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### The Field of Archaeology

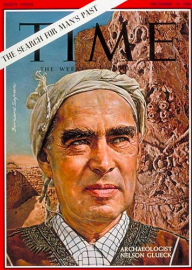


Archaeology is the study of the ancient world. The word archaeology actually stems from the combination of two Greek words. *Archaïos* can mean ancient or beginning, and *logos* denotes a field of study.

αρχαίος

λόγος

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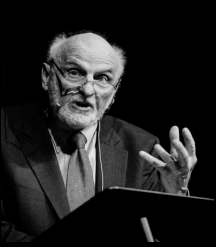
“It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference. Scores of archaeological findings have been made which confirm in clear outline or exact detail historical statements in the Bible. And, by the same token, proper evaluation of Biblical descriptions has often led to amazing discoveries.”

**Dr. Nelson Glueck**  
Former President  
Hebrew Union College

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In the past century, liberal theologians began to popularize the idea that the Torah was *invented* during the Babylonian Exile in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. According to this theory, a group of fraudulent authors conspired to provide the Israelites with a noble history and hope in the midst of their despair. ***Is this true?*** The Torah makes specific historical claims dating back to the 21<sup>st</sup> century BC.

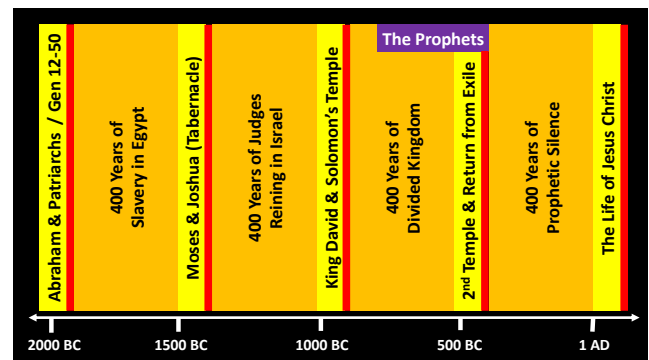
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“The Old Testament in its final form is a product of and response to the Babylonian Exile [6<sup>th</sup> century BC].... The Torah was likely completed in response to the exile... The Old Testament materials, understood normatively, are to be taken precisely in an acute crisis of displacement, when old certitudes, sociopolitical as well as theological, had failed.”

**Dr. Walter Brueggemann**  
Professor of Theology  
Eden Theological Seminary

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“The period of the patriarchs, exodus, conquest, or judges as devised by the writers of Scriptures... never existed.”



**Dr. Robert Coote**  
Professor of Old Testament  
San Francisco Theological Seminary

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**Dr. Millar Burrows**  
Professor, Oriental Research  
Yale University

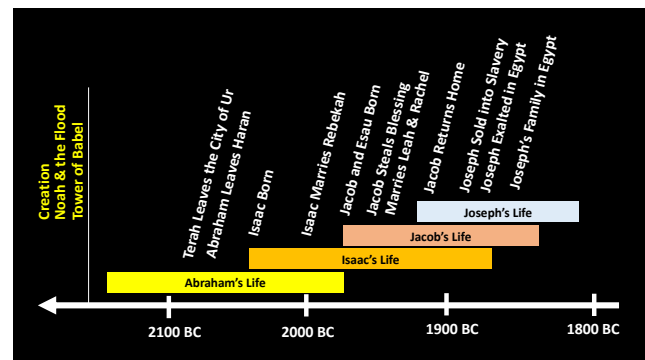
“The Bible is supported by archaeological evidence again and again. On the whole, there can be no question that the results of excavation have increased the respect of scholars for the Bible as a collection of historical documents.... In addition to this general authentication, however, we find the record verified repeatedly at specific points. Names of places and persons turn up at the right places and in the right periods.”

8

*Any  
Questions?*



9



10

## Genesis 12:1-3

Now the Lord said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing... and *in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*”

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## Ancient Libraries (Cuneiform Tablets)



The earliest forms of writing involved pictograms. In the third millennium BC, cultures in the Mesopotamian region began using cuneiform, which is wedge-shaped writing. The word cuneiform stems from the Latin word *cuneo* meaning “wedge.”

