

Table 1. Variations in Joseph's name.

Zaphnath-Paaneah	"Probably Egyptian for <i>God Speaks and He Lives</i> ." ⁷
Zaphenat-Pa'aneah	"He who is called Ipiankhu." ⁸
Tsophnath Pa'neach	"The man to whom mysteries are revealed." ⁹
Tsophnath Pa'neach	"Treasury of the glorious rest." ¹⁰
Zaphnath-Paaneah	"Head of the sacred college." ¹¹
Zaphenath-Paneah	"Revealer of a secret or preserver of a world (or age)." ¹²
Zaphnath-paaneah	Egy. Zaf-nti-pa-ankh, "nourisher of the living one". ¹³
Zaphenath-paneah/Zaphnath-paaneah	"The master of the school of learning." ¹⁴
Zoph-ent-pa-ankh	"The one who furnishes the nourishment of life." ¹⁵
Zaphenath Paaneah	Governor of the Sethroite nome (region of Goshen). ¹⁶

A problematic Egyptological interpretation

In *A Test of Time*, Rohl attempted to decipher the Egyptian name of Joseph, partly using his own scheme, and also quoting significant parts of a seemingly elegant solution put forward by Kitchen.

Rohl asked, "What on earth might 'Zaphenat-Pa'aneah' have been in its original form?"⁸

Both Egyptologists regard Joseph's Egyptian name as being constructed using two elements, Zaphenat and Pa'aneah (their spelling). The name is then analyzed by investigating each element separately and then bringing them together again with the solution. In tackling the first element (their *Zaphenat*), both men appeal to metathesis²⁰ where, in their opinion, the letters 't' and 'p' have at some point in time been switched.

Rohl and Kitchen both overlook the fundamental differences between a language such as English and either ancient Egyptian or Hebrew. Linguistically, Modern English is quite unlike the two ancient languages, not least because it is in itself a fusion of many different languages and cultures, and most of those come from an entirely different language family²¹ to that of the Hebrews²² and Egyptians.²³ *Zaphenat* is the English transliteration of the Hebrew transliteration of the original Egyptian word. Kitchen, however, goes from the English transliteration directly to the Egyptian word, completely ignoring the Hebrew transliteration, *Tsophnath Pa'neach*, from which the English transliteration comes. Kitchen wrote that:

"[T]he Hebrew 'name' is rather long and falls into two parts. The second half clearly contains the Egyptian word 'ankh, 'life/to live', as is almost universally conceded; before it is some element containing *p* or *f*. The first half, conversely, seems much more 'Semitic' at first sight: *Zaphenath* is directly reminiscent of the common Semitic root *zaphan*,²⁴ and of very little in Egyptian."²⁵

The solution needed to keep this idea intact was to change *Pa'aneah*, not into *Paiankh*, but into (*I*)*p-ankh* or (*I*)*pi-ankh* or (*I*)*pu-ankh*, which Kitchen considered to be closely-related variants of each other.²⁶

Objections

Kitchen believes *Zaphenath* transliterates into Egyptian as *djed(w)-en-ef* (he who is called); he should have correctly transliterated this phrase, minus modern vowel insertions, as 'ddnf' 𓄎𓄏𓄐. for reasons that will become clear (Egyptologists do not know for certain what vowel sounds were used). He is convinced that Joseph's story was written by a later Hebrew scribe rather than the Egyptian-educated Moses. Kitchen expects his readers to believe that a poorly trained scribe felt the need to tamper with an established term, *Zaphenath*, and write *Zatenaph* (Kitchen's original spellings—*Zat(h)nap(h)* for *Zap(h)nat(h)*). It was not, however, some imaginary scribe who was responsible for this rearrangement of a biblical name; it was Kitchen in his desire to make his particular case appear more credible.

The second part of Joseph's new name in Hebrew, *Pa'neach* (Paaneah in English), pronounced *pah-nā'akh*, is not to be understood as Kitchen would have us believe (i.e. *Pa'ankh* or *Ipiankh*). Introducing an 'I' sound at the front of 'Pa' of 'Pi' cannot be justified—the 'I' sound, represented by the hieroglyph 𓄏, has been added by Kitchen only to improve his argument.










Ipiankhu may have been, as Kitchen claims, a common name in the Middle Kingdom Period (MKP), but Joseph's new name and title were of an Archaic Egyptian construction.²⁷ This would suggest Joseph's placement as being towards the start of the MKP in Dynasty 11, not in the middle of Dynasty 12, as Velikovskiy *et al* claim. There is only one Middle Kingdom vizier by the name of Ipi, and he served the first king of the 12th Dynasty, Amenemhet I. Little is known of Ipi,

and what is known comes from his Theban tomb TT315. It is from the surviving tomb texts that we know of his names and titles—neither names nor titles correspond to those of Joseph.

