

JOSEPH AND THE ENGINEERING WONDERS OF EGYPT!

By John D. Keyser

Eighty-one miles S.S.W. of Cairo by rail, lies Medinet-el-Fayum-- the capital of the Fayum province of Egypt. The Fayum proper is an oasis in the Libyan desert, 669 square miles in area and lying below sea level within a vast depression. The oasis is encircled by the Libyan hills, which separate the province from the Nile valley. The lowest part of the Fayum -- the northwest end -- is occupied by the Birkat Qaroun, or Lake of Qaroun, whose surface level is 140 feet below that of the sea.

The region (one of the most fertile in the whole of Egypt) produces cotton, flax, hemp, rice, sugarcane, roses, oranges, peaches, pomegranates, figs of exceptional quality, grapes and olives. The occupations that contribute the most to the economy of the Fayum are poultry and sheep raising, fishing, and the making of most of the attar (fragrant floral oil) of roses produced in Egypt.

With a population of well over 1 million, the Fayum contains several towns besides that of Medinet-el-Fayum. Senuris and Tomia lie to the north of Medinet; while Senaru and Abuksa are found on the road to the lake and are served by railroads.

Within the Fayum province are the ruins of many ancient cities and villages -- including Arsinoe, an important archaeological site situated north of the capital.

Differing from the typical oasis, the fertility of which depends on the water obtained from underground springs, the cultivated land in the Fayum is formed of Nile mud which is brought down from the river in a huge canal called the BAHR YUSUF. Radiating out from this main feeder canal are many smaller irrigation canals that distribute the mud to the surrounding land. The Bahr Yusuf supplies the Fayum region with life-giving mud and water through a gap in the encircling Libyan hills.

Notes author Samuel Kurinsky:

A visitor to Egypt today, if he would abjure the euphoria of viewing a mere mirage of Egypt from the deck of one of the floating hotels on the Nile, and would instead thread carefully through the countryside parallel to the Nile, could not but be impressed by the multiplicity of farms and orchards being watered by the WEB OF CANALS drawn from the BAHR YOUSEF. This elaborate network of waterways has converted more desolate desert into rich, arable farmland than does the Aswan Dam. No electricity is produced by the Bahr Yousef, but neither does it foster the ecological damage that the Aswan dam is inflicting upon Egypt as a byproduct of its function. -- The Eighth Day: The Hidden History of the Jewish Contribution to Civilization. Jason Aronson, Inc. Northvale, N.J. 1994. P. 90.

The mother of Egypt is, of course, the River Nile. Without it there would be no Egypt! It is also true to say that Egypt as we know it would not have existed without the system of canals radiating out from the Bahr Yousef across fruitful fields that were once part of the great Libyan desert. The region east of the Nile, where only occasional isolated areas of agriculture exist, contrasts sharply with the region west of the Nile through which the canal flows -- an area in which groves of date palms alternate with green fields of grain, richly verdant patches of vegetables and vast expanses of white-capped cotton plants. But, it was not always so; until the Bahr Yousef was constructed, Middle and Upper Egypt was almost entirely a desert with civilization centered mainly in the Delta region of the Nile.

Discoveries in the Fayum!

An American engineer, Francis Cope Whitehouse, was among a group of engineers retained by the British administrators of Egypt more than a century ago to resolve the problem of increasing the amount of arable land in the desert areas of the country. Whitehouse astonished his employers by reporting that he had verified the existence of a huge artificial lake created during the time of Pharaoh Moeris (Mery-Ku-Re of the 10th Dynasty), and that the most practical method of irrigating the arid Egyptian desert was to RECONSTRUCT the system of irrigation that had been so skillfully put in place 3,500 years previously!

What had Whitehouse discovered that so astonished the British rulers of Egypt?

Whitehouse, a distinguished technician with a number of inventions to his name, was amazed when he started surveying the el-Fayum province. He became intrigued by the existence of a small lake known as Birkut el-Qarun or Lake Karoun - - which was a freshwater lake in the midst of the great Libyan desert, yet had no visible source.

According to author Samuel Kurinsky:

The lake supported a fair-sized community, which was economically far better off than most of the rest of Egypt owing to the productivity of the rich agricultural lands still being served by the lake. Around the lake's perimeter, as well as at a considerable distance from its shores, Whitehouse came across the ruins of ancient DAMS, DITCHES, AQUEDUCTS, and a variety of structures that mutely testified to the existence of a VAST AND SOPHISTICATED IRRIGATION SYSTEM. Ancient fish bones, shells, and other signs scattered about the sands surrounding the oasis unmistakably demonstrated that the lake had once been MANY TIMES ITS CURRENT SIZE; that yet ANOTHER LAKE had existed that had since dried up, and that the CANAL SYSTEM that fed into and out of the lakes had extended the arable land FAR BEYOND its contemporary boundaries. -- Ibid., p. 88.

His curiosity aroused by this extraordinary discovery, Whitehouse visited numerous libraries in the Cairo area and soon discovered that the medieval maps of the Fayum province showed TWO LAKES in the basin. "He was baffled by the fact

that not only was the Birkut el-Qarun shown to be much larger but that the twin lake, named LAKE MOERIS in the aged and yellowed documents, FAR EXCEEDED the dimensions of the Birkut el-Qarun at its erstwhile greatest dimensions" (Ibid., p. 88).

Francis Whitehouse was further amazed to learn that the medieval maps were, in fact, MERE COPIES of maps drawn by Ptolemy of Alexandria -- who lived in the 2nd-century A.D.!

Not content to stop here, Whitehouse dug deeper into the Egyptian archives and discovered corroboration for the existence of ARTIFICIALLY CREATED LAKES in the literary works of such ancient historians as Pliny, Strabo, Herodotus, Mutianus and Diodorus. These lakes were evidently quite ancient at the time of the Ptolemies (rulers of Egypt -- 323 to 30 B.C.), and the huge expanses of fresh water astounded the ancient writers no less than it did Whitehouse!

"By extensive surveying Whitehouse confirmed the fact that a vast network of canals flanking the Nile had existed long before the Ptolemaic era; they had been far more extensive, and further, a HUGE RESERVOIR had been created consisting of TWO LAKES which, if the canal system had not been debased by the Greeks and other succeeding rulers, would have continued to guarantee water to a vast area. The Greeks, ignorant of the hydrology of the system, in attempting to increase acreage by reducing the extent of the lakes, had instead caused large areas of rich soil to return to dusty sand. Once fertile fields had relapsed into an arid landscape of sand, dust, and rock" (The Eighth Day: The Hidden History of the Jewish Contribution to Civilization, p. 88).

When Whitehouse consulted the writings of the Greek historian Herodotus (484?-425 B.C.) he discovered a CLUE to the reason for the existence of the second and much larger lake: "The water of the lake does not come out of the ground, which is here extremely dry, but is introduced by A CANAL FROM THE NILE" (Persian Wars, 2.149).

Diodorus Siculus (another Greek historian, of the first-century B.C.) adds admiringly that the lake was so huge that "its circumference they say, is 3,600 stades (400 miles), its depth at most points fifty fathoms." The circumference of 400 miles equaled the entire length of Egypt along its sea coast!

Diodorus goes on to add: "Between the river [Nile] and the lake HE constructed a CANAL 800 stades [89 miles] in length and 300 feet in breadth. Through this canal, at times HE admitted the water of the river, at other times HE excluded it, thus providing the farmers with water at fitting times by opening the inlet and again closing it scientifically and at great expense" (The Pyramids of Egypt, by I.E.S. Edwards. Viking Press, London. 1986. P. 235).

Whitehouse uncovered sections of this huge canal leading into the Fayum basin and feeding Lake Karoun, and also learnt from the local inhabitants WHO the mysterious "HE" was (in the writings of Diodorus) who constructed it!

This canal, which incredibly STILL waters A THIRD OF EGYPT, appears on modern maps of Egypt under its Arabic name -- BAHR YOUSEF, or "THE SEA OF JOSEPH"!!

Whitehouse reported back to his astonished employers that he had confirmed the existence of a vast lake artificially created by the Hebrew patriarch Joseph in the time of the PHARAOH MOERIS, and that "the most practical method of irrigating the arid Egyptian desert was to reconstruct the system of irrigation which JOSEPH had instituted 3,500 years ago"!

According to Samuel Kurinsky:

Whitehouse fervently presented his discoveries in April 1883 to the Khedival Geographical Society in Cairo; in June of the same year Whitehouse pressed his case before the Society of Biblical Archaeology in London. He pressed his views with enthusiasm with a series of lectures and pamphlets, but went unheeded and ignored. Desperate, Whitehouse even sued the authorities, but after his death in 1911 he was honored solely by a long obituary in The New York Times. Thus was forgotten the discovery of an American engineer that some 3,500 years ago it was A HEBREW PATRIARCH who had conceived, engineered, and carried out the WORLD'S LARGEST WATERWORKS PROJECT UNTIL THE TVA [Tennessee Valley Authority]. -- The Eighth Day, p. 89.

Contemporary scientists finally came to appreciate the validity of the ancient system and to reconstitute it in large measure. However, it was done without accrediting Whitehouse for his research or reference to the man who designed and built it JOSEPH!

The vast irrigation project was created during the time Joseph was the administrator of Egypt -- the time in which several hundreds of patriarchal progenitors of the Israelites brought prosperity to their communities and TO THE PEOPLE OF EGYPT. The story is a fascinating one.

The Shiqmona Scarabs

All Bible students know the story of Joseph. The first of Jacob's two sons by his beloved Rachel, Joseph grew up with his family at Succoth, Shechem and Bethel respectively. Later, on the way from Bethel to Ephrath (Bethlehem), Joseph's mother died while giving birth to Benjamin.

He is first mentioned in the Bible when a youth of 17 years. While tending sheep with his brothers, Joseph brought a bad report about them to his father -- and this exacerbated an already smoldering hatred because his brothers perceived that their father Jacob loved him more than he did them. Jacob had shown his preference by making Joseph a dress which appears to have been a long tunic with sleeves, worn by youths and maidens of the richer or RULING CLASS.

Jacob was a man of renown in the land of Canaan. The Phoenician historian Sanchoniathon spoke of him in his works which have been preserved by Eusebius in Preparation of the Gospel, book i, chapter x. Sanchoniathon states: "Chronus, whom

the Phoenicians name ISRAEL [JACOB] and who was, after his death, consecrated into the star SATURN, when HE WAS KING OF THE COUNTRY, and had by a nymph of that country, named Anobret, an only begotten son, whom, on that account, they called JEUD, (the Phoenicians to this day calling an only begotten son by that name), he in the dread of very great dangers that lay upon the country from war, ADORNED HIS SON WITH ROYAL APPAREL, and built an altar, and offered him in sacrifice."