\*\*\* *Moses penned the Torah around 1400 BC.* \*\*\*

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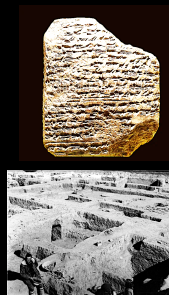
## Ur-Nammu Law Code



In Genesis 16, Abram impregnates his maidservant in order to bear a child. While this was definitely sinful in the eyes of God, the “Ur-Nammu Law Code” (the world’s oldest legal code) allowed a husband to conceive a child with a slave or concubine in order to produce an heir, if the man’s wife proved incapable of producing an heir.

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## The Nuzi Tablets



The Nuzi Tablets were discovered in Nuzi — just southwest of Kirkuk, Iraq. Nearly 7,000 clay tablets and fragments offer insights into the societal norms and culturally popular names like Abraham, Israel, Esau and Salim. Abraham grew up in the Mesopotamian region, and he would have grown up with these customs.

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## Sarah: Abraham’s Wife & Sister?



The ancient Nuzi tablets reveal that fathers often adopted daughters with plans to later present them to their natural sons. On two occasions, Abraham asked his wife Sarah to tell kings that she was his “sister,” fearing that they might kill him in order to claim her as a bride. It’s possible that Sarah was considered a daughter of Terah solely via transaction.

*“Besides, she really is my sister, the daughter of my father though not of my mother; and she became my wife” (Genesis 20:12).*

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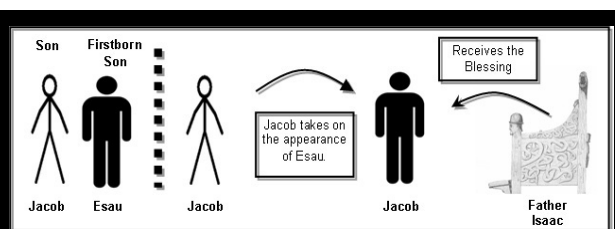
## A Nuzi Tablet: Selling Birthrights



The Nuzi Tablets contained an ancient legal code for inheritance rights. Fathers were forbidden to transfer birthrights away from their firstborn sons. But the tablets made allowances for firstborn sons to sell their own birthright. In Genesis, Esau “despised” his birthright and sold it to Jacob for a mere “swallow” of lentil stew.

*“Esau said, ‘What good is the birthright to me?’ ... So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob.” (Gen. 25:32-33)*

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**Taking the Image of the Firstborn to Obtain the Inheritance of the Father**

17

**The New Testament reminds us that Christ is the firstborn of all creation.**

Romans 8:29; Colossians 1:25-29; and Revelation 1:5

**The New Testament declares that believers are to be conformed into the image of Christ.**

1 Corinthians 15:45; Ephesians 4:24; and Colossians 3:10

**The New Testament repeatedly refers to our heavenly reward as an inheritance.**

Matthew 21:38; Ephesians 1:13-14; 1 Peter 1:3-5

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In Genesis 31, there is a bizarre story involving an inheritance dispute. Jacob and his wives were accused of scheming to steal from Jacob's father-in-law Laban. When they left, Leah and Rachel complained about their inheritance rights, and then "*Rachel stole her father's household gods*" (Gen. 31:19). Why steal pagan gods?



Among the 7,000 Nuzi tablets discovered in the ancient Hurrian region, experts found Nuzi Tablet #51. This tablet states that the primary heir of a father's estate **MUST** take possession of the household gods. This tablet sheds light on the 4,000 year old story.

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## The Ebla Tablets



Dr. Paolo Matthiae is the professor of archaeology at the University of Rome. In the 1970s, he excavated the ruins of Ebla, Syria — discovering 11,000 clay tablets. This library affirmed details in the scriptures. For example, skeptics claimed that "Canaan" did not exist at the time of Abraham. To their surprise, the tablets, dating to 2300 BC, repeatedly refer to the land of Canaan.

