

The Real Prince Of Egypt

Moses, Fact and Fiction

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A few weeks ago I took my family out to the movies to see the DreamWorks animated feature “The Prince of Egypt”. DreamWorks is a Steven Spielberg venture with a couple other fellows. One used to be the Disney head. The other fellows' names escape me.

I have read some reviews of this movie and I knew that everybody had given it good marks for its artistic value, that it had just been so well drawn, that the animation was very good. I was looking forward to it from that point of view, but I am really interested in history, especially biblical history, as you might imagine. I was very intrigued to see how they were going to present Moses in this cartoon. I had read that the producers had consulted with the brightest of secular Christian, Jewish, and Muslim scholars, and I hoped just maybe that they would be honest. Well, I was wrong. I have come to the conclusion that the movie is a lie from beginning to end. The only thing that is true is Moses' name. I am being a little bit facetious there, but I am giving the movie two thumbs down.

It is a great movie as far as movies go. You will be very well entertained, but just know going in that you are not going to get true history. They even put something at the very beginning of the movie, saying, “We've taken license with this story.” And did they ever! So, in order to make everyone happy (you know how you have to be politically correct here, there, and everywhere), they made no one happy. It is a very well-done *lie*, which Hollywood is very good at.

It is not the Moses of the Bible that is presented. It is not the Moses of the Koran that is presented. It is not even the Moses of history that is presented. It is a lie. I was just telling someone before church service today that I have begun to think of it in the same terms as I think of “Pocahontas”—the Disney movie Pocahontas which is so far off what the actual historical figure of Pocahontas is, that again the only similarity between the movie Pocahontas and the actual Pocahontas figure is the name Pocahontas. That is about it. She was an Indian girl on the east coast of America when the settlers came in, and that is about it. That movie in itself is full of environmentalism and spiritism and all kinds of weird things. So I am panning that one too.

Anyway, I figured that since some of you have probably gone out to see it, or were thinking of going out to see it, that it might be a good idea if I would present an article or a sermon on the real prince of Egypt—Moses. The one that comes out of the pages of

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the Bible—to set the record straight and to show you that the real story of Moses gives all the glory to God. If we can connect this with the sermons that my dad has been giving on “The Providence of God”, you will see from this example how God worked to make everything come out right according to *His* purpose.

There are ups and downs in the story of Moses, but everything that God did through that man—from Moses' perspective, good or bad, however he may have reacted to it—it got the children of Israel out of Egypt. God started working with Moses from the very beginning. He had actually set up circumstances from even before then, because remember, He had prophesied to Abraham that His people would suffer under the hand of a foreign people for 400 years, and then they would be released, and they would come out and go into their own land. So at least 400 years before, He had been working out the Exodus, and in many ways you could say, the story of Moses, because Moses is, apart from God, *the* central figure in the Exodus. He was used powerfully by God to do this.

Before we go on, I have to have a little caveat here, some provisos. I want to say that very little, if any, of everything that I say today is of a doctrinal nature. This is history I am talking about. It is biblical history, but a lot of it is piecing together hints found here and there, not only in the Bible, but in secular materials, archeology, and other places. I just want to say that your salvation does not hang on how I present the story of Moses from a historical perspective, but it should help to make your faith stronger if it is the truth, and I believe it is. It is my own belief based on the best information that I have been able to find. I do not want you to think it's the church's dogmatic teaching on this subject. It is *my* understanding.

I want to get that out of the way so I do not have a thousand people coming at me, saying, "What about this?" "What about that?" "Your church stinks," and all that other stuff that people tend to say when they get riled up on a personal mission to correct somebody. You may have your ideas of what Moses was like, and when he lived, and what he did. I do not want to argue about it. I am just going to give you my side, and you can take it or leave it.

But I think that this is very close to the way it actually happened, that the people that I am going to mention from history that are not necessarily mentioned in the Bible, are indeed who they are in the time frame in which they lived. I think that you will see that it makes the story of Moses much more interesting, intriguing, and dramatic than what was presented in the movie “The Prince of Egypt”, and in many cases in the movie “The Ten Commandments” by Cecil B. DeMille, because they followed similar lines of thinking.

The movie, "The Prince of Egypt", is based on a relationship between Moses and Ramses. It goes from their childhood, from the time Moses is drawn out of the water by Pharaoh's daughter, all the way to the Exodus, to the Red Sea even. In fact a theme that comes out of the movie is a true one, and that is that religion divides very brothers. Jesus Himself said this in Matthew 10:34-36, that your enemies will be those of your own house, because Jesus came bringing a sword. He came to divide. The theme, though, is not based on the facts of true history. So what we have to do is find out whether Moses was indeed a contemporary of Ramses. We have to find out when Moses lived in time so we can place him in history in the right spot.