While this passage of Sanchoniathon probably mixes several traditions, it shows that JACOB WAS REGARDED AS A KING IN CANAAN!

An ancient scarab (a seal shaped like a beetle) was unearthed by archaeologists from a Middle Bronze Age IIB tomb at Tell Shiqmona, near Haifa in Israel -- 1.3 kilometers southwest of the Carmel Cape. On the flat side of the scarab can be seen the Egyptian transliteration of the Semitic name YAQUB (JACOB) spelled out in the center of the seal as Y'QB-HR. A second such scarab, bearing a virtually identical inscription FRAMED IN A CARTOUCHE, was also uncovered. With the same name Y'QB-HR on it, it identifies the owner as A CANAANITE CHIEF OR KING! These seals were dated to before 1730 B.C., thus placing them close to the time of the biblical JACOB!

Around the peripheral of the scarabs are SPIRAL MOTIFS, which are a CHARACTERISTIC OF ISRAELITE ART and can be found on pottery and other art forms of the Minoans, the Mycenaeans, the Etruscans, and most of the Celtic tribes. Today, in Ireland, these spiral motifs can be found on the lintels of ancient tombs and carved on rocks scattered around the countryside.

Joseph Arrives in Egypt

In Genesis 37:5-7 we read that Joseph dreamed a dream foreshadowing his future power over his brothers -- which further increased their hatred of him! Eventually he was sent by his father to visit his brothers who were tending flocks in the fields of Dothan. They resolved to kill him, but he was saved by Reuben, who persuaded the brothers to cast Joseph into a dry pit, with the intent of restoring him to Jacob. When Joseph arrived they stripped him of his long striped garment and followed through on Reuben's recommendation. Subsequently, as a caravan of Ishmaelites came into view, Judah, in Reuben's absence, persuaded the others that, rather than kill Joseph, it would be advantageous to sell him to the passing merchants. Genesis 37:21-27 tells the story.

Despite Joseph's plea for compassion, his brothers sold him for 20 pieces of silver and later deceived Jacob into believing that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Jacob was so grieved over the loss of his son that he refused to be comforted.

Insight On the Scriptures notes:

Eventually the merchants brought Joseph into EGYPT and sold him to Potiphar, the chief of Pharaoh's bodyguard (Ge. 37:28, 36; 39:1). This purchase by the Egyptian Potiphar was not unusual, ANCIENT PAPYRUS DOCUMENTS indicate

that Syrian slaves (Joseph was half Syrian [Ge. 29:10; 31:20]) were valued highly in that land.

As Joseph had been diligent in furthering his father's interests, so also as a slave he proved himself to be industrious and trustworthy. With Jehovah's blessing, everything that Joseph did turned out successfully. Potiphar therefore finally entrusted to him all the household affairs. Joseph thus appears to have been a superintendent, A POST MENTIONED BY EGYPTIAN RECORDS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE LARGE HOMES OF INFLUENTIAL EGYPTIANS. -- Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. Brooklyn, N.Y. 1988. Pp.. 106-107.

The First Intermediate Period

Joseph's arrival in Egypt coincided with a period of time modern historians call the FIRST INTERMEDIATE PERIOD. Following the close of the Old Kingdom, Egypt experienced one of the darkest periods in her long history. Not only was little attention paid to the development of arts and crafts, but most of the temples and tombs of the Pyramid Age -- with their artistic masterpieces and untold treasures -- were systematically pillaged and destroyed. According to the Egyptian scribe Manetho, two dynasties of short-lived rulers (namely the VIIth and the VIIIth Dynasties) occupied the throne AT MEMPHIS, but their authority was only LOCAL -- and complete anarchy prevailed throughout the GREATER PART of Egypt. In fact, the chaos was so great that much of the land remained uncultivated; and in a number of nomes (counties) there was famine.

I.E.S. Edwards notes:

At some time during the VIIIth Dynasty an attempt seems to have been made to restore order in the eighth southernmost nomes, where a CONFEDERATION WAS FORMED under the hegemony of the nomarch of COPTOS. About forty years later, however, a nomarch of Herakleopolis Magna named KHETY conquered THE WHOLE OF UPPER EGYPT as far as the First Cataract at Aswan and became THE FOUNDER OF THE IXth DYNASTY. -- The Pyramids of Egypt, p. 207.

Khety's (also called Akhtoy) kingdom extended northwards as far as MEMPHIS, but evidently did not include the Delta, part of which was still under the control of Asiatic invaders. His city of Herakleopolis (known by the Egyptians as "Nen-Ny-sut") occupied the site of present-day Ahnasyeh, on the west side of the Nile -- just south of THE ENTRANCE TO THE FAYUM!

Assuming the throne name Mery-yeb-Re, Khety (or Akhtoy) and the 17 Herakleopolitan kings of the 9th and 10th Dynasties who succeeded him ruled altogether about 190 years. Except for its founder, we know very little about the 13 kings of the 9th Dynasty, most of whose names are listed in whole or in part in the tattered fragments of the TURIN PAPYRUS.

With the 10th Dynasty, however, we are on much firmer ground. The Turin Papyrus lists five rulers; and the last three kings of the HOUSE OF HERAKLEOPOLIS are major players in the story of Joseph. The third king of this

dynasty -- Wah-ku-Re Akhtoy IV was a man of great talents. History tells us that Wah-ku-Re REGAINED CONTROL OF THE DELTA, driving out the Asiatic invaders and INAUGURATING A PERIOD OF INTENSIVE RECONSTRUCTION UNDER A WELL-PLANNED ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM DIRECTED FROM MEMPHIS.

"Memphis...remained, as before, the seat of the pharaonic government and the site of the royal cemetery. To facilitate communications between the ancient capital and THE KING'S RESIDENCE AT HERAKLEOPOLIS, a CANAL FIFTY-FIVE MILES IN LENGTH now linked the two cities. With the recovery of the Delta harbors trade was reopened with the Syrian coast, and fine coniferous woods were again imported into Egypt." (The Scepter of Egypt, by William C. Hayes. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 1960. P. 144).

There is a record of how Akhtoy IV, after restoring order in Egypt, traveled up and down the Nile River with AN ENORMOUS FLEET, and was hailed upon his return to the royal palace at Memphis.

THIS WAS THE PHARAOH WHO RULED LOWER EGYPT WHEN JOSEPH ARRIVED IN THE LAND as a prisoner of the Midianites!

The "Instruction to King Mery-ku-Re"

Wah-ku-Re Akhtoy IV was the author of the famous INSTRUCTION TO KING MERY-KU-RE -- who was his son and heir. Accepted by scholars as an OUTSTANDING example of Egyptian didactic (moral instruction) literature, this composition added a new dimension: it was a royal instruction; the testament of a departing king to his son and successor, and as such it embodied a treatise on kingship. Like all other Instructions that have come down to us, it is preserved in papyrus copies of later times; and its date must be determined from internal evidence. Apart from the historical significance of this work, it is famous for its LOFTY MORALITY which even goes far beyond the pragmatic wisdom of the famous Egyptian Ptahhotep. In reading this work you can't help but get a feeling for this king's morality and humility. No proud boasts and flowery language we usually associate with the inscriptions of the Egyptian pharaohs -- just plain, down-to-earth advice and instruction to his son.

Notice:

The beginning of the instruction which the King of Upper and Lower Egypt...made for his son, King Meri-ka-Re....

Be a craftsman in speech, (so that) thou mayest be strong, (for) the tongue is a SWORD to [a man], and SPEECH IS MORE VALOROUS THAN ANY FIGHTING. No one can circumvent the skillful of heart....They who know his wisdom do not attack him, and no [misfortune] occurs where he is...

Copy thy fathers and thy ancestors....Behold, their words remain in writing. Open, that thou mayest read and copy (their) wisdom. (Thus) the skilled man becomes learned....

Advance thy great men, so that they may carry out thy laws....

Mayest thou speak justice in thy (own) house, (that) the great ones who are on earth may fear thee. Uprightness of heart IS FITTING FOR THE LORD....

Do justice whilst thou endurest upon earth. Quiet the weeper; do not oppress the widow; supplant no man in the property of his father; and impair no officials at their posts. Be on thy guard against punishing wrongfully. Do no slaughter: it is not of advantage to thee. (But) thou shouldst punish with beatings and with arrests; this land will be (firmly) grounded thereby --

Do not prefer the wellborn to the commoner, (but) choose a man on account of his skills....(Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament, edited by James B. Pritchard. Princeton University Press, Princeton.)

King Wah-ku-Re then goes on to say how he pacified the Delta region of Egypt and created A SPECIAL DISTRICT which he filled with A SPECIAL PEOPLE:

I arose as lord of the city, Whose heart was sad because of the Northland; From Hetshenu to Sembaqa, and south to Two-Fish-Channel I pacified the entire West as far as the coast of the sea. It pays taxes, it gives cedar wood, One sees juniper wood which they give us.... THE INNER ISLANDS ARE TURNED BACK, AND EVERY MAN WITHIN, The administrative districts say: "Thou art more honored than I." The land they had ravaged has been made into nomes, All kinds of large towns [are in it]; What was ruled by one is in the hands of ten, Officials are appointed, tax-[lists drawn up]. WHEN FREE MEN ARE GIVEN LAND, They work for you like a single team; No rebel will arise among them.... The due of the Northland are in your hand, For the mooring-post is staked IN THE DISTRICT I MADE IN THE EAST FROM HEBENU TO HORUSWAY IT IS SETTLED WITH TOWNS, FILLED WITH PEOPLE, OF THE BEST IN THE LAND.... Medenyt [in the Fayum] has been restored to its nome, Its one side is irrigated as far as KEM-WER, It is the [defense] against the Bowmen. Its walls are warlike, its soldiers many, Its serfs know how to bear arms, Apart from the free men within. The region of Memphis totals ten thousand men, FREE CITIZENS WHO ARE NOT TAXED; Officials are in it since the time it was residence, The borders are firm, the garrisons valiant. Many northerners irrigate it as far as the Northland, TAXED WITH GRAIN IN THE MANNER OF FREE MEN; Lo, it is the gateway of the Northland, They form a dyke as far as Heracleopolis. Abundant citizens are the heart's support....

(Ancient Egyptian Literature, by Miriam Lichtheim. University of California Press, Berkeley, CA 1975. Pp.. 103-104).

