about this later, but let's remember from the footnotes about Manetho that he was an Egyptian historian and temple priest from Heliopolis, and that he lived almost three hundred years BEFORE the crucifixion of Christ, yet more than a thousand years AFTER the Exodus. It should be further noted that Manetho had no vested interest in validating the cause of Moses, which he found abhorrent. What Manetho's records have done is validated that Moses was a real person who did in fact lead a large body of people out of Egypt. ...Score a direct hit!

Josephus also quotes a contemporary Egyptian historian by the name of Chaeremon (see footnotes), who tells essentially the same story as Manetho, but with sufficient variations to indicate that Chaeremon was using different source materials for which he was responsible at the great library of Alexandria. Chaeremon also identified the rebel leader of the Exodus with Moses, referring to him by an Egyptian name of Tisathen. Chaeremon wrote that Moses had a co-conspirator named Peteseeph, and he then goes on to identify this Peteseeph with Joseph, possibly based on the similar pronunciation of the two names. Joseph, the son of Jacob (the Patriarch Israel), and the prophet leader Moses, are usually

¹⁹ The tenth king of the 18th Dynasty was the most controversial pharaoh of history as a result of his break with traditional religion. Many claim that he was the most remarkable king to sit upon Egypt's throne. Akhenaten's throne name was Amenhotep IV. There can be little doubt that Akhenaten was a far greater thinker and philosopher than any that preceded him.

²⁰ In Exodus 3:6-7 Moses' hand is turned leprous and then restored. Later a similar situation develops with his sister, the prophetess Miriam. However, it should be noted, that the Egyptian priest recording the event of the Exodus, would likely have considered anyone worshipping an unknown god to be unclean, thus the term "leprous" may be a derisive slang.

thought to be separated by hundreds of years although more recently a new analysis of both biblical translation and secular history may collapse their separation to only two to four generations. Notwithstanding the name confusion, and the other intriguing questions that may arise therefrom, Chaeremon has also validated the reality of the Exodus, and he too confirms that the primary rebel leader was Moses. Bingo!

In a paper entitled “Osarseph and Exodus: Literary Reflections in an Egyptian Mirror,” delivered at the annual meeting of the International Society of Biblical Literature (Lausanne, Switzerland 1997), Gary Greenberg makes the following comparison of the historical works of Manetho and Chaeremon:

“Plot-wise, the Egyptian story has the following structure:

1. A pharaoh fears that a large group of people living in Egypt represent a threat to the throne;
2. He vacillates between letting them leave the country and enslaving them;
3. He also vacillates between confronting them militarily and retreating;
4. He orders them enslaved;
5. After a period of enslavement, they ask permission to journey to another location of special interest to them;
6. A god is to punish the Egyptians for the pharaoh’s act of enslavement;
7. The slaves rise up against the pharaoh and bring great devastation to the land;
8. A cruel ruler comes to the throne and oppresses the people;
9. A child is hidden away from the cruel ruler;
10. The child is raised in the pharaoh’s household;
11. When the child reaches adulthood, he liberates his people from oppression;
12. The former slaves are chased out of Egypt by the pharaoh.”

Greenburg continues by showing that “with just one slight plot twist, this storyline is almost identical to that of the biblical Exodus. In the Egyptian account, the child-liberator is the future pharaoh, and the cruel tyrant is the slave leader. Therefore, in the Egyptian story the child is hidden away after the slave revolt while in the biblical story the child is hidden away before the slave revolt. In most other respects, however, the biblical and Egyptian stories are virtually identical.

Scribes in both camps framed the historical events within Egyptian literary formats and produced parallel accounts, each portraying their own hero as child-liberator and depicting their rival as the usurping villain. Like backward writing, if we hold both texts up to an Egyptian literary mirror, we can see the true history reflected back to us.”

The second chapter of the book of Exodus describes the daughter of Pharaoh as being the royal mother of Moses. On the other hand, the Qur'an claims that the royal mother of Moses was Pharaoh's wife, the queen of all Egypt. Why the discrepancy, as they both clearly used the same textual materials to construct their writings? Egyptologists and linguists have discovered that the same word in ancient Egyptian meant different but related things, depending on the substance of the story. For example, in ancient Egyptian, the words: house, household, wife and daughter were the same word. As developed more fully below, there are secular sources that suggest the Qur'an translation may be the more correct.