Kitchen’s argument is not sound for other reasons either: ‘He who is called’ is not a title for someone of high office—‘Minister/Overseer/Superintendent of the [high office]’. Two examples of how this naming worked in practice can be seen in *m-r hnw imm-m-h3t* ‘Amenemhet, Overseer of the Chamber’,²⁸ and *it-ntr ity* ‘Ity, the god’s father’.²⁹ In each case, due to the word order in the Egyptian, the title precedes the name—exactly the same, as will be shown, in Moses’ choice of Zaphenath Pa’aneah: in English, we would write a comparable title as ‘John Smith, Minister for Internal Affairs’, not the Egyptian way, ‘The Minister for Internal Affairs, John Smith’.

Solution


Moses spent four decades living as an Egyptian where “[he] was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words (Greek *logos*) and deeds” (Acts 7:22). This clearly implies that Moses was very accomplished in the use of words; and not just in speaking. The Egyptian system of teaching was very thorough and, after four decades of life in the royal household, Moses would have understood the complexities and applications of the Egyptian language and court etiquette. Therefore his choice of the Hebrew, Zaphenath Paaneah, is very likely to be a valid transliteration into Hebrew from the original Egyptian.


The first section of Joseph’s Egyptian name is, as earlier indicated, not a proper name; rather it is a very important and, as far as I can discern, unique title. The Egyptian equivalent of Zaphenath is almost certainly *df3wn’ty*, which translates into modern English as ‘Overseer/Minister of the Storehouse of Abundance’. The title *df3wn’ty*  can be easily broken down into its composite elements of *df3w* ; *n* ; and ‘*ty* . Part one, *df3w*, is a noun derived from the verb *df3*—(to provide for/to abound in supplies), where *df* is the etymological equivalent of the Hebrew *tsaf*. Part two, *n*, is the masculine genitival adjective ‘of’. Finally, part three, ‘*ty*—is a noun expressing the official title ‘Storehouse Overseer/Minister’, which is drawn from the Archaic Egyptian³⁰ root ‘*t*—storehouse . The second section, *p3nn’i3h* , is a proper name, and like the ending ‘*ty* of *df3n’ty*, exhibits Archaic traits. This name, *p3nn’i3h*, is also composed of three elements—*p3n* ; *n’i* ; *3h* . The first part, *p3n*, ‘he of’ is written but there is no grammatical or historical evidence for it necessarily being vocalized. The second part, *n’i*, and the third, *3h*, combine to express Joseph’s new Egyptian name literally as [*p3n*]*n’i3h* ‘[He of the] Excellent/Gracious Spirit’ where *n’i* translates as ‘excellent/gracious’ and *3h* translates as ‘spirit’.

In the list of proposed names shown earlier, many indicate the belief that the end of Joseph’s name is to be translated as

‘life’ (Egy. ankh *anh*). This is, however, completely wrong. In the Hebrew ‘spirit’ is rendered as רוּחַ *ruwach* (pronounced *rü’ah*) with the entirely legitimate understanding of ‘impelling a prophet to utter instruction’ or ‘warning’. Ancient Egyptian has a number of words for ‘spirit’, but it is *3h*, the equivalent of the Hebrew *ruwach*, that confirms the intimate inside knowledge of the writer of the Joseph narrative. The Egyptian *3h* most often refers to spiritual power and/or intellectual ability; both qualities agree with the Hebrew and were abundantly exhibited by Joseph. This accords perfectly, when compared contextually, with Genesis 41:38–39:

“And Pharaoh said to his servants, ‘Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the *Spirit of God*?’ Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, ‘Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as *discerning and wise* as you [emphases added].”




Pharaoh is clearly asking his courtiers a rhetorical question; in his mind he has already decided the right course of action. Pharaoh wastes little time in conferring upon Joseph a title and a new Egyptian name, *df3n’ty p3nn’i3h* ; the Hebrew *Tsophnath Pa’neach*, better known in English as Zaphenath Paaneah.

There were many holders of the title ‘overseer of the storehouse’ (Egy. *imy.r.šnwt* , yet Joseph’s particular title appears to be unique in the record as indicated by the etymological link between the Hebrew *tsophnath pa’neach* and the Egyptian *df3n’ty p3nn’i3h*.

Moses has rendered the Egyptian name almost identically in Hebrew, giving the final part of the name as ‘spirit’—further evidence that Moses had a profound knowledge of the Egyptian language and culture, including spiritual matters—a subject of considerable importance to ancient Egyptians.

Significantly, when Joseph revealed himself to his brothers (Genesis 45) he made no mention of his office of Overseer of the Storehouse of Abundance, but chose to refer to himself by three other titles:

“... a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and ruler throughout the land of Egypt” (Genesis 45:8).

