



*Read here
Egyptian accounts
of the pharaohs
who ruled at the time
of the oppression
and the Exodus.*

In 1898, local *felaheen* — Egyptian peasants — drew the attention of Loret, the French archaeologist, to a remarkable find in the Valley of the Kings.

It was an ancient tomb, carved long ago into the sandstone cliffs of the Theban hills opposite Luxor by the Nile.

As an excited Loret entered the tomb, he found a corridor, rough and undecorated, leading downward, deep into the hills. Following the sloping corridor, Loret eventually arrived at what proved to be a false burial chamber, created by ancient architects to confuse tomb robbers.

In the floor of this chamber, the archaeologist found a stairway descending into the actual tomb chamber, a large room supported by six pillars.

The false burial chamber had obviously failed in its purpose, for the stairway had been uncovered in ancient times by tomb robbers.

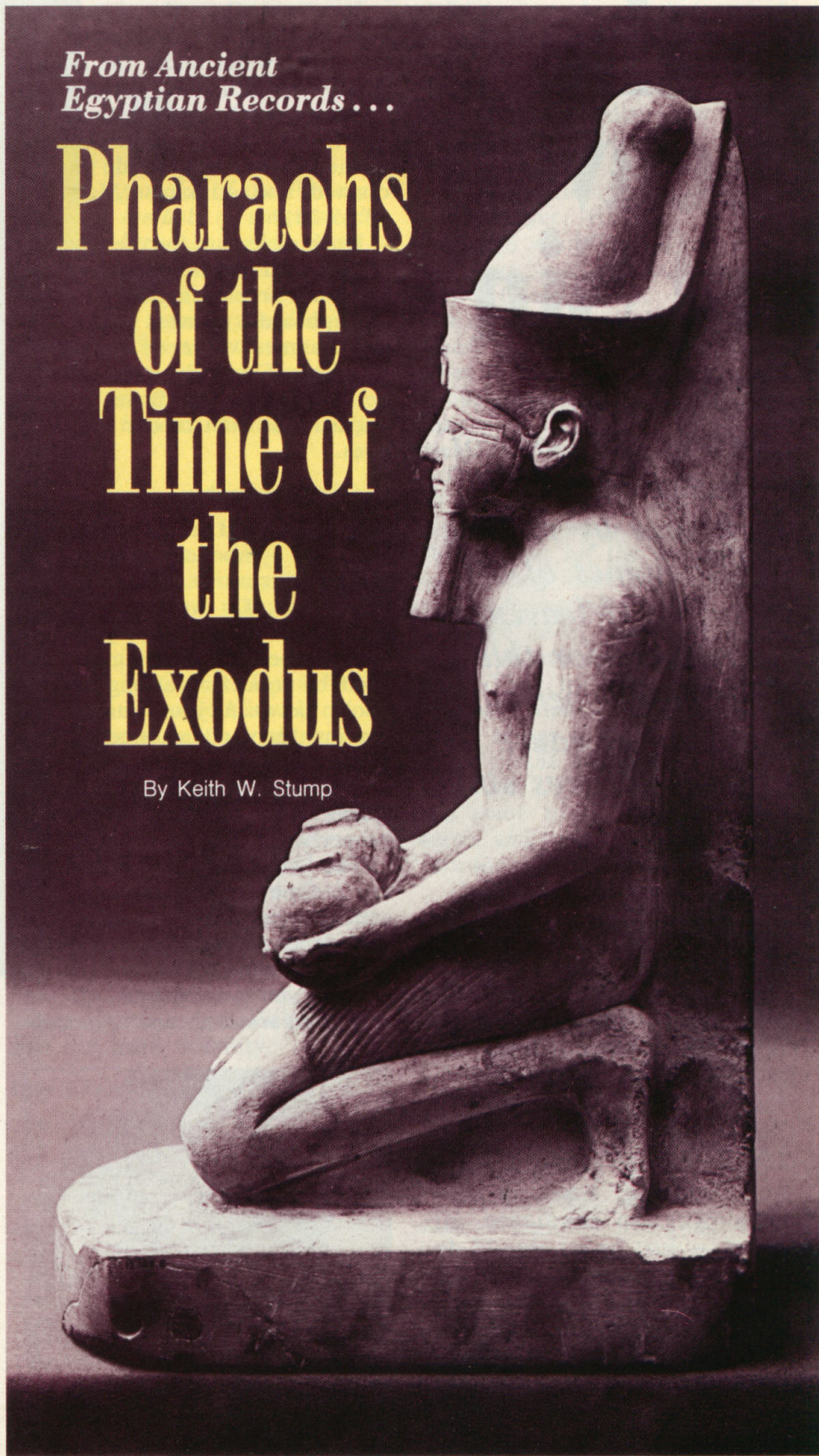
As he entered the funerary chamber, Loret found a magnificent quartzite-sandstone sarcophagus (stone coffin). The sarcophagus was all that ancient grave-robbers had left when they plundered the chamber long ago.