In his History of Egypt in five books, another Egyptian historian of the first century AD by the name of Apion also wrote about Moses. Apion was schooled in Alexandria and eventually taught in Rome under Tiberius, Caligula, and Claudius. He records in his third book that Moses was a native of Heliopolis who erected open air prayer houses all facing eastward, exactly as the Pharaoh Akhenaten is credited with doing in the inscriptions of his capital city. Apion also mentions a bark (ark?)²¹ that was somehow associated with an altar that proscribed a circle equivalent to the course of the sun as it moved in the heavens.

Akhenaten is believed to have spent his childhood in Heliopolis where he was ultimately ordained to the state-supported priesthood. All the Egyptian stories of Osarseph (Moses) indicate that he was also ordained a priest of Heliopolis. This is probably more important than one might immediately suspect. Temples of the ancient world were the equivalent of the universities of today. Those that learned to read and write had gone through temple training and were referred to as priests. Thus, we have direct assertion from three different Egyptian historians and one Jewish-Roman historian, each claiming that Osarseph was Moses AND that he was the equivalent of a university graduate. In other words, he would be capable of abridging and compiling historical records into the book of Genesis.

The Pharaohs

The Egyptian nineteenth dynasty, following that of the Amarna kings (eighteenth dynasty), endeavored to wipe out all trace of the four pharaohs now known to us as Akhenaten, Semenkhekare, Tutankhamen and Aye. (Curiously, this last pharaoh's name in Hebrew is Ephraim, the same name as the birthright grandson of Jacob-Israel.) Taken together, these four kings reigned only 19

²¹ Bark and Ark have a common origin in the Egyptian word "Ak", meaning a sacred container or vessel. "In Egypt an Ak (bark or ark) was kept in the inner sanctum at the temple of Karnak, just as the Ark of Israel was eventually placed in the inner sanctum of the Jerusalem temple. Both were gold gilded sacred containers carried by poles inserted into rings on either side." Source: Graham Phillips, *The Templars and the Ark of the Covenant*, Bear & Company 2004, p62. In Exodus 2:5, we see that Moses was placed in an ark and floated on the Nile. In this case, the reference is the same as the Egyptian "bark." The "Ark of the Covenant," was a sacred container that held the original "Ten Commandments," the serpent staff of Moses, and other artifacts from the Exodus period. The Ark was undisputed as ancient Israel's most holy relic.

years, or 32 if you count the period during which Akhenaten acted as co-regent with his father. Directly after the fall of the Amarna regime, the names of these pharaohs were excised from monuments, and chipped off king lists etched in temple walls.

Remarkably, Manetho's chronology correctly placed the missing kings between the reigns of Amenhotep III, (Akhenaten's father and king Tutankhamen's grandfather), and that of pharaoh Horemheb. It is Horemheb, and his vizier²² Pa-Ramses, which now seem the most likely rulers for enslaving the Israelites. This is a period often referred to as the "Oppression." It is during the brief reign of Pa-Ramses after the death of Horemheb, that the Exodus from Egypt likely took place.

The king lists of Syncellus, drawn from the record of the pre-Roman Christian father Eusebius,²³ which was found translated into Armenian along with the Julius Africanus Chronography, puts the Exodus in the reign of Amenhotep III and his co-regent son Akhenaten. According to the Eusebius manuscript Syncellus says that it was "about" the time of Pharaoh Akhenaten that Moses led the Hebrews²⁴ on their march out of Egypt. So, how might that correlate with what we have learned already? If we take the position that the pharaoh of the oppression was Horemheb, and the pharaoh of the Exodus was Seti I, why do we keep getting associations with Akhenaten, the pharaoh who endeavored to abolish the pantheon of ancient Egypt and replace it with a single God?

Horemheb's head of government was Pa-Ramses, who later assumed the throne even though he was not of the royal bloodline. After becoming pharaoh, Pa-Ramses took the throne name Ramses I, thus founding the nineteenth dynasty and a new bloodline of future kings. This is probably the very man, while he was the vizier to Horemheb that forced the Hebrews to build the cities of the eastern delta. We know from history, that amongst his other titles, and before he became pharaoh, that Ramses was the governor over the biblical land of Goshen.