Let us start in I Kings 6. We have to go all the way to I Kings to figure out the dating of the time of Moses. The reason is because biblical chronology is done through reigns of kings and length of time between events. You will find nowhere in the Bible that it says "David reigned in 1010 BC," or whatever. It does not say that. It did not know "BC" when it was being written. It just knows time based on the length of reigns, or the time between events.

Remember also that the Bible was not written as a history book. The Bible was written as a theological treatise on the nature of God and how His people respond to Him, and how He is going to get His people to be just like Him. That is the theme of the book. "I will make man in My image." The theme is not, "I will set history down exactly, so that everyone can understand." We have got to understand that, though the Bible presents history truly and correctly, its perspective is not as a history book. It is as a theological book. It is explaining God's works through mankind, or in mankind, or with mankind, or for mankind, but it is not going to present history in the way that we sometimes would like.

I Kings 6:1 And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

This is the keystone verse in the whole Bible for us to date the Exodus. One of the most secure dates that ancient history knows is the date that Solomon started the Temple, because they can fix it with other dates and correlations, the lengths of the reign of Solomon and other kings, and they have come up with about 965 BC.

Now I said *about*, because any date that far back in history is approximate. When you read something like in a biblical archeological thing or a history text book, they will use a

little "c" with a period after it. That means about, around the time of. This date I have seen as early as 967, and as late as 961. I used 965 because it was a good round figure. It is easy to do math with 5s. So plus or minus two or three years is not going to make a great deal of difference in what I have to present today. So it is about 965 BC.

Taking the Bible at its word—which we are apt to do, because we believe that the Bible was written under the inspiration of God, and that it is true—this verse tells us that the Exodus was in 1445 BC—give or take a few years. That seems pretty straightforward. We take 965, we add 480 years, and we come to 1445 BC. But (there is always a but), scholars of the more liberal and critical variety say that this figure is way too round. Why was it not 479? Why was it not 492? Why was it not some number that does not look quite so exact as 480 years? And they say, “Well, whoever wrote this must have taken 40 (which is the normal time in the Bible to count a generation) and they must have gone back and looked at I Chronicles 6:4-10 and saw that whoever had written that had put 12 high priests in there.”

If you go and look at I Chronicles 6:4-10, it lists 12 priests from the time of the Exodus to the time of the building of Solomon's Temple. I am talking about high priests, Aaron's line. So they say take 12 x 40 and you get 480. Well they say 40 years is way too long for a generation. It could not be 40. Twenty-five is a better time for a generation.

If you think about it, most of us have had our first child about age 25, give or take a few years. So they say you take 12 and you multiply it times 25, which is a better generation period, and you come out with 300 years. So you add 300 years to 965 BC and you come up with 1265 BC. And guess where that hits? Smack dab in the middle of the reign of Ramses II, the greatest king of the 19th Dynasty. Ramses! Oh! We have been looking for Ramses, because Ramses was the name of one of the cities the children of Israel built by slave labor, so that must be right? Right? Would not he name the city after himself? Sure.

I will not go into all that because there is a lot of explaining I could do on that count, one of which is that many people believe that when Ezra was putting things together they updated the language, and that the original word had been the name of the city at the time. But because most people did not know what that town was, they updated it to say Ramses, which was the name that everybody knew. It was the same town. He just updated the name of it.

It is just like New York used to be called Amsterdam. But who in the world knows that New Amsterdam is New York? They do not teach it in school anymore, I do not think, so we would take the text book that was written 200 years ago, and scratch out New

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Amsterdam, and put in New York, because everybody knows where New York is. So they did the same thing supposedly with the Bible. That may be true. That may not be true. Another thing is that the land may have been known as Ramses for a long time, because Ramses simply means born of Ra, and Ra had been around a long time as a god of Egypt. It certainly did not start with Ramses II. There had to be a Ramses I before him. So critical scholars are wrong.

They say that it puts it in the time of Ramses II—1265 BC. Now how do we answer that? We have got to come up with an answer that fits.

I Chronicles 6:33-37 gives a listing of the generations of another group of people. And guess how many generations there are? Not twelve. The actual period of time that we are talking about is nineteen generations, not twelve. You have got to understand. Writers of the Bible, especially if they were Jews (for some reason the Jews like to do this), put things in easily remembered groupings. If you notice in I Chronicles 6:4-10, they list twelve high priests. And then when they list the priests from the time of the Temple to the time of Ezra to the building of the next Temple, there are also twelve high priests. They mirror each other.

From the time of the Exodus to Solomon are twelve priests, and from the time of Solomon to the building of the second temple there are also twelve priests. But if you look and see the actual number of generations, you find out there were nineteen generations, not twelve. Obviously, some of the priests were left out. This was done in the New Testament too in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. There were fourteen generations between Adam and Abraham; fourteen generations from Abraham to David; fourteen generations from David to Christ. There were, I think, at least three sections of fourteen people each. We know that four kings were missing from that list, so one of those groups had at least eighteen generations, and probably they all had many more or less than fourteen generations. Anyway, that was how that worked.