Inside the sarcophagus lay a mummy, festooned and garlanded. Loret quickly read the

*From Ancient
Egyptian Records . . .*

Pharaohs of the Time of the Exodus

By Keith W. Stump



Photos: Metropolitan Museum of Art



hieroglyphs to discover the identity of the mummy.

This was the tomb of Amenhotep II, a pharaoh of Egypt's Eighteenth Dynasty!

The find was significant. It was the first tomb ever opened in which a pharaoh was found where he had been laid, undisturbed by tomb robbers. And the burial chamber proved to be one of the most beautiful and impressive in the entire Valley of the Kings.

Few scholars suspected the full significance of this monumental discovery. For, unknown to Loret and his colleagues, the French archaeologist had entered the tomb of the Pharaoh of the Exodus — the very king who confronted Moses more than 33 centuries earlier!

Needless confusion

Much needless confusion exists regarding the historical setting of the biblical Exodus.

Most Bible scholars, ignoring or rejecting the explicit chronological information of I Kings 6:1, have not properly understood the time scheme of the Exodus. They have placed that great event around 1290 B.C. or somewhat later, during the reign of Ramses the Great of Egypt's Nineteenth Dynasty — a full century and a half *later* than it actually occurred! This late date must be rejected.

A careful consideration of all biblical and extra-biblical evidence reveals that the Exodus occurred in the middle of the 15th century B.C. — specifically, in the year 1443, during the reign of Amenhotep II, whose tomb Loret

excavated. *He* was the pharaoh who ruled from Thebes in Upper Egypt when the Egyptians would not let Israel go.

This date — 1443 — was 430 years after the covenant with Abraham, made in the spring of 1873 B.C. (Genesis 17:1, Exodus 12:40-41, Galatians 3:17). And it was in the 480th year before the laying of the foundation of the Temple in Solomon's fourth year (964 B.C.), as required by I Kings 6:1. An Exodus date of 1443 also harmonizes nicely with the Amarna Letters of ancient Egypt, which tell of "Habiru" (Hebrew) incursions into Canaan around 1400 B.C. — after the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.

Now notice what Egyptian records say about this remarkable king and his dynasty.

Eighteenth Dynasty

The dynasty that enslaved Israel is known in Egyptian history as Dynasty XVIII, inaugurated by Pharaoh Ahmose about 1570 B.C. Amenhotep II — a descendant of Ahmose — was the sixth pharaoh of this dynasty.

Moses (born in 1523) was brought up as a prince of this

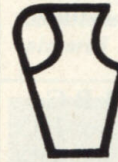
ruling family. The "daughter of Pharaoh" (Exodus 2:5) who raised him would therefore be known in Egyptian history as Hatshepsut. She was the daughter of Pharaoh Thutmose I, a son-in-law of Ahmose.

Notice that the word *mose* — meaning "child" or "son of" — often appears as a part of royal names of this dynasty. *Ahmose*, for example, means "son of Ah" (the god of light). *Thutmose* means "son of Thoth" (the moon god).

The Hebrew child drawn from the Nile by Hatshepsut was called simply *Mose* or *Moses* — for his parentage was unknown.

Amenhotep (the Greek form is *Amenophis*) was the son and successor of the great empire-builder Thutmose III, "the Napoleon of ancient Egypt." Thutmose — perhaps the greatest of the pharaohs of ancient Egypt — would therefore be the biblical "pharaoh of the oppression."

In 1483 B.C., Moses was ex-



Sarcophagus and mummy of Amenhotep II (below), discovered by Loret in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes in 1898.