In the movie the "Ten Commandments" Seti I is the pharaoh of the Oppression, and his son Ramses II is the pharaoh of the Exodus. Why the change? Because

²² A vizier is the head of government, the chief minister, the equivalent of a Prime Minister but perhaps one with more direct power.

²³ Eusebius of Caesarea was a bishop of Caesarea in Palestine prior to the formation of the Roman Catholic Church. He lived from 275 to 339 AD. He is known as the father of church history because of his work in recording the history of the early Christian church. His timeline research has been lost in the original, but it was reconstructed from later scholars of Byzantine times who made excerpts from the work. His timelines have been preserved in a Latin translation by Jerome and in an Armenian translation.

²⁴ In both the New Testament and the Old Testament of the Bible the word "Hebrew" refers to the descendants of an ancient patriarch king by the name of "Eber," sometimes translated as "Heber" each referring to the same person.

a monument constructed during the reign of Seti I, (who was the pharaoh immediately following the short reign of Ramses I), states that the Shasu Bedouin (derogatory name for the escaped Hebrews) were suddenly emerging from the Sinai and posing a threat to Canaan, Edom and Moab, a situation mirrored in the Book of Joshua. The main point to all this is that by the time of Seti I and his son Ramses II, the Israelites were apparently already in Canaan. This means that the Hebrew flight from Egypt would have been just before Seti I and his son Ramses II,²⁵ in other words, under the reigns of Horemheb and Ramses I. (Ramses II, who apparently was not involved in the Exodus, is better known to the world as “Ramses the Great.”)

The reader will recall that Akhenaten is the only pharaoh known in all of history to attempt the conversion of his entire nation to monotheism! And, as we have come to know more recently, Akhenaten’s approach to religious observance was curiously reminiscent of the teachings of the patriarch Abraham, who had surely brought his philosophical concepts to Egypt many years before his great grandson Joseph came to power as vizier of all Egypt (Genesis 41:39-46).

The god of Moses (“the creator” or the “Lord”) and the god of Akhenaten (the “Aten” meaning in Egyptian “the creator” but most often referred to by the title “Neb” meaning the “Lord”),²⁶ were each considered the one and only true god. This was a completely novel idea at the time, as all known ancient societies had god-statues for all kinds of occasions. Neither Moses nor Akhenaten’s gods were to be called by a personal name, but rather as “Lord”, “God”, the “Lord God Almighty”, the “Lord of Hosts,” and other similar title-names.²⁷ No graven image of them was allowed as that was deemed to be idolatry, and no one was to bow down and worship anything like unto it. The symbol for both was revelation, light and enlightenment.

The renowned Egyptologist, James Breasted, pointed out as early as 1909 that a prayer found carved in stone in Akhenaten’s palace bore striking similarity to

²⁵ The Gronigen University radiocarbon dating, done in 1996 of the organic remains of the City of Jericho, place the date of its destruction during the Israelite conquest as about 1320 BC or right into the middle of Set I’s reign, (the father of Ramses II). It should be noted that the Israelites remained in the “wilderness” for at least a generation before beginning the Conquest of Canaan under the leadership of Joshua.

²⁶ Yahweh is the Hebrew name for the Creator. Until recently this name was translated “Jehovah,” or the “Lord.” The term YHWH, (there are no vowels) has been translated approximately 6,000 times in the Scriptures as “Lord.” It is the proper name of the God of the Old Testament. The Creator was the “Son” of Elohim (God the Father.) The Yahweh of the Old Testament is the Lord Jesus Christ of the New Testament. See St John 1:1-14

²⁷ In the Talatat, the name by which the blocks of stone inscriptions recovered from Akhenaten’s palace city in Karnak are known, there are inscribed words reminiscent of the “I am who I am” statement from the burning bush element of the Moses story: The Talatat translation is: “Thou art what thou art.”