If we take nineteen, which is the actual number of generations that there were between the Exodus and Solomon's Temple, and we multiply it by the better figure of twenty-five years per generation, it comes out to 475 years—only five years off the figure that this person in I Kings 6:1 says there was in actual years between the Exodus and Solomon. So I think we can take the word of whoever wrote I Kings 6 that it was 480 years exactly.

Well, we can check it. Let us go back to Judges 11 and we will find that the Bible verifies its own numbers. This is the story of Jephthah. Jephthah was a fairly good judge, and he had a problem with the Ammonites. If you remember, from the law, it says that when

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Israel was to go out against its neighbors militarily, they were first to go up and parlay with them to see if they could get out of a fight. This is what Jephthah was doing. He did not want to go to war with Ammon if he did not have to. Why waste men and materiel and a lot of time? Why make hard feelings with the Ammonites if you could help it? So he goes out and parlays with them. What he is trying to do is make the claim that Israel had a right to the land that is being disputed. Listen to what he says in verse 26.

Judges 11:26 While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and its villages, in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities along the banks of the Arnon [this is the land of Ammon], for three hundred years, why did you not recover them within that time?

What he is saying is, "We have lived here for three hundred years. We have squatters' rights for that long a time. Why have you not tried to get it in that time? I think we own this land now. Go away, Ammon." Well, they did not listen to him. They fought, and Ammon lost, and Israel kept the land.

Three hundred years Israel had been in the land by the time of Jephthah. When did Jephthah live? Well this is another one of those benchmark time periods that everybody seems to agree on. It was circa 1105 BC. Add 300 years and you come up to 1405 BC. That is when they came into the land. Add 40 more years for their wanderings in the wilderness, and you come up with 1445 BC. It is exactly the same figure that the writer of I Kings 6 said. They both come out as having the Exodus at 1445 BC. So the Bible authenticates its own dating. Pretty slick is it not?

There are other factors from archeology and history, but when it comes down to it, God's people are going to believe the Bible first. I am not going to go into all that other stuff. There are so many different things that scholars bring in about "this time and that time," and when supposedly Joshua and the Israelites came into Canaan certain cities were not burned, and certain cities were burned. They did not find any destruction level at that particular city for that period of time, so the Bible must be wrong...blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.

Believe me, it all works out. There are so many confusing little methods that come in when you talk about chronology during this time, that if you date a piece of pottery wrong, it can throw things off by hundreds of years. It looks like that is what has been done at Jericho, where somebody dated a piece of pottery, or a type of pottery at a certain point, and it throws it off by 200 years, and so this 1265 figure looks right, when in actuality the pottery is dated wrong, and it puts it right back into 1405 period of time.

I do not want to get in to all that. I am mostly interested in talking about Moses, so we will leave it at that and say that 1445 is a pretty good figure. It could be a few years before, or it could be a few years after, but right around that general time.

That particular dating opens up a story of Moses that will really curl your hair as far as its dramatic, and just exciting, feeling goes. So many things were happening at the time. It is so much more interesting than Moses and Ramses. Ramses was an old fuddy-duddy compared to these kings that we are talking about. Ramses lived until he was in his 90s, or something like that. He reigned for almost seventy years. He was a good king. He kept Egypt together for a long time. He built lots of temples and things, and went on some military campaigns, but it does not fit the things the Bible says that Moses did. For one thing there is no Pharaoh's daughter that stands out in the time of Ramses. For another thing, the king that died while Moses was in the wilderness does not fit Ramses. He lived for ninety years. He lived way before and way after that 1265 date. There are a lot of things that just do not fit. I am not so sure, but I have read somewhere, or heard somewhere that Ramses was a firstborn, so that just throws that all out the window too, because he would have died in the plague, and so would his son. We have to stick to the Bible.

This story of Moses that comes out of this dating places Moses, who is God's greatest prophet (outside of Jesus Christ), in the heart of Egypt's greatest and most powerful kings and queens, and also Egypt at its greatest extent as an empire. Moses was not working with the king of Thebes, and he had fifteen acres that he controlled. Moses was working with the king of Egypt, who had lands from Ethiopia and Nubia all the way to the Euphrates River. A veritable empire and he was the head honcho. Moses was fighting this—a whole empire.

Let us say the Americans were taken over by the Russians at their height, and this would be like some American going up and trying to pull the entire Russian empire down alone. Now we had to factor God in, but the situation is like that, that this was a mighty, strong, warlike, wealthy nation, and Moses was one little man. A shepherd off in the desert by the time this all takes place, and the only ace he had was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Let us start in Acts 7 to try to pin down when Moses lived.

