

Matching dates

A review of
***Solving the Exodus
 Mystery, Volume I***
 by Ted Stewart
 Biblemart.com,
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This new book is on the old problem of matching Egyptian historical dates with Bible dates. Stewart spent twenty-four years researching and finding ‘436 synchronisms that tie the histories of Babylon, Elam and Egypt to the biblical period from Abraham to the Exodus’. This number, of course, is statistically far beyond any claim of coincidences, and thus merits a serious look by all who are interested in this problem, including Egyptologists themselves.

A sample of the synchronisms is the familiar event of Joseph collecting all the money, cattle, land, and even people as sharecroppers during the famine until the pharaoh owned everything in Egypt. This should show up in history as a pharaoh who gained great wealth. Historian William C. Hayes describes such during the reign of Sesostri I:

‘Secure upon his throne, he was able to devote his great energy, ability and breadth of vision to a programme for the enrichment and expansion of Egypt more grandiose than any heretofore undertaken.’¹

Hayes further describes the mines of precious metals and stones, and the thousands of men who quarried blocks for numerous sphinxes and statues during this reign. A pharaoh who owned all the cattle would need herders to care for them. A governor at that time in the Oryx province was named Ameni, and in his tomb is found this inscription about his work overseeing

herds.

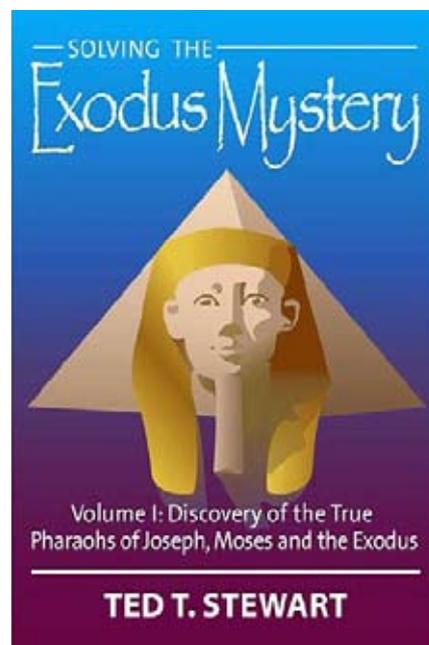
‘The gang-overseers of the crown possessions of the shepherds of the oryx nome gave to me 3,000 bulls in their yokes. I was praised on account of it in the palace each year of the loan-herds. I carried all their dues to the king’s house; there were no arrears against me in any office of his.’²

This same governor Ameni wrote about distributing food earlier, during the famine. Stewart details twenty such synchronisms with the famine and its aftermath. Along with the rest of the 436 synchronisms, this would move the twelfth dynasty to about 300³ years later than most history books place it, if we are to match Egyptian dates with Bible dates.

This immediately raises questions about astronomical dating and carbon-14 dating that Egyptologists have used, and Stewart handles both of those. First, is Sothic dating, which figures from the heliacal rising of the star Sirius. Stewart surveys historians’ determinations of ‘astronomically fixed’ dates and finds that they are not fixed at all. Scholars through the years have changed such ‘absolute’ dates, one time by an entire Sothic Cycle of 1,460 years, other times by 475 years and various other amounts. Two chapters in this book are packed with details about how particular scholars arrived at their particular revisions.

Stewart secured the technical help of astronomer Dr Danny Faulkner of the University of South Carolina, and came to a conclusion that the whole Sothic Cycle was ‘broken’ when the eighteenth dynasty switched back to a 360-day year after a long use of the 365-day year. Actually, the ancients fluctuated several times between the two years. Some scholars had noted the change but Stewart says they missed its significance in the Sothic figuring.

The chapter on carbon-14 dating also has an interesting story. Tree-ring dates are older than the carbon-14, and



it happened that they were closer to Egyptian history dates. Thus arose the modern system of calibrating carbon-14 dates by tree-ring dates, which consists of science bowing to history. The controversies over tree-ring dating are not explored here. But Stewart located a pre-tree-ring book that compared the uncalibrated carbon-14 dates with Egyptian history, and he was amazed to find that they confirmed his own proposed dates.

Several recent scholars have also proposed shortening Egyptian history by about 300 years. David M. Rohl, for instance, in his interestingly written *Pharaohs and Kings*⁴ also uses the system of finding synchronisms to locate Joseph and other Bible personalities in Egyptian history, and he thus shortens the history, but differently than Stewart. Floyd Nolan Jones in his highly useful *Chronology of the Old Testament*,⁵ solves numerous Bible chronology problems and proposes a shortening of Egyptian history that also is different. Stewart compares details of his system with these and others in his appendices.

After Stewart moves the twelfth dynasty forward, he recovers those lost years by making some of the later dynasties simultaneous rather than contiguous. It works out that Amenemhet I was the pharaoh when Joseph was

sold into Egypt. Amenemhet's son, Sesostris I, was pharaoh of the famine and of Joseph's viziership. A second Amenemhet and a second Sesostris reigned. Then came Sesostris III, the pharaoh who oppressed the Hebrews, and whose daughter raised Moses in the palace. His son, Amenemhet III, wanted to kill Moses, so Moses fled the country. Amenemhet IV followed, and he became the pharaoh of the Exodus. His tomb has never been found. All these twelfth dynasty pharaohs are corroborated by numerous synchronisms with the Bible from Egyptian history.

Volume II is to appear in 2003 and will carry the study from the Exodus on to the end of the Jewish exile at the time of Cyrus the Persian.

References

1. By Hayes in *Cambridge Ancient History*, quoted on p. 137 of Stewart.
2. Translated by J. Breasted in *Ancient Records of Egypt*, quoted on p. 140 of Stewart.
3. According to the historical accounts by Josephus, Diodorus Sicilius, Herodotus, Eusebius and others, this shortening of the Egyptian history does not go far enough. In the work of Constantius Manasses, the Egyptian states lasted 1,663 years until they were conquered in 525 bc by Cambyses. That would bring its start to 2188 bc when Peleg was 60 or 160 years after the Flood. See Usher, J., *Annales Veteris Testamenti* (in Latin), J. Flesher & L. Sadler, London, p. 139, 1650 [Ed].
4. Rohl, D., *Pharaohs and Kings: A Biblical Quest*, Crown Publishers, New York 1995.
5. Jones, F.N., *Chronology of the Old Testament*, KingsWord Press, The Woodland, 1999.