Psalm 104 in the Old Testament. Both prayers describe in identical terms how God and the Aten are respectively seen as creators, nurturers, and prime movers of all phenomena on earth. **The composite of all these similarities being completely coincidental is so profound, happening as it does at the exact same moment in time and place, that once we strip our cultural prejudices²⁸ from the Egyptian records, it seems obvious that the god of Moses and the god of Akhenaten are one and the same!**

Akhenaten as Moses

Extra-biblical sources indicate that during Abraham's twenty-year sojourn in Egypt (well previous to the time of Akhenaten), Abraham, similar to his great grandson Joseph, had risen in power and authority before the pharaoh of his age and functioned as a counselor to the king. Abraham was also known as an astronomy teacher. There is even evidence to suggest that the founding of the city of Heliopolis (the biblical city of "On"), was dedicated to Abraham and that it became the temple center of learning and astronomy for Egypt.²⁹ Thus, prior to Moses, we have three great champions of monotheism, Abraham, Israel, and Joseph, all having access to the halls of power in Egypt with at least two of these three great patriarchs functioning as administrators of royal power on behalf of pharaohs and their court. In other words, these early Hebrew patriarchs were in the absolute thick of the current political events of their times!

We know from Egyptian records that the mother of Akhenaten was queen Tiye,³⁰ whose father was Yuya.³¹ Yuya was the vizier to both Tuthmose IV and Amenhotep III; the latter was Akhenaten's father, the former his grandfather. Research on the lineage of Yuya (father of the queen who was the birth mother of Akhenaten), indicates that Yuya was Semitic.³² Yuya³³ and his wife Tuyu's

²⁸ Several recent television programs on Pharaoh Akhenaten reflect these prejudices although the reporting on his life and accomplishments are generally excellent.

²⁹ See the author's paper entitled "Abraham, the Man, the Myth, and the Mystery."

³⁰ It is often speculated that Tiye was also the mother of Tutankhamen, although her son Akhenaten is credited with being the father. (Historical records show six daughters born to Akhenaten but no sons.) An auburn lock of Tiye's hair was enclosed in a small coffin found in Tutankhamen's tomb with references to Tiye being his mother. At the very least she was his grandmother.

³¹ "Yuya, along with his wife Tuyu, were nobles of the Eighteenth Dynasty. They were the grandparents of Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten.) Together with Tuyu, Yuya exercised a considerable influence on the affairs of the dynasty and the court during the reigns of Amenhotep II and Akhenaten. He became 'Master of the Horse' which brought with it considerable military responsibilities. Later, the title 'Father of the God' was bestowed on him and his prestige and standing at court was considerably enhanced. It is thought that Yuya was also the father of King Aye who succeeded Tutankhamen as king." Source: The Egyptian World, ancientsites.com

³² "Ya" is an abbreviated form of Yuya's name, which was inscribed on his coffin in his Valley of the Kings tomb, and points to his patron god, Yahweh/Jehovah. Yuya's facial features, as observed on his mummy, have led archaeologists to postulate that he was Semitic in origin.

tomb were discovered in 1905, and there are indications that he may also have been the father of Pharaoh Aye, who reigned briefly after Tutankhamen. There are several possible genealogies of Yuya available over the Internet and a wonderful story about the discovery of his tomb.³⁴

At the end of the eighteenth dynasty, the necropolis Saqqara³⁵ became the main burial place for officials of the royal court. There are several tombs dated to the period under Amenhotep III but most are from the time of Akhenaten and his son Tutankhamen and extending into the nineteenth dynasty. An important archeological discovery of recent date (as it pertains to our topic), is the tomb discovery of Aperel, who was vizier to Akhenaten.

Aperel was previously unknown to history, but the murals and inscriptions contained within his tomb demonstrate that he was a high priest of Aten BEFORE he became vizier to the king. Egyptians have never been known to incorporate the “el” terminology in their names and this is such a stunning find that a number of papers have been written to demonstrate that this is proof positive of foreign influence on the throne of Akhenaten. According to the LDS Bible dictionary, the term “el” means might and strength. It goes on to point out that, “In Hebrew and related languages it designates “the divine being.” Many biblical names employ “el” with other words, such as Bethel (house of God), Eleazar (God has helped), Michael (who is like God), Daniel (a judge is God), Ezekiel (God will strengthen), and Israel (to prevail with God). Perhaps the best-known use is Elohim, a plural form of the term signifying the “almighty” or “omnipotent,” the name commonly applied to God the Father.”

Found in Aperel’s tomb is a gift offering from Akhenaten’s father, Amenhotep III and from Akhenaten’s mother, queen Tiye. This infers several things; perhaps most importantly that Aperel was highly respected by Akhenaten’s parents! Thus, we have a Hebrew functioning as a high priest of the only monotheistic

Some scholars have gone so far as to connect Yuya with the biblical story of Joseph, the son of Jacob and Rachel. They point out that the hieroglyph for “ya” is extremely similar to that for “sef”, and thus that the name should be read “Yusef”.