Acts 7:22-23 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds. Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel.

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Acts 7:29-30 Then, at this saying, [when he killed the Egyptian] Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian, where he had two sons. And when forty years had passed, an Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire in a bush, in the wilderness of Mount Sinai.

We have two forty-year periods, which means by the time of the Exodus Moses was eighty years old. We take the 1445 date and add 80 years to that to get a birthday of 1525 BC. Now who reigned in Egypt in 1525 BC? Well, he was a fellow by the name of Thutmose I. He was the third Pharaoh in the 18th Dynasty of Egypt.

Exodus 1:15-17 Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah; and he said, When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live. But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.

Acts 7:17-20 But when the time of the promise drew near which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt till another king arose who did not know Joseph. This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, making them expose their babies, so that they might not live. At this time Moses was born.

Thutmose was the one who gave this order, because it had to have been around the time that Moses was born. From what Stephen says, there is a hint that this was a standing order from many Pharaohs before. Notice it says that "another king arose who did not know Joseph. This man dealt treacherously with our forefathers, making them expose their babies."

If you would look at the chronology, that does not fit Thutmose. The king "who knew not Moses" lived a great deal before Thutmose I. Remember Thutmose I was the third king of the 18th Dynasty, which means that there would have been at least two kings before him that did not know Joseph. The wording means a new family, a new dynasty took over. It was that dynasty that did not know Joseph.

There is another controversial piece in here, because Isaiah mentions something that is interesting. I am just going to throw this out for what it is worth. It is actually worth a lot

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when it comes to the chronology of things.

Isaiah 52:4 For thus says the Lord Good: My people went down at first into Egypt to sojourn there; then the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.

How in the world would they be oppressed by Assyria by going down to Egypt? Well, there is a certain period in Egyptian history call the "Hyksos" period. They were known as shepherd kings. They were Semite. They were Assyrians who came in between the time of Joseph and Moses and devastated Egypt. Eventually they set up their own dynasty and ruled there for quite a long while. This was the king "who knew not Joseph." Stephen says that it was this king that gave the order to expose the Hebrew babies.

So what I think (it is my speculation), is that this edict had gone out of favor for one reason or another between the time of the Hyksos and the time of the 18th Dynasty. When Thutmose came to the throne, he looked around and he saw probably about three million Israelites and said, "We've got to do something about this. They're going to be greater than us. They'll kick us out." And so he revived the edict just before God's prophet was to be born.

What does that tell you about Satan's involvement in things? Did he not do the same thing with God's own Son? He tried to kill Him first by the sword through Herod. I think that is what happened here. He got in Thutmose's head, and made him recall this order that the Assyrians had given, and put it back into effect, just in time for Moses to be born. We will go back now to Acts 7 and begin to look at the life of Moses.

Acts 7:20-21 At this time Moses was born, and was well pleasing to God; and he was brought up in his father's house for three months. But when he was set out, Pharaoh's daughter took him away and brought him up as her own son.

Exodus 2:1-5 And a man of the house of Levi went and took as wife a daughter of Levi. So the woman conceived and bore a son. And when she saw that he was a beautiful child, she hid him three months. But when she could no longer hide him, she took an ark of bulrushes for him, daubed it with asphalt and pitch, put the child in it, and laid it in the reeds by the river's bank. And his sister stood afar off, to know what would be done to him. Then the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river. And her maidens

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walked along the riverside; and when she saw the ark among the reeds, she sent her maid to get it.

In the movie “The Prince of Egypt”, it looks like they put this ark in the water about twenty miles away. It goes down the river, and crocodiles snap at it, and it nearly has a collision with an Egyptian boat. It looks like this kid is going to get drowned. It suddenly ends up, of all places, in Pharaoh's daughter's little place where she went to bathe.

If you look at what it says, it says that they "laid it in the reeds by the river's bank," and that is where Pharaoh's daughter found it. Moses was not in danger on the Nile. He had just been left there, and little Miriam, however old she was, was posted to watch it to see who picked it up. It does not say that it got caught in the currents of the Nile, because it probably would have ended up in the Mediterranean Sea.

They knew better. They were not dumb. They just did not throw Moses out there. They loved the kid. They put him where he could be found by somebody important. They must have known that the Pharaoh's daughter had a soft spot in her heart or something, to put it where they knew she might walk by. I am speculating a little bit here, but the way it is written here is that they put the baby where they wanted it to be found.

Exodus 2:6 And when she had opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby wept. . . .

I think the movie has the baby just making a little whimpering cry like it had not just been through near hell trying to come down the Nile! But the baby was scared. It was a real baby.

Exodus 2:6So she had compassion on him, and said, “This is one of the Hebrews' children.”