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## The Mari Tablets



In 1925, archaeologists discovered the Mari Letters (on clay tablets) near the eastern border of Iraq. These tablets affirmed that several Old Testament names were common—including Benjamin, Nahor, Haran, Hazor, and Laish. The tablets also speak of the Amorites — an ancient civilization that resided in the land of Canaan in the days of the Patriarchs.

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## The Hittite Library Discovered



The "Hittites" are mentioned 58 times in the Old Testament. Post-Enlightenment skeptics argued that the Hittites were fictional, pointing to a lack of evidence. These criticisms continued until 1906, when Dr. Hugo Winckler discovered the Hittite capital of Hattusa — complete with the ruins of a palace, a temple, and roughly 10,000 clay tablets recording their history.

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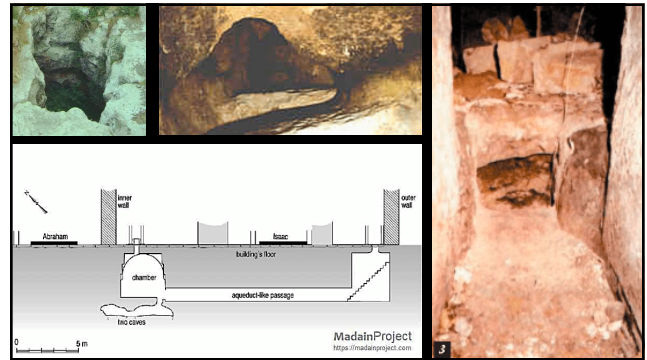
## Genesis 23:7-19

"Abraham rose and bowed *to the Hittites*, the people of the land. And he said to them, 'If you are willing that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me and entreat for me Ephron the son of Zohar, that he may give me the cave of Machpelah, which he owns; it is at the end of his field.' ... Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah east of Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan."

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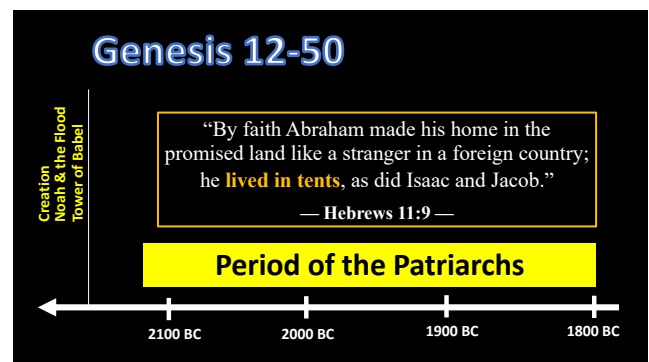
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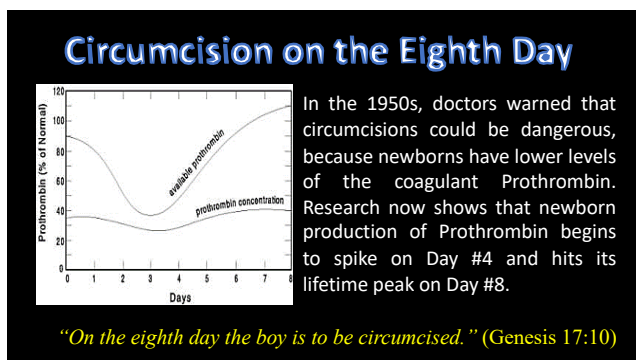
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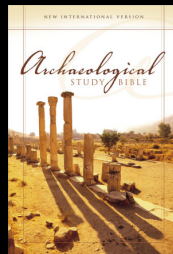
## Jacob's Well Near Shechem



When Jacob returned from Padan-Aram, he purchased "a parcel of a field" near the city of Shechem (**Gen. 33:18-19**). This is where Jesus met the adulterous Samaritan woman and offered her "living water." In response, she asked: "Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?" (**John 4:12**).

31

## The Governance of Patriarchs



In the ancient world, the land surrounding Canaan was ruled by city-state kings. In contrast to these regions, tribes in the land of Canaan subscribed to more patriarchal and nomadic models of governance — with elder tribal chiefs. This matches the model of patriarchal leadership found in Genesis with "Father Abraham," receiving his power as the elder, not as the king.