³³ In 1887 about 350 clay tablets were found at el Amarna, the site of Akhenaten's capital Akhenaten. Most of these are now in European Museums. They are written in Akkadian (Northern Mesopotamia) cuneiform, the diplomatic language of the era. Most of the letters are dated to the reigns of Amenhotep III and Akhenaten. The tablets reflect the correspondence between the Egyptian administration and its representatives in Canaan and Babylonia and they provide significant insight on the condition of international affairs between Egypt and the major world powers of the time. *Five cuneiform tablets were found naming a Semitic king as the father-in-law to Amenhotep III and Akhenaten.* Some scholars speculate Yuya was the biblical Joseph.

³⁴ touregypt.net/featurestories/yuyata.htm

³⁵ Saqqara, (The City of the Dead), is a huge nine square kilometer ancient cemetery near the Nile river Delta, located just south of the modern city of Cairo and west of the ancient city of Memphis.

religion in Egyptian history! And, then he becomes Akhenaten's prime minister! All of this evidently takes place during a time that Pharaoh Amenhotep III and his wife are yet alive, but while Akhenaten is the functioning, Pharaoh. Whew!

The construction of royal tombs frequently commenced at the birth of a crown prince or at the latest, upon ascension to the throne. Akhenaten's tomb was discovered but he was apparently not interned there. Instead, his second daughter, the princess Meketaten, had been placed in his sarcophagus and was the only mummy in the royal crypt. Although Akhenaten's mummy disappearance could be the result of tomb raiders, it actually appears to not have ever been used for him, inasmuch as the final episodes of his death and internment were never completed in the tomb murals.

It is well known that Akhenaten was under immense political pressure to abdicate the throne. A civil war loomed whilst the powerful priesthood of Amun-Re accused Akhenaten of a defiled bloodline and having undertaken a heretical religious revolution. Numerous monuments from the period indicate the intensity of the Amun-Re propaganda campaign against their king. Not only had Akhenaten, and perhaps his father to some degree, snubbed the former state religion under whose authority each pharaoh was officially anointed, but they had also ignored influential families in both Memphis and Thebes. In addition, both Akhenaten and his father appear to have elevated women, (or at least some of them), to equal stature with the male nobility. Both Queen Tiye, Akhenaten's mother, and Queen Nefertiti, his wife, are depicted in Egyptian monuments and in royal cartouches as equals of the king.³⁶ Perhaps, rather than to further expose those loyal to him Akhenaten left his newly built palace at Amarna, which was located at the desert's edge half way between the competing power centers of Memphis and Thebes, and escaped to the Sinai.

While his father was still the pharaoh, but during the period Akhenaten reigned as co-regent, the construction of an entirely new palace complex commenced far removed from Thebes (Luxor and Karnak), and Memphis (Heliopolis), where the priesthood power of the old gods of Egypt held sway. Akhenaten's new city, and

³⁶ This practice is reminiscent of the patriarch Abraham who, according to the Bible, married Sarah in the Mesopotamian city of Haran. We learn from extra-biblical sources that Sarah was the crown princess, daughter of the king of Haran, which was then the capital of the land. In Haran the equivalent of a law library was discovered in the late 1970's that includes the details of a higher form of marriage vows. In essence, under Hurrian law, a man could dissolve a marriage but not the bond of a brother and sister, thus the special higher marriage vows for the elite dealt with the concept of a marriage of equals. Numerous and interesting details were meticulously preserved in the Bible, including that the bride have her own property, her own handmaiden, be called sister, etc. One of the arcane details of the higher marriage sealing is that the bride was to retain house-gods from her family as proof of her independence and equality. This is similar in concept to the medieval practice of one carrying a signet ring as proof of authority. The requirement that a woman possess family house-gods as proof of her position sheds new light on Rachel's possession of house-gods, in the otherwise inexplicable story reflected in Genesis 31:14-35. In Egyptian royalty rites of the Akhenaten period, women were also treated as equals.

places of worship, were available to all that converted to the religion of the Lord God. Excavations of this area demonstrate conclusively that there were no idols or images of God in Amarna, although light beams were a major sculptural icon of the faith. Initially archeologists theorized that Aten was just another sun deity, (the very idolatry Akhenaten was trying to escape), but recent interpretations demonstrate that monuments depicting light emanating to Akhenaten was more likely intended to convey prophetic enlightenment or direct revelation.