The "Two-Fish Channel" mentioned above is the name for the branch of the Nile that flowed through the nome of Letopolis -in other words the Canopic branch. In this passage IT DESIGNATES THE SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF THE WESTERN DELTA. Hetshenu was a town near Heliopolis.

The "Inner Islands"!

The phrase "The Inner Islands are turned back" has puzzled the scholars and produced a variety of less than satisfactory explanations. Under Wah-ku-Re Achtoy IV Egypt became a VAST MEDITERRANEAN POWER, and one of the areas early settled by the Egyptians at this time was CRETE (an important naval gateway) AND OTHER ISLANDS of the Mediterranean Sea.

Herman L. Hoeh of Ambassador College notes: "From CreteCaphtor in Hebrew -- came the Philistines (Jer. 47:4 and Amos 9:7). The Philistines descended from MIZRAIM, father of the Egyptians (Gen. 10:13-14). RULING OVER THE EGYPTIANS AND PHILISTINES IN CRETE AND THE EASTERN NILE DELTA WAS A LITTLE-KNOWN DYNASTY OF EGYPTIAN KINGS. They are mentioned in the Book of Sothis by Syncellus. Manetho does not include them among true Egyptian dynasties because THEIR SEAT OF GOVERNMENT WAS ON CRETE. The Cretan king of this dynasty, WHO WAS SUBJECT TO THE JURISDICTION OF THE GREAT PHARAOH IN EGYPT [Wah-ku-Re Achtoy IV], was Rameses" (Compendium of World History. Ambassador College, 1963. Vol. II, pp.. 46-47).

The links between Egypt and Crete become obvious when one understands that Crete was a part of the land of Goshen. When British archaeologist Sir Flinders Petrie unearthed the village of KAHUN (consisting of 2,000 separate dwellings dispersed over 18 acres and built to house the Israelites who were erecting the tomb of Sesostris II), he discovered some beautifully crafted pieces of pottery. "These sherds turned out to be 'KAMARES WARE', a distinctive type of painted vase named after THE CAVE SANCTUARY ON MOUNT IDA IN CENTRAL CRETE where they were FIRST FOUND. Similar vases also emerged in Sir Arthur Evan's 'FIRST PALACE LEVEL' at Knossos [on Crete]..." (Discovering the World of the Ancient Greeks, by Zofia Archibald. Facts-On-File, N.Y. 1991. P. 64).

A number of facts should be highlighted here: This pottery, discovered by Petrie, was used by the ISRAELITES erecting the pharaoh's pyramid; and the town built to house the workers was called "KAHUN" -- a Hebrew word derived from KOHAN meaning "priest"! Since this pottery has not been found amongst the general necropoles of the Egyptians, it must have been manufactured by the Israelites themselves!

As well as at Kahun, Kamares pottery has been excavated from ILLAHUN (another Hebrew name) and Abydos.

One of the things that struck the archaeologists was the beauty and exquisiteness of this pottery; it is of superb craftsmanship, and only in later Venetian glass, according to the experts, can equal feeling in color effects be found. "It is said that the potters who produced this fine work ADMIRERD THE SHEEN WHICH THE WORKERS IN BRONZE HAD MANAGED TO ATTAIN and had finally succeeded in achieving it in their own 'eggshell' pottery" (The House of the Double Axe: The Palace of Knossos, by Agnes Carr Vaughan. Doubleday & Co., N.Y. 1959. Pp.. 139-140).

A characteristic of this style of pottery is the SPIRAL MOTIF (found delicately incorporated into the design) which, as mentioned earlier, is a NOTABLE FEATURE

of pottery from Mycenae, Etruria, and other sites that were inhabited by the Celtic tribes.

The Kamares pottery (which prevailed for about 300 years in Crete) was highly valued by the pharaohs, and a vessel of this type was found in the tomb of King Senusert III (Sesostris) at Abydos in Upper Egypt.

Another link between Egypt and Crete was forged when a statue of an Egyptian dignitary, crafted in diorite stone and inscribed with his name in Egyptian hieroglyphics, was found IN A COURT OF THE PALACE AT KNOSSOS in Crete. Its style makes it evident that it was sculptured during the 12th Dynasty -- the time that Egypt was at the height of her power and had control of the Mediterranean!

The late professor Percy Newberry, addressing the British Association in 1923, pointed out that at the very beginning of the historic period in LOWER EGYPT the CULT OBJECTS OF THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTH-WESTERN DELTA (nearest to Crete) "included (1) THE HARPOON, (2) THE FIGURE OF EIGHT SHIELD with crossed arrows, (3) THE MOUNTAIN and probably, (4) THE DOUBLE AXE and, (5) A DOVE or Swallow. With the exception of the Harpoon ALL OF THESE CULT OBJECTS ARE ALSO FOUND IN CRETE" (Quoted in The Bull of Minos, by Leonard Cottrell. Facts-On-File Publications, N.Y. 1984. Pp. 200-201). Even the Harpoon may have been later modified into the familiar MINOAN TRIDENT -- which appears on the walls of Knossos and Phaestos, usually in association with Poseidon.

"The district I made in the East" can only refer to the area the Bible calls GOSHEN, and the confines of the district ("from HEBENU [another Hebrew name] to HORUSWAY") refers to somewhere near modern Minich in Middle Egypt to the Suez frontier on the Way-of-Horus -- the road that led from Egypt to Canaan. "Thus the east Delta was anchored along a newly established frontier line" (Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament, footnote 31, p.416). "Horusway" and "Horusways" are synonymous with the eastern frontier fortress of SILE.

Kem-Wer was a town of the FAYUM district; and under Wah-ku-Re "the east bank of the twenty-second nome was recovered by the Heracleopolitans and brought under cultivation up to the point where it joined the Fayum which they had held all along" (Ancient Egyptian Literature, footnote 16, p. 108).

Such were the conditions in Egypt when Joseph arrived with the Midianite traders.

Joseph and Potiphar's Wife

While working as a superintendent of Potiphar's household, Joseph (who evidently was a very handsome young man) was noticed by Potiphar's wife who became infatuated with him. "Archaeological evidence indicates that the arrangement of Egyptian houses appears to have been such that a person had to pass through the main part of the house to reach the storerooms. If Potiphar's house was laid out similarly, it would have been impossible for Joseph to avoid all contact with Potiphar's wife." (Insight on the Scriptures, p. 107).

Eventually Potiphar's wife took advantage of the situation when there were no other men in the house, and grabbed hold of his garment, saying: "Lie down with me!" Joseph, being obedient to the laws of God, fled the scene leaving his garment in her hand. Potiphar's wife began to scream and made it appear that Joseph had made immoral advances toward her. Upon relating this to her enraged husband, Potiphar had Joseph thrown into the prison house where the king's prisoners were kept under arrest.

This event in the life of Joseph did not go unnoticed by the Egyptian bards. There is a papyrus in the British Museum (#10183), dated to the 19th Dynasty, that tells the story of a conscientious young man who was falsely accused of adultery by the wife of his elder brother after he had rejected her advances. The Story of Two Brothers is so similar to the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife that it must be based on the remembrance of Joseph's ordeal in the household of Potiphar.

During the course of centuries the story of Joseph attracted occasional details from other popular stories which had nothing to do with Joseph. The Story of Two Brothers is the story of Anubis and Bitis. Bitis was the younger, and was entrusted with all the older brother's property -- just like Joseph was entrusted with all the affairs of Potiphar. The affectionate relationship between the two brothers was disturbed, however, by the wife of Anubis. One day, when Bitis went to the house to get some seed, the wife attempted to seduce him. He angrily resisted, but said nothing to the brother. That evening, when Anubis came home, the wife complained to her husband that she had been mistreated by Bitis, whereupon the latter was forced to flee for his life. "This story corresponds so EXACTLY to the biblical tale of Joseph and the wife of Potiphar (Gen. 39:7ff) that scholars have generally taken it as a MYTHOLOGICAL ACCRETION TO THE LIFE OF JOSEPH." (Biblical Archaeology, by G. Ernest Wright. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 1962. P. 54).

Numerous other elements in the Book of Genesis have been explained in a similar fashion -- but none as clear as this!

Notice:

Now [after] many [days] after this, they were in the fields and ran short of seed. Then he sent his younger brother, saying "Go and fetch us seed from the village." And his younger brother found the wife of his elder brother sitting and doing her hair. Then he said to her: "Get up and give me (some) seed, for my elder brother is waiting for me. Don't delay!" Then she said to him: "Go and open the bin and take what you want! Don't make me leave my combing unfinished!" Then the lad went into his stable, and he took a big jar, for he wanted to carry off a lot of seed. So he loaded himself with barley and emmer and came out carrying them.

Then she said to him: "How much (is it) that is on your shoulder?" [And he] said to her: "Three sacks of emmer, two sacks of barley, five in all, is what is on your shoulder." So he spoke to her. Then she [talked with] him, saying "There is [great] strength in you! Now I see your energies every day!" And she wanted to know him as one knows a man.

The Story of the Two Brothers continues:

Then she stood up and took hold of him and said to him: "Come, let's spend an [hour] sleeping (together)! This will do you good, because I shall make fine clothes for you!" Then the lad [became] like a leopard with [great] rage at the wicked suggestion which she had made to him, and she was very, very much frightened. Then he argued with her, saying: "See here -you are like a mother to me, and your husband is like a father to me! Because being older than I -- he was the one who brought me up. What is this great crime which you have said to me? Don't say it to me again!....

But the wife of his elder brother was afraid (because of) the suggestion which she had made. Then she took fat and grease, and she became like one who has been criminally beaten, wanting to tell her husband: "It was your younger brother who did the beating!" And her husband left off in the evening, after his custom of everyday, and he reached his house, and he found his wife lying down, terribly sick. She did not put water on his hands, after his custom, nor had she lit a light before him, and his house was in darkness, and she lay (there) vomiting. So her husband said to her: "Who has been talking with you?" Then she said to him: "Not one person has been talking with me except your younger brother. But when he came [to] take the seed to you he found me sitting alone, and he said to me: 'Come, let's spend an hour sleeping (together)! Put on your curls! So he spoke to me. But I wouldn't listen to him: 'Aren't I your mother? -- for your elder brother is like a father to you!' So I spoke to him. But he was afraid, and he beat (me), so as not to let me tell you. -- Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament, p. 24.

Joseph's Rise to Power

Evidently, Joseph was initially treated severely in prison, as Psalm 105:17-19 points out: "He sent a man before them -Joseph-- who was sold as a slave. They HURT HIS FEET WITH FETTERS, HE WAS LAID IN IRONS. Until the time that his word came to pass." Later, however, the chief officer of the prison house placed Joseph in a position of trust over the other prisoners because of his exemplary behavior under adverse conditions. In this capacity, the prisoner Joseph again showed himself to be AN ABLE ADMINISTRATOR by ensuring that all the work was done in the prison.