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*Any  
Questions?*



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## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE Joseph in Egypt

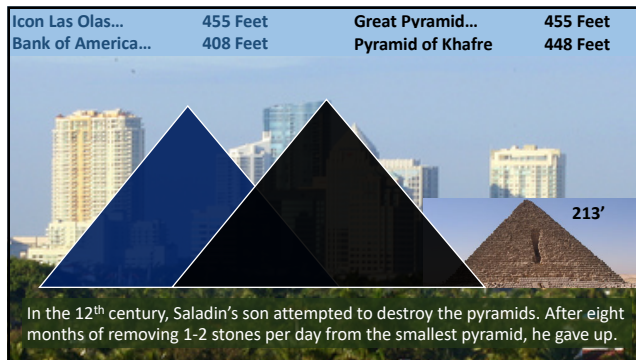
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- ❖ Joseph is a shepherd. (**Gen. 37:2**)
- ❖ Joseph is one of the twelve sons of Jacob. (**Gen. 37**)
- ❖ Joseph is the beloved son of his father. (**Gen. 37:3**)
- ❖ Joseph is clothed in multi-color robes. (**Gen. 37**)
- ❖ Joseph testified of his brothers' sins. (**Gen. 37:2**)
- ❖ He dreamed all knees would bow to him. (**Gen. 37:9**)
- ❖ His brothers plotted to kill him. (**Gen. 37:18**)
- ❖ Judah betrays him for silver coins. (**Gen. 37:28**)
- ❖ Joseph was stripped of his robe. (**Gen. 37:23**)
- ❖ His tunic was dipped in blood. (**Gen. 37:31**)
- ❖ He was bound and led away to Egypt. (**Ps. 105:18**)

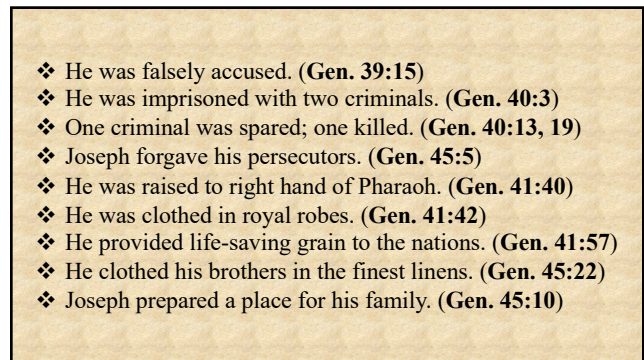
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### DATE: Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt

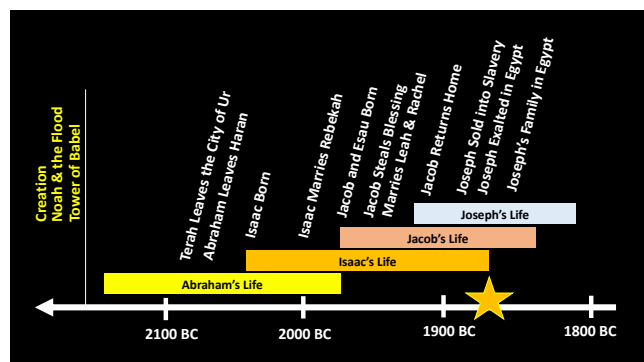
The Bible provides helpful clues for the dating of the Exodus. Most notably, we are told that Solomon began construction of the temple during the fourth year of his reign and in the 480<sup>th</sup> year after the Exodus (1 Kings 6:1). Most historians are confident that Solomon's reign began in 970 BC.

\*\*\* 966 BC + 480 years = **1446 BC** (*Exodus from Egypt*) \*\*\*

The book of Exodus states that "the time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years" (Exodus 12:40). If our timeline is correct, then we should expect that Joseph's family entered into Egypt around **1876 BC**.