That did not fool her. She knew. She knew who this baby was. And I think Moses knew who he was too. Both of these movies—“The Ten Commandments” and “The Prince of Egypt”—have him saying, "I'm a Hebrew!" when he's about twenty-five years old. If you know anything about the racial makeup of the Egyptians, they were Hamitic. They were dark-skinned people. Not real dark, but they were dark enough. You could just see him going up to his mom and saying, "We're not quite the same. You stayed out too long in the sun," or something.

It was not like that at all. He knew he was a Hebrew. She knew he was a Hebrew. Nobody was going to hide it. Why in the world would they mess up on a little fact like this? It does not make any sense. What are they trying to hide? Were they trying to be politically correct because they did not want to offend the black people? I do not know. I would think that the people who are in charge of this politically-correct stuff would want to elevate the Egyptians, because they were probably one of the greatest empires of the Hamitic people of all time. I do not know. I just do not get it. That boggles my mind that they would do stuff like that.

Exodus 2:7-9 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call a nurse for you from the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for you?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the maiden went and called the child's mother. Then Pharaoh's daughter said to her [Moses' mother Jochebed], "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages."

Not only did they get their son's life saved by a member of the royal family, but they also got paid for nursing the child, and they got to keep him in their own house. Did you notice that? She sent him away with her until probably he was weaned. It could have been a couple of years that he was living in his own family's house during those very important formative years. He was a Hebrew living as a Hebrew, and his parents were righteous. It says in Hebrews 11 that they were faithful. "By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents" (Hebrews 11:23). He was in good hands. Notice God working this out, making all the details fit.

Exodus 2:10 And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water."

That is interesting too. She named him "Moses." Moses, it looks like in the Bible, is a Hebrew name. If you look in your margin, it says "Mosheh." Well, that is not true. Moses is not a Hebrew name. Moses is an Egyptian name that just happened to have a Hebrew root that matched it, and it means drawn out. God worked things out so that the name fit. The root fit the circumstances of Moses' experience. He was indeed drawn out.

In Egyptian, Moses means son, child. So if you are Thutmose, you are the son of Thut, who is a god of the Egyptians. If you are Ahmose, you are the son of Ah, and Ah was the moon. If you are Ramose, you are son of Ra, who is another god. So she named

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him son. Son of what? Was his name just, "Hey, son. Come here."? I really do not think so. It might have been a nickname. We call people "buddy" and "bubba," or we take part of their name.

My middle name is Theodore. Nobody ever calls me Theodore. My mom occasionally calls me "Ted." It is a nickname. I get called "Rich" a lot. That is not my full name. My full name is Richard Theodore Ritenbaugh," but most people call me "Rich" or "Richard," or my mom calls me "Ted." I think that is what happened with Moses.

It is interesting that in the 18th Dynasty we are talking about here, there were four Thutmoses, and there was one Ahmose. Does that not seem to place Moses in the right dynasty, that there were enough royal names at the time that said "Moses"? As a matter of fact, if you read some of the older history books, they do not call Thutmose "Thutmose." They call him "Thutmthis" and "Ahmothis." They put a kind of a "th" in there, but that can easily become "s" over time—"Thutmoses."

This is my own personal speculation, but I think that what we have here is that Moses' name is just the last part of his full Egyptian name. I would not be willing to bet much on it, but I have an idea of what I think his full name was. I think it was Hopmose or Hopimose, or whatever the word that the Egyptians used for the Nile. Hopi was the god of the Nile. I could just imagine this Pharaoh's daughter, seeing this child having been pulled out of the Nile, giving him the name of "child of the Nile," or "child of Hopi," since Hopi was "controlling" the Nile. He was the god of it.

I do not know that for sure, but I think that what happened was because he was God's greatest prophet, God did not want him known by the name of a foreign god, and so his name became known forever as just Moses the son, which is very, very interesting. If you go back to Hebrews 3 there is a very significant thing there, that Moses is a forerunner of Christ.

Hebrews 3:1-6 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was faithful in all His house. For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God. And Moses indeed was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His own house, whose house we are.

Is that not very interesting that Moses' Egyptian name would be "son," and he was a type of Jesus Christ, who is the Son, and both of them were considered faithful in their house? That is kind of interesting.

Who was this woman that drew him out of the water? In many respects this Pharaoh's daughter is the central figure of these scriptures that we just read in Exodus 2. She makes all the difference in the world for Moses. I find it interesting that "The Prince of Egypt" pays very little attention to her. She draws him out and she appears a couple more time, but that is about it. Now Hebrews 11 gives us a clue about Pharaoh's daughter.