Later on, when two of Pharaoh Achtoy's officers -- the CHIEF OF THE CUPBEARERS and the CHIEF OF THE BAKERS -- were thrown into the same prison, Joseph was assigned to wait upon them. During their incarceration, both of these men had dreams which Joseph explained to them. Since the cupbearer's dream indicated that he was to be restored to his position with the pharaoh in three days time, Joseph requested that the cupbearer remember him and mention him to the pharaoh so that he might be released from prison. The baker's dream was interpreted by Joseph to mean that he would be put to death in three days time. Both dreams were fulfilled on schedule -- on the pharaoh's birthday. By this time some 11 years had already passed since his being sold by his brothers.

Insight on the Scriptures reveals what happened next:

Again restored to his position, the cupbearer forgot all about Joseph. (Ge. 40:23) However, at the end of two full years, Pharaoh had two dreams that none of Egypt's magic-practicing priests and wise men could interpret. It was then that the cupbearer brought Joseph to Pharaoh's attention. At once Pharaoh sent for Joseph. In keeping with EGYPTIAN CUSTOM, Joseph, before going before Pharaoh, shaved and changed his garments. Also in this case he did not take any credit to himself but ascribed the interpretation to God. -- Page 107.

Joseph then explained that both of Pharaoh's dreams pointed to SEVEN YEARS OF PLENTY to be followed by SEVEN YEARS OF FAMINE. Also, he recommended measures to be taken to alleviate the upcoming famine (Gen. 41:1-36).

The pharaoh, in his wisdom, realized what must be done:

Pharaoh recognized in 30-year old Joseph the man wise enough to administer affairs during the time of plenty and the time of famine. Joseph was therefore constituted SECOND RULER IN EGYPT. Pharaoh gave Joseph his own signet ring, fine linen garments, and a necklace of gold. (Ge. 41:37-44, 46; compare Ps. 105:17, 20-22) This manner of investiture IS ATTESTED BY EGYPTIAN INSCRIPTIONS AND MURALS. It is also of interest that from ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RECORDS it is known that several Canaanites were given high positions in Egypt and that Joseph's change in name to Zaphenath-paneah is NOT WITHOUT PARALLEL. Joseph was also given Asenath the daughter of Potiphera (from Egyptian, meaning "He Whom Ra Has Given") the priest of On [Heliopolis] as a wife. -- Ge. 41:45.

Thereafter Joseph toured the land of Egypt and prepared to administer affairs of state, later storing great quantities of foodstuffs during the years of plenty. Before the FAMINE arrived, his wife Asenath bore him two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. -- Ge. 41:46-52. (Ibid., p. 108).

As pointed out in the quote above, the position to which Joseph attained in Egypt is well illustrated by inscriptions and reliefs. "Joseph not only was SECOND IN POWER to none but Pharaoh, but in view of the approaching FAMINE he was placed in control of all grain and granaries. From EGYPTIAN RECORDS we should judge that he therefore COMBINED IN HIS PERSON TWO OFFICES: that of 'governor' or Prime Minister at the head of the government, and that of 'superintendent of the granaries.' The duties of the Prime Minister were various; he was not only minister of the interior and chief magistrate, but occasionally MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORSHIP also" (Biblical Archaeology, pp.. 54-55).

The office of "Superintendent of the Granaries" was extremely important at all periods of Egyptian history because the real wealth and stability of the nation lay in its grain. The prime responsibility of the Superintendent was to see to it that the supply was plentiful; and every year, in a solemn ceremony, the Superintendent presented to the pharaoh an "account of the harvests." If there had been a bumper crop -- "a better harvest than for thirty years" -- then the official would be given special honors by the pharaoh, anointed and arrayed with valuable necklaces.

The Seven-Year famine

The biblical story of SEVEN YEARS of famine was not at all unusual in Egypt. Many inscriptions speak about famines in the land, and at least two officials, giving glowing summaries of their good deeds on the walls of their tombs, tell of distributing food to the hungry "in each year of want." One inscription that Herman L. Hoeh of Ambassador College (now Ambassador University) latched upon to prove his particular arrangement of the Egyptian dynasties, is that written under Pharaoh Djoser of the Third Dynasty. Carved on a rock on the island of Siheil near the First Cataract of the Nile, the inscription reads, in part, as follows:

I was in distress on the Great Throne, and those who are in the palace were in Heart's affliction from a very great evil, since the Nile had not come in my time for a space of seven years. Grain was scant, fruits were dried up, and everything which they eat was short....The infant was wailing; the youth was waiting; the heart of the old man was in sorrow....The courtiers were in need. The temples were shut up....Every(thing) was found empty.-- Translated by J. B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, p. 31.

That this particular famine was NOT the one of Joseph's time is evidenced by a number of observations. First of all, the reign of Pharaoh Djoser of the Third Dynasty was far TOO EARLY to coincide with Joseph's sojourn in Egypt -- there are many factors that PROVE the time of the bondage and exodus was in the MIDDLE KINGDOM, and counting back the 400 years the Israelites were in Egypt brings us to the First Intermediate Period, NOT the time of Djoser!

Also, famines of seven year's duration are not uncommon in Egyptian history. G. Ernest Wright notes "that seven-year famines [plural] were otherwise known in Egypt" (*Biblical Archaeology*, p. 53). The text of the inscription at the First Cataract states that Djoser's Prime Minister was li-em-(ho)tep, the son of Ptah -- NOT Zaphenath-paneah or Joseph! li-em-(ho)tep (or Imhotep) was famous in Egyptian history, and later became deified.

Finally, in reading the inscription, we learn that the "seven lean years...by a contractual arrangement between pharaoh and a god, were TO BE FOLLOWED BY YEARS OF PLENTY." (*Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, p. 31). The Bible plainly shows that SEVEN YEARS OF PLENTY WERE TO BE FOLLOWED BY SEVEN YEARS OF FAMINE -- not the other way around!

To top this off, there is some question regarding the authenticity of this inscription -- James Pritchard notes that "it is a question whether it is a PRIESTLY FORGERY of some later period, justifying their claim to territorial privileges, or whether it correctly recounts an actual grant of land more than 2,500 years earlier. This question cannot be answered in final terms." (*Ibid.*, p. 31).

There are numerous inscriptions of the First Intermediate Period that tell of the terrible famine of Joseph's time. One in particular (the stela of the Butler Merer of Edfu) contains an important CLUE for dating the inscription and the famine.

Notice:

An offering which the king gives (and) Anubis, who is upon his mountain and in the place of embalming, the lord of the necropolis, in all his good and pure places: an offering for the revered one, the Sole Companion, Butler and Overseer of the slaughterers of the House of Khuu in its entirety, who says:

I was the priest for slaughtering and offering in two temples on behalf of THE ruler. I OFFERED FOR THIRTEEN RULERS without a mishap ever befalling me....

I buried the dead and nourished the living, wherever I went IN THIS DROUGHT WHICH HAD OCCURRED. I closed off all their fields and mounds in town and countryside, not letting their water inundate for someone else, as does a worthy citizen so that his family may survive. When it happened that Upper Egypt barley was given to the town, I transported it many times. I gave a heap of white Upper Egyptian barley and a heap of hmi-barley, and MEASURED OUT FOR EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS WISH....(Ancient Egyptian Literature, p. 87).

Now the sentence "I offered for THIRTEEN RULERS without a mishap ever befalling me" poses problems for the historians. Obviously, Butler Merer could not have "offered" for 13 consecutive kings -- he would not have lived long enough! The historians explain it away by saying: "The point Merer is making is that he served his superiors without ever making a mistake. These superiors may have been dead rulers for whom he performed funerary sacrifices." As far as I am concerned the "historians" can explain it away any way they like -- the fact remains that Merer meant what he said! He offered for 13 rulers all right not consecutive or dead rulers but 13 CONTEMPORARY ONES!

Who could these 13 rulers be? We will answer that question shortly!

Another stela of the First Intermediate Period, that of the Treasurer Iti of Imyotru, deals with the SAME FAMINE and relates how he supplied his town during the famine and also helped the towns of Hefat and luni, while not attempting to help the hungry citizens of Thebes. The similarities in style and content make it certain that this stela is CONTEMPORARY with that of Merer.

It reads, in part:

An offering which the king gives (and) Anubis, who is upon his mountain and in the place of embalming, the lord of the necropolis: an offering for the revered one, the Royal Seal-bearer, Sole Companion, Seal-bearer of the God, Iti, who says:

I was a worthy citizen who acted with his arm. I was a great pillar in the Theban nome, a man of standing in the Southland. I NOURISHED IMYOTRU IN THE YEARS OF MISERY. Though four hundred men were in straits through it, I did not seize a man's daughter, nor did I seize his field....(Ancient Egyptian Literature, pp.. 88-89).

A stela discovered in the necropolis of Naqada, which lay within the Coptic nome (the fifth nome of Upper Egypt -- 25 miles N.E. of Thebes), refers to the SAME

PROLONGED FAMINE once again and is known as the stela of the Steward Seneni of Coptus: "An offering which the king gives (and) Anubis, who is upon his mountain and in the place of embalming, the lord of the necropolis: an offering for the Eldest of the House Seneni, who says: I MEASURED OUT UPPER EGYPTIAN BARLEY AS SUSTENANCE FOR THIS WHOLE TOWN IN THE GATEWAY OF THE COUNT AND CHIEF PRIEST DJEFI, IN THE PAINFUL YEARS OF DISTRESS. Having acted in the proper manner, I was praised for it by the whole town. Never did I do what everybody hates. The royal chamberlain Senen(i)." (Ibid., pp.. 89-90).

In all likelihood, these contemporary stelae from the First Intermediate Period record the great SEVEN-YEAR FAMINE in the time of Joseph.

Jacob's Arrival in Egypt

The great seven-year famine not only affected Egypt, but also surrounding countries. Eventually Canaan was also languishing under drought conditions and Jacob was forced to send his sons (Joseph's half-brothers) down to Egypt to buy food. When Joseph finally revealed himself to his brothers, he said: "I am Joseph; does my father still live?...But now, do not therefore be grieved or angry with yourselves because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. For these two years the famine has been in the land, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing or harvesting. And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a FATHER TO PHARAOH, AND LORD OF ALL HIS HOUSE, and a RULER THROUGHOUT ALL THE LAND OF EGYPT." (Gen. 45:3-8, NKJV).