The religious and political hostility that divided Egypt during the reign of Amenhotep III and his son Akhenaten, continued through Tutankhamen and Aye, and was so great, that the pharaohs that came after them launched a deliberate campaign to erase these kings from history. It is said that it was actually forbidden to even say the name Akhenaten or to even refer to his throne name of Amenhotep IV. Egyptians began to call him the “rebel leader” (recall that Osarseph means leader), the Israelites and their Egyptian converts to monotheism apparently referred to him as Moses “the son,” meaning he was the legitimate birthright king.

There is a growing corpus of evidence suggesting that the most unusual pharaoh of all time, Amenhotep IV, who took the name Akhenaten, (meaning high priest to the god Aten), is synchronistically close to the Moses story. In fact, and notwithstanding a number of yet-to-be-reconciled scriptural conundrums, there are so many curious and specific connections between Moses and Akhenaten as to be literally overwhelming in their implications. These two great leaders, existing at the exact same time and place, and known for many of the same historical events, are likely one and the same person!

Akhenaten’s queen, the “Great Royal Wife of the King” was his slightly older half-sister, the famous Nefertiti.³⁷ She was evidently the daughter of Amenhotep III’s sister-wife Sitamun. Nefertiti was a high priestess of Aten, and the most revered person associated with the Aten temple at Karnak, before the new temple at Amarna was yet built. References to her appear five times more frequently in the temple complex than to Akhenaten, the pharaoh and her husband. In the Hebrew vernacular, Nefertiti would be a prophetess. The equivalent in the Bible story is Miriam, who is referred to as Moses’ older sister, who was known as a prophetess, and was deeply revered by the early Israelites.

Nefertiti’s wet-nurse Tiy also had a son of her own who was raised at court. Later Tiy would become the wet-nurse for Akhenaten. In those days, as it is with Bedouin children today, the nursing woman is called “mother” without reference

³⁷ Famed throughout the ancient world for her outstanding beauty, Akhenaten's queen *Nefertiti* remains the one of the most well known of the queens of Egypt. Nefertiti seems to have taken a hitherto unprecedented level of importance in Amarna art. She is often shown making offerings to the Aten, and appears as the Pharaoh's equal in terms of status. Source: Akhet Egyptology, akhet.co.uk/nefertiti

to birth. Thus, the nurse in this case would be mother to her own son, as well as to Nefertiti, and about three years later Akhenaten would be her suckling son. The son of Tiy would be a “feeding brother,” to Moses. The Qur’an records that Moses and Aaron were related only through the feeding-mother relationship.³⁸

The first mention of Aaron in the Bible is after Moses has been living in voluntary exile in Midian for almost forty years.³⁹ At this point, Moses is giving reasons to the Lord for not fulfilling His instructions that he return to Egypt and rescue the Israelites. Moses complains in Exodus 4:10 that, “I am not eloquent...I am slow of speech, and of an slow tongue.” In Exodus 4:14 we read the Lord’s response: “Is not *Aaron the Levite* thy brother? I know that he can speak well...” The verses here introduce Aaron to the storyline but also indicate that Moses may not have spoken the Egyptian-Israelite dialect of Hebrew well. Moses was raised in an Egyptian palace in the language and the custom of Egypt. He made his excuse to the Lord of having a “slow tongue,” after having been told that his first responsibility upon arriving in Egypt would be to call together the elders of Israel (Exodus 3:16) and convince them of his calling.

The Amarna palace and the surrounding city were commissioned to be built by Akhenaten and Nefertiti in a place that had never seen any prior construction. The city was generally referred to simply as “Akhenaten”. According to the Cairo-born historian and linguist Ahmed Osman, “although the city of Akhenaten was never rebuilt, there is a village on the opposite side of the Nile which has retained the name Mal-lawi (or Mallewi, meaning “city of the *Levites*”) to this present day! The Levites are identified by Osman as that select group of nobles and close relatives of Akhenaten and Yuya who made up the newly formed priesthood of the Aten and served in the temples of Aten at Thebes and at the new capital city of Akhenaten. (In the Sinai, the Levites were Moses’ primary supporters when trouble broke out.)”⁴⁰ It would appear that the Levities, who held the priestly positions with Moses, held the same positions with Akhenaten at the new temple built at Amarna!