Hebrews 11:23-26 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful child; and they were not afraid of the king's command. By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

Here we have the importance of Pharaoh's daughter coming to the fore. Most people are not aware that Egyptian succession in the royal house did not go through the male line. It went through the female line, which is very odd. The reason why they do that is because Isis was supposedly the sister of Osiris, and so they gave the prominence to the female side. Egyptian mythology is all convoluted. But what they thought was that the Pharaohs should be united like Osiris and Isis, a sister with a brother. Your claim to legitimacy as a Pharaoh hinged on whether you were married to the Pharaoh's daughter. Strange, is it not?

What would happen normally is that a Pharaoh would have many wives, and thus he would usually have many children. He would take his firstborn son by his favorite or most important wife, and he would marry this son to his firstborn daughter, who was known as "Pharaoh's daughter." Sometimes these were full-blooded, full-blown incest. Sometimes it was half-brothers and sisters, just depending on where his firstborn son and firstborn daughter happened to come from, whether it was this wife alone, or that wife. That is why these Egyptian dynasties kept getting overthrown. After awhile there was so much incest these heirs started to have some real terrible physical and mental problems, but that is how it worked out.

What we have here is that God guided Moses to the king-maker—directly into her

possession. It was in her power, as Pharaoh's daughter, to allow Moses to become the next Pharaoh, because he was her son—full adoption. She could say that "he was born of the Nile." She could say "he was a gift from the gods," and his legitimacy would be pretty strong, that it had been miraculous. He just appeared out of the Nile as a babe.

Moses was in the catbird seat. He was in a position to have all of Egypt himself. This is what Moses gave up when he refused to be called "the son of Pharaoh's daughter." Do you think that took some faith and some guts?

Pharaoh's daughter was a woman of great spunk. We know this because she defied her own father's command to kill all Hebrew males as babies. She went against the Pharaoh in order to raise this child as her own.

Does the 18th Dynasty have a crown princess like this in the history books? Yes indeed. In fact she had so much initiative, so much intelligence, so much cunning and political acumen, that she became Pharaoh. She was not just Pharaoh's daughter or Pharaoh's wife; she took over, according to the histories of the 18th Dynasty. Her name was Hatshepsut, and she, if you look into the history books, is known as Egypt's greatest queen, or Pharaoh.

She called herself a Pharaoh. Even on her monuments she is seen wearing a beard and all the accoutrements that a male Pharaoh would. As a matter of fact, the hieroglyphs and all the other Egyptian writings go back and forth between "he" and "she." When she is doing something masculine like going to war, she is called "he." When she is doing something feminine, like maybe building a garden or maybe having her tomb done, she is a "she." This was a totally new concept really to Egypt, that there would be a Pharaoh who is a woman. The language just was not able to grasp it. But she did well enough as "he" or "she," depending.

She was really quite a woman. She reigned for about twenty years. First she was a regent for her stepson, Thutmose III. In the time being she was the wife obviously of the Pharaoh before Thutmose III (Thutmose II). There are lots of Thutmoses. You can get just totally bamboozled by all the Thutmoses that run through here. But after Thutmose I died, she was married to Thutmose II. He did not live very long, but he lived long enough to have a daughter by Hatshepsut, and a son by a lesser wife, a concubine. This was Thutmose III, and the new crown princess, or the new "Pharaoh's daughter."

When Thutmose II died, Thutmose III was a young child, and so she was proclaimed "regent" until he should come of age. He could marry her daughter and take over the throne. Well, she did not want Thutmose III to be Pharaoh. She wanted her son Moses

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to be Pharaoh. I think she was banking on the fact that the Thutmoses were fairly weak and did not seem to live very long, and she was probably hoping that Thutmose III would die. She could then marry her son Moses to her daughter, and Moses would become the next Pharaoh. That is the way I think she was thinking. She did not want to take Thutmose's life, because he was legitimate. She was not that kind of woman. Remember, she had compassion on Moses when he came in the ark. She had a soft spot. She would not resort to a lot of violence, but Thutmose was made of sterner stuff, and he actually lived a long time.

Hatshepsut's reign is known for its internal peace and for its increase in trade. She brought a lot of wealth into Egypt because she was a peaceful Pharaoh. She was able to control the kingdom. She and her people made advancements in art and architecture and in the natural sciences.

One of the great things in her reign was that she sent an expedition down to the land Punt, which was at the far reaches of the Red Sea, and brought back a lot of natural flora, fauna, gold, and spices, and that sort of thing. She is well known for that. Her reign was just one of flourishing prosperity.

There were a couple of wars that she waged because she had to put down certain rebellions. She went to Nubia and Syria. This lady was something. She even led her own troops into battle, at least once, because her family had been known as military Pharaohs—warrior Pharaohs. She was not going to be any less than they were, so she put on all her accoutrements of Pharaoh going into battle, and she led her own troops.