Joseph then directed his brothers to return to Canaan and bring his father with them to Egypt: "Hasten and go up to my father, and say to him, 'Thus says your son Joseph: "God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not tarry. You shall dwell in THE LAND OF GOSHEN, AND YOU SHALL BE NEAR TO ME, you and your children, your children's children, your flocks and your herds, and all that you have. There I will provide for you, lest you and your household, and all that you have, come to poverty; FOR THERE ARE STILL FIVE YEARS OF FAMINE.'"" (Ibid., verses 9-11).

Pharaoh Wah-ku-Re Achtoy IV was almost as excited as Joseph, and provided wagons for Joseph's brothers so that they might bring Jacob and his entire household to Egypt.

When Jacob heard the news he could not believe that his son Joseph was still alive. But, when finally convinced, the 130-year-old Jacob exclaimed: "It is enough. Joseph my son is still alive. I will go and see him before I die" (Gen. 45:28, NKJV). Later, on the way to Egypt with his household, Jacob had a vision from God at Beer-sheba. In the vision, God gave Jacob His divine approval for the move and told him: "I will go down with you to Egypt, and I will also surely bring you up again; and Joseph will put his hand on yours eyes" (Gen. 46:4). Joseph, therefore, was to be the one to close Jacob's eyes after his death. Since the FIRSTBORN customarily did this, God thereby revealed that Joseph was to receive THE RIGHT AS FIRSTBORN.

Having been advised of his father's arrival within the borders of Egypt by Judah -- who had been sent in advance -- Joseph prepared his chariot and went to meet Jacob IN GOSHEN.

The Stone That Roared!

With Jacob when he arrived in Egypt was a MYSTERIOUS STONE -- a stone that was destined to travel to the ends of the earth and become the center of legends and traditions that have been preeminent amongst various Celtic tribes.

The story begins early in Jacob's life:

Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. AND HE TOOK ONE OF THE STONES OF THAT PLACE AND PUT IT AT HIS HEAD, and he lay down in that place to sleep. -- Gen. 28:10-11, NKJV.

During the night Jacob dreamt of a ladder going up to heaven with angels ascending and descending on it. God then made certain promises to Jacob regarding the future of his descendants and the greatness they were to attain.

"Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, 'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it'....Then Jacob rose early in the morning, AND TOOK THE STONE THAT HE HAD PUT AT HIS HEAD, SET IT UP AS A PILLAR, AND Poured oil ON TOP OF IT....Then Jacob made a vow, saying, 'If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God. And THIS STONE which I have SET AS A PILLAR shall be God's house....' (Gen. 28:16, 18, 20-22, NKJV).

A number of historians, including Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, record the removal of Jacob's STONE to Egypt: "The stony pillar on which Jacob slept at Bethel was by his countrymen TRANSPORTED TO EGYPT." (Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey. John Murray, London. 1876. P. 57).

Also, author Raymond F. McNair notes: "Tradition identifies this stone [the Coronation Stone in Westminster Abbey, London] with the one upon which JACOB RESTED HIS HEAD AT BETHEL...Jacob's sons CARRIED IT TO EGYPT...." (Quoted in the manuscript In Search of the Lost Ten Tribes from the Westminster Abbey Official Guide).

After Jacob and his household were settled in Goshen, tradition seems to support the idea that a building or temple was built to house the stone which, according to the Cronicon Rythmicum, became known as the "LAPIS PHARAONIS" or "PHARAOH'S STONE."

Why was Jacob's pillow stone known as "Pharaoh's Stone"? Because Jacob was a KING in Egypt!

A tradition arose in the land of Egypt of a "VOCAL-STONE" that "ROARED" whenever a prince of the ROYAL LINE OF THE HEBREWS sat or stood on it: "If it would make a noise under the person who sat on it, it was an infallible sign of his accession to the crown; but if it proved silent, it precluded him from any hopes." (Ogygia, or, a Chronological Account of Irish Events, by Roderic O'Flaherty -- translated by James Hely. W. M'Kenzie, Dublin. 1793. Pp.. 66-68).

Ancient authors have made mention of a "vocal-stone" which was evidently housed in a statue of an Egyptian king (Jacob?) which was afterwards broken by Cambyses to the middle of the breast.

The Land of Goshen

After greeting his father when he arrived in Goshen Joseph, along with five of his brothers, requested an audience with Pharaoh Achtoy.

Insight On the Scriptures relates what transpired in the presence of the pharaoh:

As directed by Joseph, his brothers identified themselves as herders of sheep and requested to reside as aliens IN THE LAND OF GOSHEN. Pharaoh granted their request, and Joseph, after introducing his father to Pharaoh, settled Jacob and his household IN THE VERY BEST OF THE LAND. (Ge. 46:28-47:11) Thus, wisely and lovingly Joseph made the best of an Egyptian prejudice against shepherds. It resulted in safeguarding Jacob's family from being contaminated by Egyptian influence and eliminating the danger of their being completely absorbed by the Egyptians through marriage. -- Page 109.

Exactly where is the land of Goshen?

Modern scholars try to tell us that "the best of the land" is a small, semi-desolate region east of the Nile -- halfway between the Nile and the Suez Canal today. More generous scholars, such as G. Ernest Wright, allow that it was the Wadi Tumilat: "This Wadi (the Arabic for a river bed which is usually dry except in the rainy season) is A NARROW VALLEY BETWEEN THIRTY AND FORTY MILES LONG, connecting the Nile with Lake Timsah. In both ancient and modern times the area around the Wadi Tumilat, especially to the north of it, was one of the richest sections of Egypt [outside of the Fayum], truly 'the best of the land,' as it is described in Gen. 47:11. The great American explorer, Edward Robinson, reported in 1838 that it yielded more revenue at that time than any other province in Egypt, and that there were more flocks and herds there than elsewhere. The population was half migratory, large numbers of people still retaining their nomadic habits. This was exactly the situation in Joseph's day, as we infer both from the Bible and from Egyptian texts. If there is any place in Egypt where the Hebrew shepherds should have settled, THIS was the region" (Biblical Archaeology, p. 56).

The question is, how could an area such as this between the Nile and the Suez Canal support a population of 600,000 Israelite men -- excluding women and children -- at the time of the exodus? Similarly, how could a narrow wadi between thirty and forty miles long support such a population? These areas probably could

not have sustained more than 6,000 men (exclusive of women and children) along with all their cattle! So -- is the Bible wrong? No, the so-called scholars simply have not understood WHERE the land of Goshen was!

Let Herman L. Hoeh explain:

Genesis 46:28 tells us more of the story. "And he (Jacob) sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to direct his face unto Goshen." Jacob was coming down from Beersheba in Palestine into Egypt. "And they came into the land of Goshen. And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went UP (NORTHWARD) to meet Israel his father, to Goshen, and presented himself unto him."

Did you notice that Joseph was not in the land of Goshen? Joseph dwelt where Pharaoh was. AND PHARAOH WAS AT MEMPHIS, the [administrative] capital of lower Egypt. "Joseph made ready his chariot, AND WENT UP TO MEET ISRAEL his father." He went up to Goshen. He was going NORTH. Therefore, the land of Goshen was NORTH of the capital of Egypt at this time. -- Compendium of World History, vol. II. Ambassador College, 1963. Pp.. 224-225.

If we turn to Genesis 46:33 and 34 we read: "So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?'" Here Joseph instructs his father to reply: "...you shall say, 'Your servants' occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we and also our fathers'..." Why did Joseph tell Jacob to say this? "...that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians." The Egyptians quite often hired foreigners to take care of their cattle; so the purpose was to have the children of Israel live in the land of Goshen and tend the Pharaoh's cattle there.

The story continues in Genesis 47:5. "Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, 'Your father and your brothers have come to you. The land of Egypt is before you. Have your father and brothers dwell IN THE BEST OF THE LAND; let them dwell in the land of Goshen. And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock.'"

Herman Hoeh asks: "Did you notice that Pharaoh said to the children of Israel, 'The land of Egypt is before you, THE BEST OF THE LAND, the land of Goshen.' This is the portion of Egypt that Pharaoh is actually turning over to the children of Israel because of what Joseph did!"

We should recall that God told Abraham (Gen. 15:18) that his descendants were going to control land all the way to the river of Egypt -- the Nile! God was now beginning to fulfill that promise.

So the land of Goshen was NORTH of Memphis and stretched all the way from the Nile to the eastern border of Egypt. Since the river Nile had many branches where it approached the Mediterranean, the land of Goshen must have stretched to the westernmost branch -- therefore the ENTIRE DELTA REGION was included in the land of Goshen!

If we read verse 11 of Genesis 47, we learn that the land of Goshen was also called "THE LAND OF RAMESES": "And Joseph situated his father and his brothers, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, IN THE LAND OF RAMESES, as Pharaoh had commanded."

The best of the land, in verse 6, is called "the land of Goshen," while in verse 11 the best of the land is called "the land of Rameses." Obviously, then, the land of Goshen and the land of Rameses are the same! It is the ENTIRE delta region of Egypt!

The Proof of "Sais"!

Historical proof that the land of Goshen stretched to the westernmost branch of the Nile can be found in the town of SAIS. An ancient city of the Egyptian Delta, Sais lay WESTWARD of the Thermuthiac or Sebennyitic branch of the Nile. It was the capital of the 5th nome of Lower Egypt, and was an important town from very remote times. Today, all that remains to be seen of Sais is the brick enclosure wall of the temple near the little village of Sa-el-hagar (Sa of stone), and crude brick ruins and rubbish heaps scattered over the site.

By the time of the exodus Sais was an important city held by the Israelites and a DEPARTURE POINT for those escaping from the harsh rule of the 12th Dynasty pharaohs.

According to The Harmsworth Encyclopedia CECROPS (who was, it can be proven, none other than CHALCOL of I Kings 4:31 and brother to DARDA) was the "mythical" founder of ATHENS and its FIRST KING. He was said to have been the LEADER of a band of HEBREW COLONISTS FROM EGYPT!

This is confirmed by Diodorus Siculus who says: "Now the Egyptians say that also after these events [the plagues of the exodus] a great number of colonies were SPREAD FROM EGYPT all over the inhabited world....They say also that those who set forth with Danaus, LIKEWISE FROM EGYPT, settled what is practically the oldest city of Greece, Argos and that the nations of the Colchi in Pontus and that of the Jews (remnant of Judah), which lies between Arabia and Syria were founded as colonies by certain EMIGRANTS FROM THEIR COUNTRY [EGYPT]; and this is the reason why it is a long-established institution among these peoples to circumcise their male children, THE CUSTOM HAVING BEEN BROUGHT OVER FROM EGYPT. Even THE ATHENIANS, THEY SAY, ARE COLONISTS FROM SAIS IN EGYPT." (Diodorus of Sicily, by G.H. Oldfather. Vol. I, bks. I-II, 1-34, p. 91).