Eighteenth Dynasty limestone sculpture shows Pharaoh Amenhotep II wearing the Double Crown (left). He is depicted as offering a libation (liquid sacrifice).





iled from Egypt by this Thutmose upon the death of Hatshepsut, Moses' foster mother and protector. Hatshepsut (Thutmose III's aunt) had governed as regent for Thutmose III while he was a minor. But Thutmose and his aunt had been bitter rivals. Upon the death of Hatshepsut, Thutmose III — in a fury of revenge — purged her name and image from everything she had built throughout Egypt.

It was during Thutmose' long reign that Moses lived in exile in distant Midian, tending the flocks of his father-in-law Jethro.

“The lord of glories”

In the latter part of 1453 B.C., as the long-lived Thutmose III felt his strength failing, he named his son, Amenhotep II, as his co-regent. Their reigns thus overlapped somewhat.

Upon the death of Thutmose in 1450, Amenhotep assumed the sole leadership of the country. By his side was his beautiful queen Taa. Egyptologist Sir Flinders



Sculpture of Amenhotep II (above). Oval-shaped cartouche encloses his royal name (right).

Petrie (1853-1942) estimated that Amenhotep was about 18 years of age at the time of his accession.

Now see what the ancient records reveal about this pharaoh. Amenhotep was a worthy son of the great Thutmose III. Physically, Amenhotep was a powerful man. Inscriptions reveal that no one in Egypt was his equal.

To illustrate: Amenhotep had a great bow, a bow so powerful that none of his soldiers was strong enough to use it. Only Amenhotep himself could draw it. This symbol of the pharaoh's unparalleled strength remained at his side throughout his reign, and was buried with him upon his death in 1425 B.C.

The fact of his unrivaled strength goes far in illuminating the character of this pharaoh who refused to “knuckle under” to Moses' God. Never in his life had Amenhotep been required to submit to anyone! He was accustomed to getting his own way. He was second to none. A man of great pride and given to boasting, he is referred to in ancient inscriptions as “the lord of glories.”

Amenhotep's upbringing was carefully planned by his warrior father. Great emphasis was placed on athletic development and skills of warfare. Amenhotep was an apt pupil.

Supremely confident in his strength and skills as a warrior, the newly crowned Amenhotep quickly set out to establish his renown. He personally led his forces in battle. Two campaigns to quell uprisings in Palestine occurred early in his reign. During the first campaign, the proud Amenhotep displayed his archery

skills before the people of Kadesh on the Orontes, a key north Syrian city.

These and other of Amenhotep's personal exploits are chronicled in the Temple of Amon at Karnak. We are informed that Amenhotep “was as a terrible lion” against his enemies. Scenes of him slaying his foes are found on numerous monuments. A scarab inscription calls him “the good god, lion over Egypt, lord of might, giving life like the sun.”

Hard heart

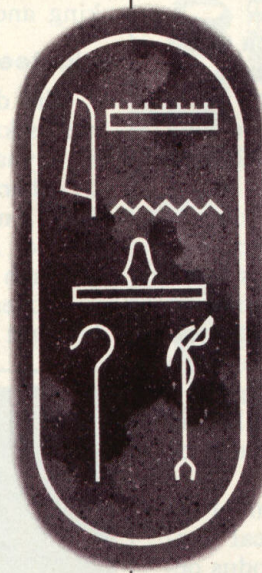
God, of course, knew of this great pride and stubbornness of Amenhotep. In Midian, God warned Moses, “I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go” (Exodus 3:19). It would be necessary for God to reveal Himself and His power and authority to this unresilient pharaoh in a series of devastating plagues.

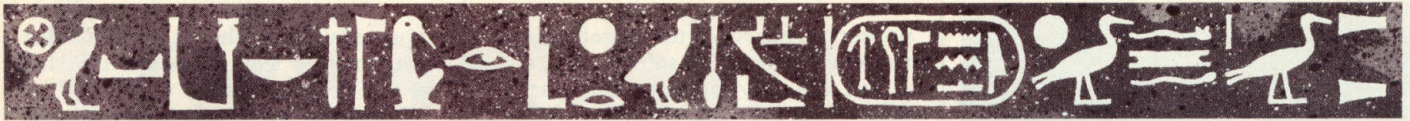
Time and again, Amenhotep grudgingly conceded to Moses' demands — but only temporarily. His pride and stubbornness would quickly reassert themselves and he would change his mind — “harden his heart,” as the Bible says.