She had the backing of the religious powers of her time. The priesthood was all behind her. She undertook the restoration of Egypt from all the depredations that the Hyksos had made. Remember, they were not native Egyptians, and they destroyed a lot in Egypt. She took it upon herself—and I am sure she used a lot of Hebrew slaves—to make all the temples and all the public buildings respectable once again. She made lots of gardens and beautified the land. Some historians say that her way of governing was unrivaled in Egyptian history. She was able to balance everything, and have peace for the most part.

Go now to Acts 7. I think this scripture gets explained by knowing who Hatshepsut was.

Acts 7:22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.

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Now you know how he could. He was the son of the greatest queen of Egypt. He had everything at his disposal to learn everything that Egypt had to offer. Egypt was well known throughout the whole world as being a place of wisdom. Even Solomon is compared to the wisdom of Egypt. In I Kings 4:30 it says that "he excelled the wisdom of Egypt."

Moses knew a lot. He did a lot. Josephus says that he led Egypt's army as a general into Ethiopia, and it was there that he took an Ethiopian wife in order to secure peace with the Ethiopians rather than put them to the edge of the sword. And so Numbers 12 comes in, because Miriam and Aaron remember that he has an Ethiopian wife. This happened long before his conversion when he was still known as "son of Pharaoh's daughter."

Thutmose III was the legitimate heir as long as he lived, because he was indeed married to Hatshepsut's daughter. Remember, he was the son of Thutmose, so that gave him first crack at being the king. The record seemed to be that he was kind of shut up and put away to the side while Hatshepsut ruled on her own. In fact it says they made him a priest. He was a priest of Ra for a long time, and he was also sent out on military expeditions to get him out of Egypt while Hatshepsut ruled. Had he died, Moses would have had no rivals for the throne. But everything that Hatshepsut threw at Thutmose, he was able to work with. He did not die in battle. He did not die of a sickness. He just kept on living. And guess what? Something happened. Guess what it was.

Acts 7:23-25 But when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. And seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian. For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand.

Exodus 2:11-12 Now it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out to his brethren and looked at their burdens. And he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his brethren. So he looked this way and that way, and when he saw no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

A mistake was made—a political mistake. Not only a sin, but a political mistake. This doomed Hatshepsut, because her favorite son—her only son, this Hebrew—killed an

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Egyptian. She was, to put it into modern language, "dead meat." All her fortunes hinged on Moses—and he destroyed them. The daters of history say this occurred in 1485 BC when Moses was exactly forty years old. Hatshepsut lost the throne to Thutmose III.

I think that it was this act of Moses that spelled her doom. She could not recover because now Thutmose had the backing of the priests, and he had the backing of the army which he had been sent out to lead. Hatshepsut either died in a coup, or she was put away like he had been put away, and she died a few years later. Moses had to scuttle out of Egypt as quickly as his feet would take him, to become a shepherd in the land Midian.

Exodus 2:15 When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian.

Thutmose wanted to get rid of his rival if he could, and this was as good an excuse as any—a murderer.

Moses finds the priest of Midian and his family.

Exodus 2:21-22 Then Moses was content to live with the man, and he gave Zipporah his daughter to Moses. And she bore him a son.

Notice Moses was content. This was probably the best part of Moses' life. He was in the wilderness for forty years. He did not have anything to do but raise a family and watch sheep and goats. I think he learned an awful lot of humility. I think he learned what his place was in the world. Though he had been given a great gift of God and had been really handpicked—he knew it—to be the deliverer of Israel, but he knew that he had really messed up.

I think that humbled him, and God made him dwell on his failure for forty years. It was not a dwelling on failure that ended in moroseness or any kind of depression. It was the kind of dwelling on it that made him a better man. In says in Numbers 12 that he was the meekest man that ever lived on the earth. He learned his place. He learned how to deal with things. That sojourn in the wilderness gave him time to reflect and to really come to understand more of what God was all about, and what God had made of his life. He had to learn how he had trashed all of that in one outburst of wrath, and then he would have to just wait until God worked it out.

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In the meantime Thutmose III was on his throne that he had now no rivals to, and he was doing deeds that would make historians call him "the Napoleon of Egypt." He was the greatest king. He followed the greatest queen. He expanded Egypt into Syria. He fought battles on the banks of the Euphrates, and won. He was just an expansionist king. He had prodigious energies and great organizational skills. He was not really a bad guy, you know, if we would just look at him without thinking about Moses and the Israelites. He was a great king. He brought the empire to its greatest extent. No king after him—not even Ramses II, who was also a great king—could match the size of empire that Thutmose III did. He had a professional standing army to make sure that everything was garrisoned. He sent governors to all parts of his land, and put troops throughout the empire and just kept the peace everywhere his name was extolled as "Pharaoh."