Serpents and Scepters

³⁸ The source of this information is: Osman, Ahmed, “Moses and Akhenaten” Grafton Books, London 2002, Chapter 19

³⁹ Midian was both the name of a person and a place. After the patriarch Abraham’s wife Sarah died, he married a woman named Keturah. Midian was the fourth born son this marriage. After escaping Egypt, Moses lived in the land of Midian; a place mentioned 39 times in 38 verses. Moses married Zipporah, the daughter of Reuel (Exodus 2:18-21), apparently also called Jethro (Exodus 3:1). Midian was east of the Dead Sea and included the land southward into Arabia including parts of the Sinai.

⁴⁰ The Gospel According to Egypt, an epitome of Ahmed Osman’s books. Domain of Man.com

If Akhenaten is the Moses of the Old Testament,⁴¹ it is likely that he abandoned the throne under serious threat to himself and his followers and retreated to the Sinai where it is known that Akhenaten had family relations in control of mining operations and the military garrison on the Egyptian border. This is consistent with the escape of Moses to Midian.

The Bible account says that Moses returned to Egypt after a lengthy self-imposed exile. His mission was to confront a pharaoh that had assumed the throne and was persecuting the Hebrews. In Exodus 4:19 we learn that those who were seeking his life were now dead: "And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt for all the men are dead which sought thy life."

The historic scepter of Pharaonic authority for the reigning kings of ancient Egypt was a bronze serpent staff. We learn from several biblical passages that Moses also had a remarkable staff. The staff was so impugned with power that at least five hundred years after the Exodus the people of Judah were still burning incense to it (II Kings 3-4). Hezekiah, a king of Judah living many hundreds of years after Moses, referred to the staff as Nehushtan, which translated means a brass or bronze serpent. This circumstance is remarkable and may provide insight as to why Moses carried a bronze staff fashioned as a serpent.

Upon his return from exile, Moses' first encounter with the Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph" (a pharaoh not of the royal blood line of the Amarna kings) is recorded to include an event wherein Moses' threw down his serpent staff in front of the king and his counselors. Might this very act shed new light on the serpent staff of Moses? Was he in actuality providing proof that he was in possession of the authentic staff of authority and that the new pharaoh was a usurper?⁴²

Chronology

The following is a re-examination of the chronology of the later Amarna kings of the Eighteenth dynasty, from Amenhotep III through Horemheb; the latter was the last of this royal blood line. Included are three Pharaohs of the Nineteenth dynasty to provide perspective and an historical anchor.⁴³

⁴¹ An alternative theory is that Moses was actually Akhenaten's older brother, the original crown prince Tuthmose. (Tuth = the god Thoth; mose = son, thus his name means literally the son of the god Thoth.) Tuthmose, who after waging a war in Ethiopia for the Crown, an event that correlates in numerous details to a Talmudic story of Moses, returns to Egypt and then vanishes from the records without a trace. It is also possible that Tuthmose and Akhenaten is the same son of Pharaoh Amenhotep III and that the names are simply different title names.

⁴² For another interesting connection to the serpent staff see Kings, 18:3-4.

⁴³ The dates and lengths of reign are Ahmed Osman's. The notes are the author's although most of the intent of the notes are positions taken by Osman and others.