\*\*\* 1446 BC + 430 years = **1876 BC** (*Joseph in Egypt*) \*\*\*

39



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### Joseph's Purchase Price

In Genesis 37, Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave to Ishmaelite merchants for twenty shekels of silver. Skeptics argue that this price is too low to be credible. After examining ancient stone tablets, Dr. Daniel Browning discovered that "in the Akkadian Empire and Ur III periods, a slave brought 10-15 silver shekels; in the Old Babylonian Law Code of Hammurabi, the price for a slave is one third mina, or 20 shekels."

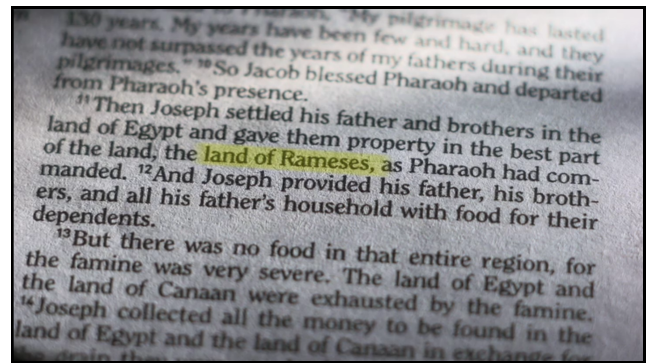
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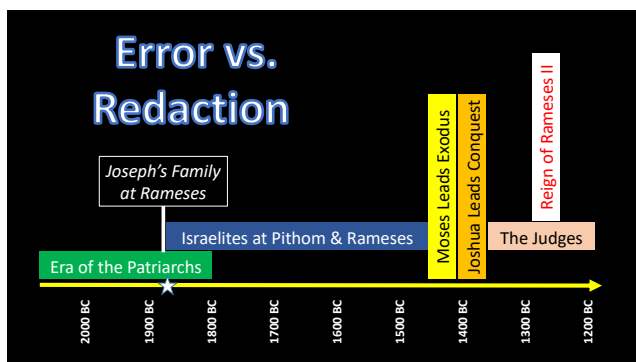
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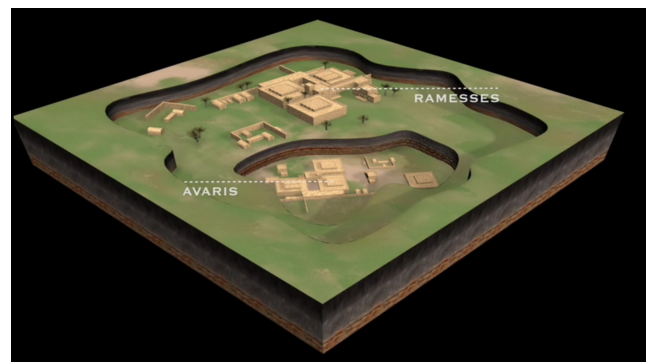
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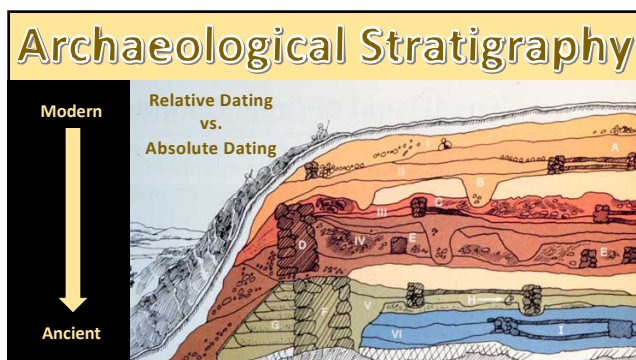
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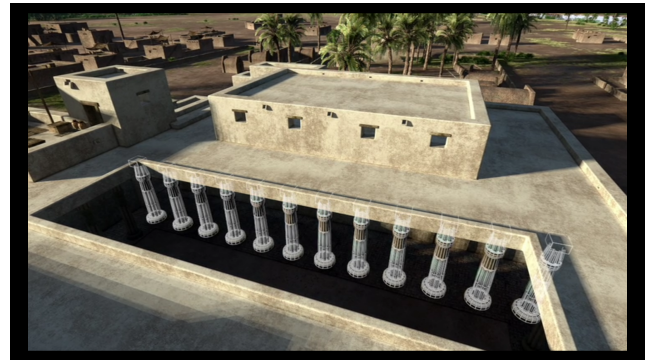