The Greek philosopher Plato (about 427-347 B.C), in his Dialogues, makes the SAME connection:

In the Egyptian Delta, at the head of which the river Nile divides, there is a certain district which is called the district of SAIS, and the great city of the district is also called Sais, and is the city from which King Amasis came. The citizens have a deity for their foundress; she is called in the Egyptian tongue NEITH, and is asserted by them to be the same whom the Hellenes call Athene; THEY ARE GREAT LOVERS OF THE ATHENIANS, AND SAY THAT THEY ARE IN SOME WAY

RELATED TO THEM. Translated into English by B. Jowett. Vol. 2. Random House, N.Y. 1937.

Geoffrey Keating puts a date on the emigration, as follows: "Cecrops was the FOUNDER OF THE ATHENIAN NATION. He was A NATIVE OF EGYPT. He led his colony to Attica about 1556 YEARS BEFORE THE CHRISTIAN ERA." (The History of Ireland. Translated by John O'Mahony. P.M. Haverty, N.Y. 1857. Footnote p.152).

Obviously Sais, in the very western part of the Delta, was inhabited by the Israelites and therefore a part of Goshen!

Who Was Rameses?

One of the titles belonging to rulers of the Delta and the island of Crete was "Rameses." This title was used by these rulers LONG BEFORE the pharaoh "Rameses the Great" came on the scene, and can be found mentioned in the Book of Sothis by Syncellus. Manetho does not mention them because their SEAT OF GOVERNMENT WAS ON CRETE. When Wah-ku-Re Achtoy IV pacified the Delta region he took control of Goshen away from "Rameses" and made it his own personal property or estate. It was this land that he gave to the father and brothers of Joseph!

As Herman L. Hoeh notes:

Ancient Egypt was a feudalistic world. In feudalism the king claims theoretically to own everything. He leased the land out to his princelings and lords (who lease parts of their land to others of still lower rank), but the king reserves a certain portion for himself.

Pharaoh naturally reserved the BEST land for himself -- the land of Goshen. IT BELONGED PERSONALLY TO PHARAOH. So Pharaoh was not taking land leased to his lords. He is granting this territory to Joseph, who was next highest in the kingdom, for his services. The fee for receiving the land of Goshen or Rameses is stated in verse 6: "And if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers of MY cattle." Compendium of World History, vol. II. P. 227.

So by the command of Pharaoh Wah-ku-Re Achtoy IV all the land of Goshen (the land of Rameses), including THE ISLAND OF CRETE, was given to the children of Israel as partial fulfillment of God's promise that Abraham's seed should extend to the river of Egypt -- to the Nile!

Jacob -- A Ruler Under Pharaoh?

As we have seen, Jacob was a man of renown in Canaan, and scarabs have been unearthed showing that he was a chief or king in the land. When Jacob moved to Egypt and took up residence in Goshen, he also became KING over the newly acquired territory!

Notice:

The king [of Egypt] with the unmistakable Hebrew name YAAKOV, as JACOB is pronounced in Hebrew, PROVIDES A PARALLEL to the biblical name of the father of Joseph. The name YAAKOV appears on NUMEROUS SCARABS OF THE PERIOD FOUND IN EGYPT, [and] in NUBIA (biblical Kush)...in the form of the Egyptian transliteration Y'QB-HR....Another scarab, almost identical to that of the Shiqmona, was published by Martin Pieper in 1930 and so closely resembles the Shiqmona scarab it appears to be produced by the same artisan. The SINGLE DIFFERENCE between the two scarabs is, however, highly significant: THE NAME Y'QB-HR IS FRAMED ON THE LATTER SCARAB BY A CARTOUCHE, THE USE OF WHICH INDICATES ROYALTY AND IDENTIFIES THAT YAAKOV AS A KING IN EGYPT....(The Eighth Day:The Hidden History of the Jewish Contribution to Civilization, p. 67).

If you will recall, the stela of the Butler Merer of Edfu states the following: "I offered for THIRTEEN RULERS without a mishap ever befalling me." I mentioned earlier that modern scholars are in a quandary regarding the identity of these rulers, and usually dismiss them as being metaphoric. However, these kings were real! The thirteen rulers were JACOB AND HIS 12 SONS!

Let's examine the evidence. The Icelandic LANGFEDGATAL, which traces the ancestry of Odin, shows that he was descended from KING SATURNUS OF KRIT. Who was this Saturnus of Krit?

Herman L. Hoeh reveals the answer:

In modern English the name would be SATURN OF CRETE. There were many Saturns in antiquity, often confused with one another. Usually the name was applied to a man who FLEES or who HIDES himself.

Saturn is a Latin word derived from a root meaning TO FLEE INTO HIDING. The Greek term was KRONOS. This particular SATURN OF CRETE was so famous that the Phoenician historian Sanchoniathon spoke of him. Fragments of his works have been preserved by Eusebius in Preparation of the Gospel, book i, ch. x. Here are his words: "For Kronos or (Saturn), whom the Phoenicians call ISRAEL...." (Corey's Ancient Fragments of the Phoenician, Carthaginian, Babylonian, Egyptian and other Authors, by E. Richmond Hodges, page 21.)

Israel was the name of JACOB....But why was Jacob called Saturn? Because Jacob became famous for fleeing or hiding from his enemies. Jacob's mother warned him of his brother Esau's wrath: "Now, therefore, my son, hearken to my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother in Haran" (Genesis 27:43). "And it was told Laban...that Jacob was fled" -- this time back to Palestine. (Gen. 31:22).

But how is one to account for the title to Crete in Jacob's name? Certainly Jacob did not have title to it prior to descending into Egypt. The answer is, JACOB OBTAINED IT FROM PHARAOH IN EGYPT. -- Compendium of World History, vol. II. Pp.. 44, 45-46.

Since Crete was part of Goshen, JACOB WAS THEREFORE KING OF THIS NEWLY ACQUIRED TERRITORY! He was the overall king, or HIGH-KING of Goshen!

Now what about the other 12 KINGS mentioned by the Butler Merer of Edfu?

According to the History of Herodotus, THE EGYPTIANS WERE THE FIRST PEOPLE TO RECOGNIZE A PANTHEON OF 12 GODS and to divide the solar year into 12 months, each month being dedicated to one of the gods. Later they divided all Egypt into 12 regions and appointed a king over each. THIS COMMEMORATED A PREVIOUS ERA WHEN THE GODS RULED IN PERSON OVER THE 12 PARTS OF THE COUNTRY. The 12 kings were UNITED BY FAMILY TIES and also by a strict treaty which they renewed at regular formal meetings IN ONE OF THE 12 TEMPLES. -- Twelve-Tribe Nations, by John Michell and Christine Rhone. Phares Press, Grand Rapids, MI. 1991. P. 38.

Clearly, when Jacob and his 12 sons received title to the land of Goshen, Jacob divided the land into 12 districts or nomes and placed his sons over each of the divisions! It also seems evident that the Israelites built a TEMPLE in each of the nomes.

The memory of the rule of Jacob and his 12 sons over the land of Goshen was incorporated into Egyptian folklore, with Jacob becoming known as HEPHAESTUS (the god who limps) and Judah becoming known as the Egyptian and Cretan ZEUS. According to Greek mythology Hephaestus became lame because of a quarrel with Zeus about Heracles. "Zeus threw him down from Olympus. Hephaestus' fall lasted for A WHOLE DAY: towards the evening, he hit the ground in the island of Lemnos, was rescued by the Sintians and restored to life, BUT HE REMAINED LAME" (The Penguin Dictionary of Classical Mythology, London. 1991. P. 180).

This myth parallels the story of Jacob in Genesis 32, where he wrestled with an angel for THE BEST PART OF A NIGHT and, as a consequence, became LAME for the rest of his life! Notice: "Then Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when He saw that he did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and THE SOCKET OF JACOB'S HIP WAS OUT OF JOINT as He wrestled with him....Just as he [Jacob] crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, AND HE LIMPED ON HIS HIP. Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the MUSCLE THAT SHRANK, which is on THE HIP SOCKET, because He touched the socket of JACOB'S HIP in the muscle that shrank" (Gen. 32:24-32, NKJV).

It is recorded by Eustathius that every year the ancient Ethiopians used to "fetch the images of Zeus, and other gods from the great temple of Zeus at Thebes. With these images they went about a certain period in Libya, AND CELEBRATED A SPLENDID FESTIVAL FOR TWELVE GODS" (Eustathius on Homer's Iliad, lib. i. II. Pp.. 423-425).

After the Famine

As the famine continued, the Egyptians gradually exhausted all their money and their livestock in exchange for food. Finally they even SOLD THEIR LAND and themselves as slaves to Pharaoh. Then Joseph settled them in cities -- doubtless to facilitate the distribution of grain. This was probably a temporary measure because the Egyptians would eventually have to return to their fields to sow seed.

After the seven-year famine passed, the land of Egypt gradually returned to normal. Once they were again enjoying a harvest from the land, the Egyptians (according to Joseph's decree) were required to give a fifth of their produce to Pharaoh for using the land. Josephus makes the comment that "when this misery [the famine] ceased, and the river overflowed the ground, and the ground brought forth its fruits plentifully, Joseph came to every city, and gathered the people thereto belonging together, and gave them back entirely the land which, by their own consent, the king might have possessed alone, and alone enjoyed the fruits of it. He also exhorted them to look on it as every one's own possession, and to fall on their husbandry with cheerfulness; and to pay, as a tribute to the king, the fifth part of the fruits for the land which the king, when it was his own, restored to them." (Antiquities of the Jews, chap. VII, sec. 7).

The Bible, however, gives no indication that the land was returned to the people of Egypt. There is evidence "that the lands were not properly restored, and this fifth part reserved as tribute only, TILL THE DAY OF SESOSTRIS [pharaoh of the 12th DYNASTY]." (Ibid., footnote p. 54).

Approximately 12 years after the famine ended, Joseph brought his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, before Jacob for a blessing. It was then that Jacob indicated that the right of firstborn was to be Joseph's, Ephraim and Manasseh being viewed as equals of Jacob's direct sons. From Joseph were to spring TWO DISTINCT TRIBES, WITH TWO SEPARATE TRIBAL INHERITANCES. Although it displeased Joseph, Jacob, in blessing Ephraim and Manasseh, kept his right hand placed on THE YOUNGER, EPHRAIM. By giving the preference to Ephraim, HE PROPHETICALLY INDICATED THAT THE YOUNGER WOULD BECOME THE GREATER (Gen. 47:28-29; 48:1-22 and also Deut. 21:17; Joshua 14:4 and I Chron. 5:1).