- Amenhotep III was the Pharaoh of Egypt for 38 years. For the last 13 years of his reign his 2nd son, Akhenaten, served as co-regent. (Reigned: 1405 – 1367 BC)
- Akhenaten ruled as sole Pharaoh for 6 years before disappearing from the historical record. (It is suggested that he was in self-imposed exile in the Sinai.) Including his co-regency, he ruled 19 years. (Reigned alone: 1367-1361 BC)
- Semenkhkare is believed to be the younger brother, and for a brief time the co-regent with Akhenaten. He lived in Thebes. Semenkhkare likely did not serve as sole pharaoh independent of Akhenaten for more than a brief time before his death, if he did so at all. There are no years ascribed to his reign.
- Tutankhamen, purported to be the son of Akhenaten, was placed on the throne at about eight or nine years of age by the powerful priesthood of Amun-Re of Thebes, with the support of the military. He served nine years. During this time Pharaoh Akhenaten was likely in the Sinai.⁴⁴ (Reigned: 1361-1352)
- Aye,⁴⁵ assumed the throne after Tutankhamen's suspicious death at about 18 years of age.⁴⁶ Aye reigned four years. (Reigned: 1352-1348)
- Horemheb was the leader of the military under both Tutankhamen and Aye. It is believed that he and Aye actually ran all of Egypt during the boyhood kingship of Tutankhamen. Horemheb assumed the throne and served 13 years with Pa-Ramses as his viceroy. He was the last of the Amarna dynasty. (Reigned: 1348-1335)
- Pa-Ramses was not of the royal blood line. Upon the death of Horemheb, he secured the throne and changed his name to Ramses I. He lived only 2 years after becoming Pharaoh. (Reigned: 1335-1333)
- Seti I is the next Pharaoh, he served 29 years. (Reigned 1333-1304)
- Ramses II (Ramses the Great), was Seti I's second born son. He became Pharaoh at the death of his father and served for an amazing 67 years.⁴⁷ (Reigned: 1304-1237)

⁴⁴ We know from Egyptian records that Akhenaten had six daughters by his wife Nefertiti but strangely no sons are mentioned. Tutankhamen may actually have been Akhenaten's younger half brother by his father's royal blood line wife rather than from his queen mother Tiye.

⁴⁵ Aye is recorded as being the "Divine Father", "Commander of all His Majesty's horses", and "the King's personal scribe." This is all under the rule of Akhenaten. His wife's name was Tey, and she is known for being the nurse of Nefertiti. After the disappearance of Akhenaten, Aye became vizier and advisor to Tutankhamen and interestingly, although the old gods and priesthood were back in power, the worship of Aten was still tolerated. Upon the death of Tutankhamen, Aye ascended the throne. After a short rule of four years, Aye died, and Horemheb, the head of the military at that time assumed the throne and eradicated the religion of Aten and enslaved its followers.

⁴⁶ A recent Time-Life program examined Tutankhamen's mummy concluding he was likely struck in the head from behind.

⁴⁷ Recent forensic work on his mummy confirmed he was over ninety at death.

Conclusion

The historical Moses has begun to take shape. We have briefly explored the claims of three ancient Egyptian historians, and one Jewish-Roman historian. All four recorded someone known in Egypt simply as the “leader” or “rebel leader” was the biblical Moses. We have learned from these extra-biblical texts that Moses was educated, that he was a priest, and that he led a large group of Hebrews out from the eastern delta of Egypt and into the Sinai. We have explored the meaning and implications of the title-name Mos, Mose, or Moses, which in Egyptian means “the son.” We have briefly touched on new archeological data that clearly demonstrates that persons of Hebrew origin were highly influential in the Egyptian palace very close to the time of the Exodus. And, we have learned something of the political crisis that faced those in power during the tumultuous times leading up to the Oppression and ultimately the Exodus.

The scriptural records of Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, all claim Moses was a prince of Egypt, and therefore a record of him should exist. Can we actually identify the Moses of history with a Pharaoh or a prince of Egypt? Recent archeological evidence allows us to spiral in and refine the period of the Oppression, and the resulting period of the Exodus, and this effort gives us a clear correlation with the pharaoh Akhenaten. Add to this the almost amazing synchronicity of the religions of Moses, and the belief system of Akhenaten, and the explosive cultural-political setting takes on dramatic new meaning.

Was Akhenaten, or perhaps his mysterious older brother Tuthmose, the biblical prophet, leader, and lawgiver Moses? At this point we cannot be certain, but what we do know is Moses did exist, and that at least portions of the scriptural records are largely confirmed in the writings of non-Hebrews of ancient date. Thus, if the scriptural accounts of him are even reasonably accurate, Moses was part of the royal family and, therefore, would have been right at the center of the religious revolution that was taking place during the latter half of the eighteenth dynasty. We now know much more about the cultural setting and the radical political and religious schism taking place in Egypt at the time the Israelites escaped their taskmasters. Were these issues connected? Almost assuredly they were. Further research should shed even more light on the fascinating political intrigue and volatile developments surrounding the best-known migration of modern man, and its amazing leader Moses, the hero of the Exodus.