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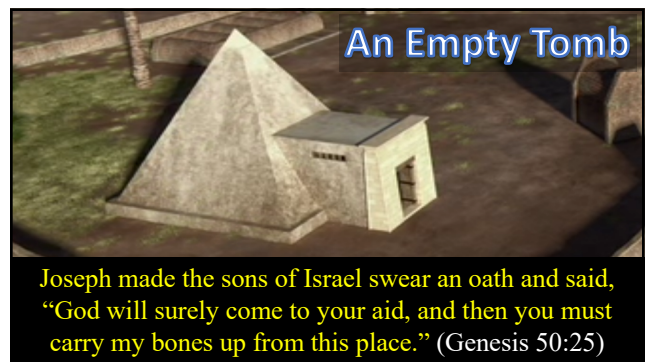
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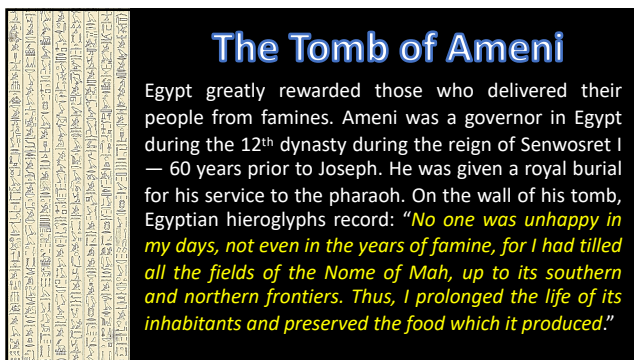
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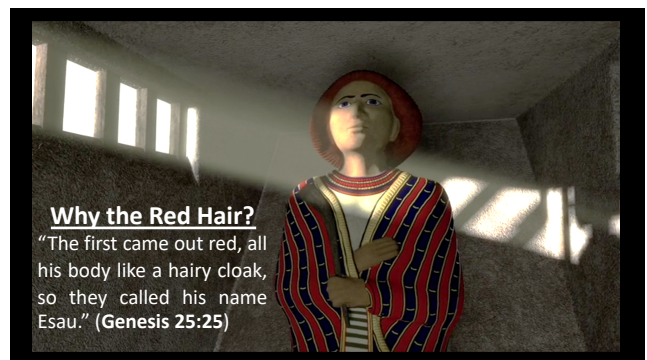
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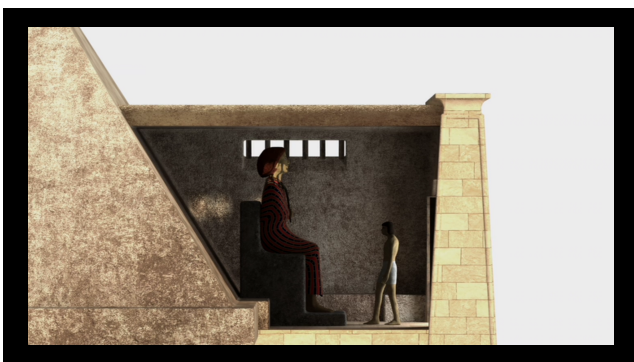
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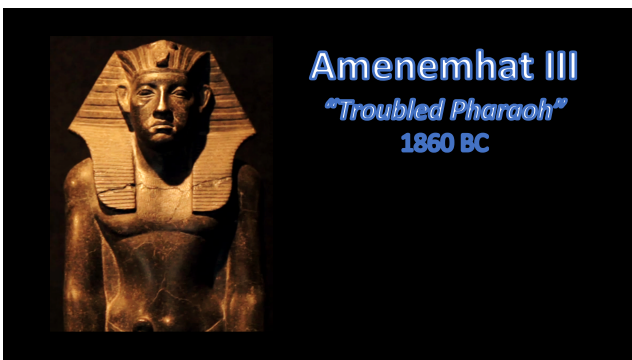
### Genesis 47:20-21

"So Joseph bought all the land in Egypt for Pharaoh. The Egyptians, one and all, sold their fields, because the famine was too severe for them. The land became Pharaoh's, and Joseph reduced the people to servitude, from one end of Egypt to the other."