This has unerringly come to pass in the form of Great Britain and her daughter nations and the United States of America today. There are many evidences to show that Great Britain, who came to power first, is directly descended from MANASSEH, while the United States, who came to power afterwards, is the younger EPHRAIM!

Shortly after Jacob finished blessing the sons of Joseph, he died. Joseph had the Egyptian physicians embalm his father's body in preparation for the trip to Canaan, where he was buried in the cave of Machpelah.

The Incredible Engineering Project!

Eventually Wah-ku-Re Achtoy IV himself died and his son MERY-KU-RE (MOERIS) ascended the throne of Egypt. Joseph served the new pharaoh with as much dedication and loyalty as he did Wah-ku-Re, but soon ran into the same court

jealousies and backstabbing as Moses did centuries later. Joseph was a hero in Egypt, and the court magicians, advisors and other functionaries wanted to cut Joseph down to size and remove him from his exalted position!

Zeccarria Sitchin, linguist and biblical scholar, reports what happened:

It was, historians related, when Joseph was more than 100 but still held a high position in the Egyptian court. The other viziers and court officials, envying Joseph, persuaded the Pharaoh that to remain venerated Joseph should not rest on his laurels. He must PROVE AGAIN his abilities. When the Pharaoh agreed, the viziers suggested an impossible project -- TO CONVERT THE DESERT INTO A FERTILE AREA. "Inspired by God" Joseph confounded his detractors by succeeding. HE DUG FEEDER CANALS AND CREATED THE VAST ARTIFICIAL LAKE IN 1000 DAYS. -- The Jewish Week and the American Examiner, July 22, 1983.

In honor of his pharaoh the lake was named MOERIS -- a Greek rendition of the name "MERY," and the huge feeder canal that runs parallel to the Nile River was forever named after Joseph-the BAHR YOUSEF or Sea of Joseph! It can still be seen on the maps of Egypt today -- a lasting tribute to the awesome engineering feats of a man of God.

After Joseph

Joseph survived his father Jacob by about 54 years, reaching the grand age of 110 years. His advanced age at death made such an impression on the Egyptians that several papyri from the Middle Kingdom cite 110 as the ideal age for a man to attain! It was Joseph's privilege to see even some of his great-grandsons. Before his death, Joseph requested that his bones be taken to Canaan by the Israelites at the time of their exodus. At death, Joseph's body was embalmed in the custom of the Egyptians and placed in a coffin to await his removal to the Promised Land.

During the 10th Dynasty the kings of Heracleopolis made every effort to consolidate and defend the territory regained in Lower Egypt. However, they did little to expand their kingdom to the south, and merely tried to protect their southern boundary and maintain peaceful relations with the rising dynasty of Thebes which had now become the leader of the allied nomes of Upper Egypt. That peace with the south existed for long periods of time is indicated by the fact that the rulers of the 10th Dynasty were able, probably through an arrangement with Thebes, to obtain blocks of red granite from the quarries at Aswan. The peace was not to last. During the latter half of the 10th Dynasty border skirmishes with the warlike Thebans became increasingly frequent and increasingly serious. To hold them at bay the kings at Heracleopolis depended mainly upon the ability and loyalty of the nomarchs of Si'ut (Asyut), the capital of the 13th nome of Upper Egypt.

Wah-ku-Re Achtoy IV was able to gain a temporary victory:

Aided undoubtedly by one of the nomarchs of Si'ut, King Wah-ku-Re was enabled temporarily to occupy the border fortress of Thisis, -- a deed which...had not previously been accomplished, even by his distinguished ancestor Achtoy I.

His triumph, however, was short lived; for the Thebans under WAH-'ONEKH IN-YOTEF not only captured Thinis but PUSHED NORTH of it as far as Aphroditopolis, in the 10th Nome of Upper Egypt. The Scepter of Egypt, by William C. Hayes. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. 1960. P. 144.

Wah-ku-Re Achtoy IV was forced to meet the Thebans not far to the south but on the borders of his own province.

Soon after ascending the throne, Wah-ku-Re's son Mery-ku-Re began to find himself in real difficulties. During his reign Si'ut fell to the Thebans and the fighting moved north into the Fifteenth, or Hermopolite, Nome, which was soon overrun by the undisciplined armies of the contending dynasts. The new Theban offensive was now being led by KING MONTUHOTPE II, whom Mery-ku-Re was unable to repel.

At his death Mery-ku-Re (Moeris) was buried at Memphis -- his administrative capital -- in a pyramid called "Flourishing-are-the-abodes-of-Mery-Ku-Re." His tomb was located near that of King Tety of the Sixth Dynasty.

The last of the Heracleopolitan pharaohs -- King Neb-ku-Re Achtoy V -- is probably to be identified with the pharaoh in The Protests of the Eloquent Peasant, a popular story of the time preserved in a papyrus of the Middle Kingdom. This tale, which reflects a concern for social justice on the part of King Neb-ku-Re, tells the story of an Egyptian peasant who, having been robbed of his belongings by a wealthy landowner, addressed his complaints to the king's high steward. The peasant presented his case with such extraordinary eloquence that the pharaoh had him present his case again and again purely for the pleasure which he derived from hearing the peasant talk.

Neb-ku-Re's reign did not last long, and his dynasty was soon terminated by a complete victory for Thebes and a NEW UNION of Upper and Lower Egypt under KING NEB-HEPET-RE MONTU-HOTPE of the ELEVENTH DYNASTY.

During this period of fighting and the eventual takeover of the Fayum province by the Thebans of the Eleventh Dynasty, much of Joseph's magnificent engineering works in the Fayum fell into disrepair.

According to Sir Allan Gardiner:

The ORIGINAL LAKE sank to below sea-level through the SILTING UP of the channel until A KING OF DYNASTY XII, by widening and deepening it, AGAIN brought the lake into equilibrium with the river [Nile]. Thus was [re]formed the famous lake of Moeris, which by functioning as a combined flood-escape and reservoir, not only protected the lands of lower Egypt from the destructive effects of excessive high floods, but also increased the supplies of water in the river after the flood season had passed. -- Egypt of the Pharaohs. Oxford University, Oxford. 1979. P. 35).

The Rise of the 12th Dynasty

The Theban Dynasty XI ruled over all of Egypt for 43 years. Soon after the death of SEANKH-KA-RE MENTHOTEP (the successor of NEBHEPET-RE), the country was once again thrown into confusion and anarchy reigned in many areas. Another Mentuhotep, who bore the name NEB-TAWI-RE, occupied the throne for part of the seven years which elapsed before law and order was restored. But, for reasons that are still unclear, later records do not credit him with having been a legitimate ruler.

Neb-tawi-Re was succeeded by his VIZIER and COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF AMENEMHAT. Evidently Amenemhet conspired against his royal master and, after some years of confusion, mounted the throne in his place and ushered in the 12th Dynasty -- a dynasty that is regarded as one of the GREATEST in the annals of Egypt. The new dynasty was composed of four kings named Amenemhet, three kings named Sesostris, and a queen named Sebek-neferu.

The name of the founder, which means literally "Amun-is-at-the-head," shows that he was born in Thebes where the god Amun was already established; his forbears, however, may have lived in El-Eshmunein -- the earliest home of this god. The inscriptions on the Egyptian monuments make it clear that his elevation to the throne was no peaceful hereditary succession, but a STRUGGLE for the crown and scepter that continued for some time. He fought his way to the throne, and was accepted as Pharaoh only because he triumphed over his rivals. After the fighting was ended and the towns of Egypt subdued, the new king began to consolidate his hold on the country and to strengthen the borders of Egypt.

He did not follow the example of the kings of the XIth Dynasty by making Thebes his capital but, profiting from their experience (and perhaps from his own knowledge of the difficulty which they had found in maintaining control over Lower Egypt from such a distance), he transferred his seat of government northwards and established it at a place called IT-TAWI, "SEIZER OF THE TWO LANDS."

Amenemhat's military expeditions do not seem to have resulted in conquests; and their aim was perhaps to protect Egypt from predatory incursions by striking terror into the tribes upon the frontier. He did not extend the boundaries of Egypt but was content to "stand on the (old) boundaries of the land, and keep watch on its borders;" to rule all Egypt "from Abu (Elephantine) to the Athu (the marsh region of the Delta)" was enough for him-- we do not find him establishing any military posts in the countries which he invaded.

Amenemhet was the pharaoh "who did not know Joseph" (Exodus 1:8), and he "set taskmasters over them [the Israelites] to afflict them with their burdens....And...[he] made their lives bitter with hard bondage -- in mortar, in brick, and in all manner of service in the field" (Exodus 1:11,14). One of the things the new pharaoh forced the Israelites to build was A GREAT WALL and a FABULOUS PALACE.

Notice:

....he followed up his victories by BUILDING A WALL, or defensive work, upon his own frontiers, for the purpose of "keeping off the Sakti," or, in other words,

of checking and repelling their incursions. This post was probably a little to the east of Pelusium, near the western extremity of the lake Serbonis....HE [AMENEMHET I] WORKED THE QUARRIES of Mokattam and Hammamat, adorned Memphis, and constructed two CONSIDERABLE EDIFICES, which have perished -- A PALACE, supposed to have been situated at Heliopolis [On], and A PYRAMID, known as Kanefer, "Lofty and Handsome." Of the former [the palace], he tells us that it was "adorned with gold; its roof was painted blue; the walls and the passages were of stones fastened together with iron cramps"; it was "made for eternity," he says....(History of Ancient Egypt, by George Rawlinson. Dodd, Mead & Co., N.Y. 1882. P. 149).

Under the next king of Egypt (Usurtasen I) the Israelites were put to work raising a temple complex to the sun-god in the city of Heliopolis.

Henry Brugsch-Bey writes about this HUGE project:

....a remarkable document on parchment, which I had the good fortune to acquire at Thebes in 1858, and which for some years past has been in the possession of the Berlin collection of Egyptian antiquities, make the fact certain, that USURTASEN I., at the very beginning of his reign, OCCUPIED HIMSELF WITH BUILDINGS AT THE TEMPLE OF THE CITY OF THE SUN. This important material informs us how, in the third year of his reign, he assembled round his throne the first officials of his court, to hear their opinion and their counsel as to his intention of RAISING WORTHY BUILDINGS TO THE SUN-GOD...After the address, the assembled counselors unanimously approve the good intentions of their lord, and encourage him to carry out the same without delay. The pharaoh immediately gives his command to the proper court official, enjoins him to watch over the UNINTERRUPTED PROGRESS OF THE WORK which has been determined upon, and then begins the solemn ceremony of laying the foundation-stone by the king himself. -- A History of Egypt Under the Pharaohs, pp. 151-152.