He was a builder of temples, monuments, and gardens just like his stepmother had been. The arts flourished, and the wealth just poured into Egypt. It is also worthy of mention, that because the empire stretched so far to the east and the north, that at this time the capitol was pretty much moved to Memphis, which is toward the northern part, rather than Thebes, which was in the southern part of Egypt. This means that he was close to Goshen. His son, Amenhotep, who was the Pharaoh of the Exodus, would also have been close to Goshen because he had that far-flung empire to rule that his father had given him.

Exodus 2:23 Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt [Thutmose III] died. Then the children of Israel groaned because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage.

And then God talked to Moses in the bush. By this time about five years had passed. Thutmose III died in 1450 BC, give or take a few years. This would have been thirty-five years in the wilderness for Moses. I am sure he had already heard the news. Moses just took a little while to get out to the desert. I am sure the news would have found him sooner or later that the king that he had so much trouble with was dead. But he still had to be called by God to do his work. God let a few years go by, let Amenhotep II, who became Pharaoh after Thutmose, a chance to solidify his reign and make Egypt the most powerful nation on the face of the earth by the time Moses was going to stroll into town.

Amenhotep II is known in history as a fierce ruler. He was known as very warlike and aggressive. He was a great sportsman. He was very proud of his dynasty. He was very

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proud of the accomplishment of the Thutmoses and all that they had done for Egypt. He was just the kind of Pharaoh we see written in the pages of the Bible—proud, unyielding, very stern, even slightly cruel.

There is one story in the hieroglyphs that says that on his return from a Syrian campaign, he personally beheaded several of the captive officers in a ceremony to celebrate his victory. This is the kind of man that Moses was dealing with—not the Ramses of The Prince of Egypt, or the Yul Bryner type, although I guess Yul Bryner played it pretty well. Amenhotep II was that kind of person. It was not a Ramses. It was Amenhotep, as far as I am concerned. Let us look at Exodus 5 just to see what this man was like.

Exodus 5:1 Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, Thus says the LORD God of Israel: Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.

Listen to this reply. Just think of it with a sneer:

Exodus 5:2 And Pharaoh said, Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go.

Pharaoh had spoken. "So let it be written, so let it be done," as Yul Bryner said.

Exodus 5:4 Then the king of Egypt said to them, Moses and Aaron, why do you take the people from their work? Go back to your labor.

Exodus 5:6-9 So the same day Pharaoh commanded the taskmasters of the people and their officers, saying, You shall no longer give the people straw to make brick as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves. And you shall lay on them the quota of bricks which they made before. You shall not reduce it. For they are idle; therefore they cry out, saying, Let us go and sacrifice to our God. Let more work be laid on the men, that they may labor in it, and let them not regard false words.

That is the kind of proud man that Moses had to face down, and it did not work. It took the death of his own firstborn son before the man relented. Of course God was working

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with this man too, hardening his heart at certain times so that He could wreak His vengeance on Egypt for the way that they had treated His people.

If you go through the plagues, you will see that the whole land suffered. Everything suffered. And all the gods of Egypt also suffered, because what God did was He aimed His plagues at the strongholds of these gods. The Nile was one of the greatest gods. It was turned to blood. Hopi—the one I talked about before—is shown as a frog. Guess what the second plague was. It was a plague of frogs, and lice, cattle, and all those other ones. Even Seth, who was the god of darkness, and God brought darkness over the land. And then He struck Pharaoh, who was the god of upper and lower Egypt supposedly, by killing his firstborn son.

But God worked through this man Moses, who was really a prince of Egypt, to bring down this proud empire to its knees. It is interesting that history records that after about his fourth or fifth year, Amenhotep did no more campaigns, because much of his army had drowned in the Red Sea, and he could not afford it, because Israel took it out on their backs—all his wealth that he had gathered from the nations—billions and billions of dollars in gold and silver. God just wiped Egypt almost out. It took them more than a generation before they could recover any bit of their empire that they had had before. It was just an awful devastation.

We know that Israel left Egypt with a high hand. It tells us that in Exodus 12:37-42. We have the Passover coming up, and it is during this time, before Passover, that Paul tells us in II Corinthians 13:5 to examine ourselves, and to examine ourselves "in the faith." How are we doing "in the faith"?

The real story of Moses, seeing how he faced and overcame the mightiest power of his time, should instill a greater faith in us, knowing that God is working in us, and through us, to overcome our problems.

On the next evening, after Passover, on "the night to be much observed," we commemorate how God provided everything for the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. He watched. He looked over them. He observed the times. He observed all the details so that they could leave Egypt like they did. And now we know spiritually He has provided for our calling and salvation in the same way, and He looks with the same diligence over us. God made all the details of Moses' life—even the setbacks, as I said earlier—work for God's purpose. And He does the same for us in our lives, to lead us to our "promised land"—the Kingdom of God.