The carnal mind is indeed “enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be” (Romans 8:7). And Pharaoh Amenhotep was carnal! From his earliest youth, his pride and glorying were in the flesh — in his physical prowess, in his

skills of warfare.

Stubborn Amenhotep refused to humble himself. Only the death of his firstborn son got his full attention. With his once proud and powerful nation shattered, Pharaoh at last ordered the





Israelites out. But even then, he afterward changed his mind and pursued them to the Red Sea.

As mentioned earlier, the Exodus occurred in 1443, 40 years after Moses' exile in 1483 (Acts 7:30). This was at the beginning of Amenhotep's 10th year (as counted from his appointment as co-ruler in 1453).

The destruction of Amenhotep's armies in the sea at that time is indirectly reflected in the Egyptian records. Not surprisingly, there are no further records of foreign wars following the time of the Exodus. There is little information of any kind about Amenhotep's later years.

"Of the remainder of his reign we know nothing," Petrie observes. Egypt is silent about its great defeat by a "foreign god." The Egyptians obviously did not wish to record their misfortunes.

More corroboration

The events of that momentous year are well-known from the biblical record, and need not be recounted in detail here. But a few additional historical notes will prove of interest.

Egyptian history reveals that Amenhotep II was not himself a firstborn. Likewise, Amenhotep's son and successor — known to history as Thutmose IV — was not Amenhotep's firstborn. Thutmose IV was not at first designated to be his father's successor.

Historians do not know why Thutmose IV — a second-born son — succeeded to the throne instead of his elder brother. The Bible reveals the answer. Amenhotep's firstborn son died in the 10th and final plague on Egypt — the death of the Egyptian

firstborn on the night of the Passover (Exodus 12:29-30).

Also of interest from a biblical standpoint is a wall-painting dating from early in Amenhotep's reign, found in the tomb of the high-ranking official Rekh-mi-Re in the Tombs of the Nobles at Thebes. The remarkable painting shows captive foreign laborers — including bearded Semites — making mud bricks (compare Exodus 5).

Pharaoh's future

Contrary to the common notion about the Pharaoh of the Exodus, Amenhotep II did not drown in the Red Sea with his army. Read carefully Exodus 14:23-31. Ancient records reveal that Amenhotep II's reign lasted no less than into his 26th year. (This has been corroborated by a wine jar docket dated in his 26th year that was discovered in Egypt near the beginning of this century.) Sixteen of those 26 years followed the Exodus.

Upon Amenhotep's death in 1425, he was interred like his ancestors in the Valley of the Kings. There he lay undisturbed until Loret's discovery in 1898.

A controversy then arose as to whether Amenhotep's mummy should be left on site or whether it should be removed to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. It was finally allowed to remain *in situ*, but with an armed guard to protect it.

But three years later, in November, 1901, when the guards' backs were turned, the tomb was rifled and the mummy was damaged by looters seeking overlooked treasures in the folds of the cloth wrappings. Amenhotep's body — much the worse for

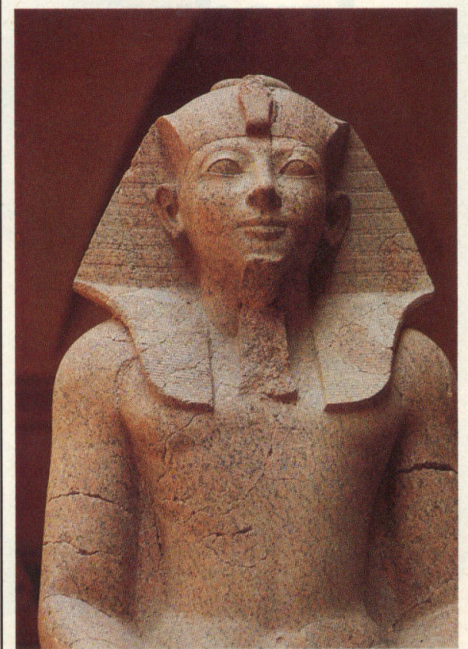
wear — was then quickly removed to Cairo, where it rests to this day.

His limbs, now thin and withered, were in life robust and muscular. One day, just over a millennium from now, those limbs will regain their former vigor and Amenhotep will again walk the earth. The Word of God will be opened to his understanding (Revelation 20:12).