Eventually a third Usurtasen, distinguished by the additional name of Shaukau-ra, mounted the throne of Egypt and became one of the MOST REVERED monarchs of the 12th Dynasty. "Manetho says, that he was regarded by the Egyptians as the GREATEST OF THEIR KINGS AFTER OSIRIS [NIMROD]; and it is certain that he was in such high repute with the monarchs of the eighteenth dynasty, that they worshipped him as a god and built temples in his honor" (History of Ancient Egypt, p. 162).

The reason for this pharaoh's popularity was that he was regarded as the CONQUEROR OF ETHIOPIA. He permanently annexed to Egypt the tract known as Northern Nubia, or the entire valley of the Nile between the First and the Second Cataract. "What gave him his fame was the fact that, having finally settled Ethiopia, he was the king to whom its conquest was attributed; and as this was the only considerable tract which the monarchs of the old empire subjugated, those of the new, bent upon conquest themselves, singled him out for approval and admiration. (Ibid., p. 164).

Towards the end of his reign, Usurtasen III BEGAN RECLAIMING THE WORKS OF JOSEPH IN THE FAYUM.

The Improvements of Amenemhat III and Moses!

The successor of Usurtasen III was another AMEN-EM-HAT, THE THIRD OF THAT NAME. According to the monuments he reigned for 42 years and, as this is the exact number of years assigned to him by the TURIN PAPYRUS, we may safely conclude that this was indeed the FULL length of his reign. Instead of following in his predecessor's footsteps and directing the forces of Egypt to the conquest of new territory he, AFTER ONE WAR WITH THE NEGROES (which was evidently PROVOKED BY AN INCURSION), threw the whole energy of himself and THE ISRAELITE SLAVES into RECLAIMING THE VAST ENGINEERING WORKS OF JOSEPH.

Incidentally, this incursion by the Ethiopians is the one mentioned by Josephus, who tells how MOSES, at the head of the Egyptian army, routed the enemy and forced the Ethiopians to come to terms.

With the assistance of the Hebrew MOSES, Amenemhat III started by clearing out the SILTED-UP CANAL that fed the lakes, then constructed a VAST DAM or dyke that formed the boundary of Lake Moeris to the north and west. Built of solid masonry, earth and pebbles this dyke, forty feet high in places, extended to the range of hills which separated the basin of the Fayum from the Nile valley.

George Rawlinson notes:

The artificial barrier ran a little east of north, from Talut in the south to Biamo in the centre of the Fayoum, a distance of FIFTEEN MILES; at Baimo it made a right angle, and was then carried in a line a little south of east from Biamo, past El Ellam and El Edrua, to the eastern range in about lat. 29 degrees 26 minutes, making a distance of about TWELVE MILES more. Thus the entire dyke had a length of TWENTY-SEVEN MILES, and, if it be regarded as averaging thirty feet in height, and at least the same in width, would have CONTAINED A MASS OF MATERIAL AMOUNTING TO NEARLY FORTY-EIGHT MILLIONS OF CUBIC YARDS, or three-sevenths more than the cubic contents of the Great Pyramid of Ghizeh. -- History of Ancient Egypt. Pp.. 168-169.

Josephus, in his Antiquities of the Jews, also relates the work the Israelite slaves did for Amenemhet III and Moses in the Fayum:

....and having, in length of time, forgotten the benefits they [the Egyptians] had received from JOSEPH, particularly THE CROWN BEING COME NOW INTO ANOTHER FAMILY, they [the Egyptians] became very abusive to the Israelites, and contrived MANY WAYS of afflicting them; FOR THEY ENJOINED THEM TO CUT A GREAT NUMBER OF CHANNELS [CANALS] FOR THE RIVER...AND RAMPARTS THAT THEY MIGHT RESTRAIN THE RIVER, AND HINDER ITS WATERS FROM STAGNATING UPON ITS RUNNING OVER ITS OWN BANKS....(Bk. II, chap. IX, sec. I).

Also, under previous rulers of the 12th Dynasty, the Israelites "built walls for their cities...they [the Egyptians] set them also to build pyramids, and by all that wore

them out; and forced them to learn all sorts of mechanical arts, and to accustom themselves to hard labour" (Ibid.).

While engaged in the completion of his great work of reclamation in the Fayum province Moses, under the direction of Amenemhet, also had the Israelites build some structures on the eastern side of Lake Moeris that became the talk of the ancient world! At a point on the eastern side, projecting towards the west, he built what really seems to have been a temple, but what the Greeks and Romans called a "LABYRINTH," and believed it to be an architectural puzzle. It was constructed of white siliceous limestone and red granite and comprised, the ancients tell us, of 3,000 chambers -- half above ground, and half below. Besides chambers, it possessed numerous colonnades and courts, covered with sculptures and roofed, Herodotus says, with stone. At one corner of this complex was a huge pyramid 240 feet high according to one authority, and according to modern measurements, 300 feet square at the base.

To supply the materials for Amenemhet's grandiose projects, the Israelite slaves labored in the quarries at Hammamat, where inscriptions belonging to Amenemhet's reign record the instructions which he gave his overseers on various occasions. There is one inscription there that records a personal visit of the pharaoh in connection with ornamental work for the Fayum including a colossal statue of himself to be set up at the provincial capital.

Not only did the Israelites work the quarries at Hammamat, but they also served with rigor in the mines of the Sinai peninsula-- at Wady Magharah and at Serabit el-Khadem.

The Greatest Era in Egyptian History!

The story of Joseph and the Israelites is the story of Egypt at its apogee. During the Middle Kingdom Egyptian civilization attained the fullest expansion that it ever reached under the pharaohs. New openings were made for trade, new routes established and provided with wells and guards, forts built and a HUGE WALL AND CANAL erected on the eastern frontier to check invasion, mines worked, the Nile carefully watched and measured, and finally the RECLAMATION OF THE HUGE RESERVOIR CONSTRUCTED BY JOSEPH IN THE 10th DYNASTY. As well as reclaiming Lake Moeris, a gigantic irrigation system was established along the whole of the western bank of the Nile river from Beni-Souef to the shores of the Mediterranean.

At the same time commercial intercourse was established with the Nubians, who furnished cattle, gold and slaves; with the East African tribes (and through them with Arabia and even India) for spices, gums, rare woods, precious stones and exotic animals; and with the Syrians for kohl or stibium, ladanum and balsam.

The Egyptian empire of the 12th Dynasty appeared to the world of that time as the CENTER of civilization, and of all progress in the areas of intellectual, artistic and commercial activity. Art, in the different spheres of its activity, reached a height and perfection NEVER AGAIN TO BE REACHED; and the stone memorials and tomb walls were of the finest in symmetry and precision.

Not least among the many marvelous materials to which the Egyptians were made acquainted during the time the Israelites were in the land was a diversity of metals. Silver, more precious than gold in Egypt, was smelted from argentiferous Asian ores imported from the Ararat mountains of the Hurrian land of Mitanni and from the Zagros mountains of the Hittite land of Anatolia. As well as being mined in the Sinai, copper was imported into Egypt from the island of Cyprus where it tended to be more abundant and cheaper than that from Sinai.

The Israelites showed the Egyptians how to improve the quality of their copper by adding arsenic and then by alloying it with another metal -- processes hitherto unknown in Egypt! Tin was carried on the backs of asses into Egypt from the far-off mountains of Badakhshan, more than 3,000 miles away. The Egyptians were taught to alloy copper with this wonder metal to form a new, harder and more durable material -- bronze. Bronze tools, because they were harder than anything the Egyptians had before, could be honed sharper; and they lasted longer because bronze resisted decay better; they were more penetrating because the tools could be lighter and wielded with more force. Other new metals were ushered into the metallurgy of Egypt by the Israelites, AND EGYPT WAS THRUST INTO THE BRONZE AGE -- a new stage of civilization!

The production of fabrics, made of flax introduced from Asia by the Israelites in the time of Joseph, was enhanced by the introduction of Asiatic spinning devices. "The upright loom, long known in the lands to the east, revolutionized the Egyptian weaving craft. As production was increased, the cost of fabrics was reduced and they became universally available. New fibers and new fast dyes made fabrics more durable and colorful and added another dimension to the quality of life" (The Eighth day: The Hidden History of the Jewish Contribution to Civilization, p. 116).

The widespread adoption by the nobility and commoners alike of the anthropoid coffin made a remarkable change in Egyptian burial customs. Introduced during the 12th Dynasty, the coffin as a sort of rectangular wooden house is replaced by the anthropomorphic case decorated to represent the deceased. The lack of good lumber restricted the craftsmen of Upper Egypt to carving out coffins from the coarse-grained logs of the sycamore-fig tree, similar to how dugout canoes are carved. The more sophisticated carpentry of the Israelites in the Delta and the availability of suitable woods quickly brought the anthropoid coffin into Egyptian popularity.

Wise men taught astronomy and medicine and mathematics in the land of Goshen. The Israelites impregnated Egypt with cultural refinement by enhancing the gentler arts. New musical forms appeared -- made possible by the introduction of a rich variety of Mesopotamian musical instruments. The multi-fretted lute, which later found its way into Europe, and the multi-stringed harp -- both with elaborate forms of tuning -- gave music in Egypt wide scope and flexibility of tone. The lyre was regarded as a "foreign" instrument long after the Israelites left Egypt, and was always represented in the tomb paintings of the 18th Dynasty as being played by Canaanite women. Legends, both Hebraic and Arab, have it that JOSEPH AND HIS

PEOPLE MADE A GREAT AND EVERLASTING CONTRIBUTION TO THE CIVILIZATION OF EGYPT.

The application of metallurgy, arts and crafts and mathematics expanded the more primitive culture and propelled Egypt to heights never before attained. And of all the wonders the Israelites wrought for Egypt, probably none exceeds the great flood control and irrigation works that Joseph constructed in the Fayum for King Mery-ku-Re, and which Moses, under the reign of Amenemhet III, reclaimed and added to with almost equal brilliance! "Today, after more than three thousand years, the BAHR YOUSEF still functions vigorously and its feeder canals irrigate more territory than does the Aswan Dam" -- a lasting tribute to Joseph and the Israelites who followed him! (Ibid., p. 128).