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64



**Amenemhat III**  
*"Troubled Pharaoh"*  
 1860 BC

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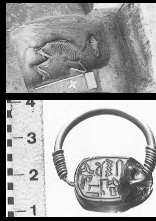
### Official Report of Manfred Bietak

"We have evidence of specialized Asiatic settlements around the Middle Kingdom royal residence, especially from the reign of Amenemhat III. We found fragments of a colossal statue of limestone depicting an Asiatic dignitary with a mushroom-shaped coiffure holding a throwstick at his right shoulder. It was a seated statue, nearly twice life-size, of excellent quality. The hair was painted red while the color of the skin was yellow, the traditional color of Asiatics in Egyptian art. The form of this statue has no parallels in Egypt.... Our statue was smashed intentionally, suggesting that there was political turmoil in the region."

66



"The direct proximity of the tombs to the palace is certainly an Asiatic tradition.... The burial of donkeys in front of tombs... is known from the Middle Bronze Age culture of Palestine.... [Tombs] yielded weaponry of Syro-Palestinian type.... [We found] an amethyst scarab mounted on a gold ring and inscribed with the title and name of the owner, [which] was damaged by tomb robbers.... Most probably the owner was an 'overseer of foreign countries', who had responsibility for the organization of trading expeditions."



"Pharaoh said to Joseph, 'I hereby put you in charge of the whole land of Egypt.' Pharaoh took his signet ring from his finger and put it on Joseph's finger.... All the countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph" (Gen. 41).

67

## Khety: The Vizier of Amenemhat III

A vizier was pharaoh's highest ranking official — a title worthy of Joseph (Gen. 41:40). According to the "Lahun Papyrus," *Khety* served as a vizier of Amenemhat III and **harvested in the Faiyum Oasis**. Several ancient languages associate the name *Khety* with "farming" (Sanskrit) and "cultivation" (Hindi). The papyrus states that Khety **"impoverished his associates for the benefits of others."** This policy is identical to the Bible's depiction. Under Joseph, the Egyptians were "reduced to servitude" (Gen. 47:21), while Joseph's family was blessed with the best of Egypt (Gen. 45:18).

68



## Bahr Yussef

*Bahr Yussef* was dug during the reign of Amenemhat III. It allowed the Nile River to flood the Faiyum region, transforming this dry desert region into an oasis, and dramatically increasing the available farmable lands.

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## Modern Impact of Joseph's Canal



Typical Egypt: West of the Nile



Egypt: At the Faiyum Oasis

70

## The Bahr Yussef: "Canal of Joseph"



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The Hawara pyramid of Amenemhat III ranks as the 2<sup>nd</sup> southernmost pyramid ever built in Egypt. Only five were built in the Faiyum region.

## Amenemhat III (1860 BC)

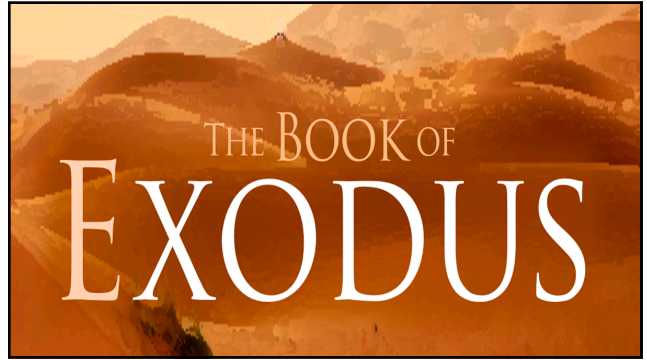
His first pyramid (the "Black Pyramid") was in the north. This second one was built next to Bahr Yussef. As the only pharaoh of the 12<sup>th</sup> dynasty to construct two pyramids, he must have had a reason to relocate his second pyramid next to this canal.

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Entrance into  
the Pyramid of  
Amenemhat III.

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