He will be shown the error of his ways and offered the gift of God's holy spirit — the power to overcome his self-will and obstinacy — by a merciful God who holds no grudge against him for his past rebellions!

Yes, one day Amenhotep and Moses will have the opportunity to again stand face to face — as friends and brothers in the Family of God. □

Queen Hatshepsut (below), shown wearing a false ceremonial beard as was customary on state occasions. Her cartouche is pictured at left.





Ken Tunell

The Untold Story of the Exodus

By George M. Kackos

The Israelites are finally free. After escaping the bondage of slavery, multiple thousands begin a jubilant march out of Egypt. After a few exhausting days of travel they reach an area near the Red Sea, free from the harsh Pharaoh.

But then the Pharaoh decides to pursue them with his mighty army. On the sixth day the Egyptians overtake the Israelites. But to the army's dismay, a cloud supernaturally separates them from the Israelites.

That night, Moses steps to the shore of the sea, stretches his hand over it, and a strong wind miraculously begins to blow. By morning, walls of water form and dry land

appears. The Israelites march across the dry pathway to safety.

But the Egyptians are less fortunate when they try to follow. Their chariot wheels fall off and the walls of water crash down, drowning the men and their horses. In safety on the opposite shore, the Israelites rejoice over their deliverance.

You've probably heard of these events since childhood. But what does this story have to do with *your* life?

Symbolic events

Let's consider the meaning of these events that took place more than 3,000 years ago as they apply to us today.

First, Israel leaving Egypt is symbolic of Christians coming out of sin. Both Egypt and leavened bread (the bread they were not to eat during the Exodus) are types of sin (I Corinthians 5:7-8, Hebrews 11:24-27).

Pharaoh represents Satan and the slavery of sin (Romans 6:16-18).

In contrast, Moses foreshadows and symbolizes Jesus Christ, our Deliverer from sin (Acts 3:20-22). The Israelites picture true Christians, and the promised land that the Israelites strove for symbolizes God's Kingdom (Hebrews 4:8-9).

Lessons for us

But more than just understanding what these events picture, what are some of the lessons we should learn from that Last Day of Unleavened Bread in 1443 B.C.?

- *Satan doesn't want us to escape from sin.* Just as those newly freed Israelites were pursued by Pharaoh, so Satan pursues newly baptized Christians (as well as older Christians). He is angry that we are escaping sin and wants us back under his evil dominance (I Peter 5:8-9).

- *We may want to return to sin.* Does this surprise you? When Pharaoh appeared with his army, what did the Israelites want to do? Return to Egypt, where their surroundings were familiar and less threatening (Exodus 14:10-12).

The same reaction can happen to us. Under temptation, we can easily want to sin because we are far more accustomed to leaning toward our own carnal, human ways than disciplining ourselves to be righteous.

- *God can deliver us from sin.* By themselves, the Israelites had no way of escape from Pharaoh and his army. They were trapped by the

mountains and the Red Sea. But God made a way of escape that led to the promised land.

Likewise, we, by ourselves, are unable to overcome sin (Romans 8:7). But with the help of God we can overcome. He can give us strength of mind and character to resist evil (I Corinthians 10:13).

For the Israelites, it was a watery grave that destroyed their adversary. For us, it is also a watery grave (baptism) that helps us leave behind our sinful way of life.

More importantly, God gives us the power of His holy spirit to overcome temptation (Romans 6:4, 6, Acts 2:38). However, this overcoming doesn't happen automatically. We must diligently call upon God — then put forth the effort to do the right thing.

- *Our deliverance from sin brings happiness.* The pursuing Egyptians were dead. The Israelites were finally free. Read Exodus 15 to capture their feelings of immense joy and jubilation.

For us, deliverance from sin brings much happiness, too. No longer must we eat the bitter fruit of sin, suffer the pangs of guilt or deny ourselves the joy of righteousness. Our life is much different — much better! And the end result is our promised land — eternal life!

"But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life" (Romans 6:22). No longer are we slaves to sin, but we are now servants to the great God who will guide us.

So think about it! Those momentous events have a lot to do with you and God's plan of salvation. Allow God to free you from sin so you can enjoy the fruits of righteousness — now and forever! □

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