These three titles are consistent with known Egyptian titles from the Middle Kingdom and generally were retained for life. לַאֲבִי לְפָרְעֹה (‘Father to Pharaoh’) was equivalent (though subtly changed by Joseph to avoid any connection with the Egyptian priesthood) to the Egyptian *it ntr*  and as a result became an honorary title denoting not only rank but degree of intimacy with the king; אֲדֹנָי לְבֵיתִי (‘Lord of all his house’), was the equivalent to the Egyptian *imy r pr nsw* (*pr nsw* being of archaic root as with elements of Joseph’s name discussed above) ; and מְשַׁלְּטָנָא כְּלֵי אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם ‘... ruler throughout all the land of Egypt’ was equivalent to the Egyptian ... *shk3.n i n km t ht t3 pn r dr.f* (... caused me to rule throughout the entire land of Egypt.)  where *t3 pn r dr.f* translates literally as ‘this entire land’.³⁰

Joseph may have had many other titles—in keeping with court protocol of the time—both honorary and real (see box

Merefnebef

The ancient Egyptians loved titles, and although the Bible mentions only four titles in regard to Joseph, there is good reason to suppose that he may have had more. Merefnebef, who was a 6th Dynasty high official of Egypt (and not so far removed from Joseph's day) and who served under Teti, Userkare, and Pepi I, amassed no fewer than 34 titles in his lifetime. They varied from the honorific *sole companion* (Egy. *smr w't(y)* 𓂏𓂏𓂏), to the self-explanatory *hereditary noble* (Egy. *rp't - 𓂏𓂏𓂏*), and the all-powerful *vizier/prime minister* (Egy. *t3ty* 𓂏𓂏).

above). But the recorder of these events, Moses, used only those which were relevant to the overall story.

Joseph's pharaoh

Over the past decade or so, various synchronisms between Joseph and his pharaoh have been attempted. Down proposed that the pharaoh was Sesostris I (Kheperkare Senuseret) and that Joseph functioned under the name Mentuhotep;³¹ Rohl proposed Amenemhet III (Nimaatre Amenemhet) and that Joseph functioned as Ipiankhu;³² Wyatt proposed Netjerykhet Zoser and that Joseph morphed into Imhotep.³³

There are serious objections to each of these fairly representative attempts to find Joseph's pharaoh. Rohl's idea has been discussed earlier, showing that Ipiankhu is an artificial construct. He also ascribes a date for Joseph's arrival in Egypt³⁴ that differs from the biblically derived date by c. 80 years.³⁵

Down's choice of Sesostris I seems based on little more than unscientific admiration of this pharaoh's statues:

"Judging by his [Sesostris'] statues, he seems to have been an agreeable-looking pharaoh They depict him with a pleasant face."³⁶

Down's choice of Mentuhotep is all the more surprising given that this specifically (and popular) Middle Kingdom name means *Content is Mentu*. How happy would the godly Joseph have been to bear the name of the Egyptian god of war? Sesostris I was served by a Mentuhotep and this official is one of the best attested from the Middle Kingdom. He was 'Overseer of all Royal Works' and this included overseeing Sesostris' construction projects at the Temple of Amun in Karnak; again the question must be asked, 'How happy would the godly Joseph have been to oversee work that glorified the god Amun?' There is also no consensus as to Mentuhotep being a *Vizier*—a dedicatory stele at Abydos gives him the title, yet in contrast the walls of his tomb make no mention of this specific office.

Wyatt creates far greater problems by linking Joseph to the famous Imhotep. Firstly, Wyatt, like several other supporters

of this idea, believes that Imhotep's name means 'he who comes in peace'. Imhotep's name is attested on the base of a statue of Zoser as *iy m htp* 𓂏𓂏𓂏 unearched at Saqqara. Certainly there is a verb *ii m htp* 𓂏𓂏𓂏 but the very manner that Imhotep's name was written indicates a different meaning to that claimed. The sign M18 𓂏 is vocalized as *iy*, which is an epithet of the god Horus (all the Egyptian gods and goddesses had multiple epithets which people incorporated into their personal names); the sign G17 𓂏 signifies *who is*; the sign R4 𓂏 is *hotep* which means *content*. Brought together, Imhotep translates as *Content is Horus* (lit. Horus who is content). Again the question must be asked, 'How happy would the godly Joseph have been to bear the name of the Egyptian sky god, Horus?'

Secondly, since the biblical timeline is fixed—which includes Joseph—Wyatt (using the conventional Egyptian chronology as the guide) must move Imhotep and Zoser around seven centuries nearer the birth of Christ. Since Zoser did not exist in isolation, logically the great pyramid builders of the 4th Dynasty—along with their mighty pyramids—must move by a similar amount since history is not composed of events punctuated by non-event vacuums.

How such chronological tensions are typically relieved is demonstrated by Down in *Timing is everything*.³⁷ His solution is to place dynasties in convenient blocks and have them rule more-or-less contemporaneously. This is nothing more than an *ad hoc* hypothesis to save the Velikovskian model from falsification; for if this model were true, the likes of the Great Pyramid builder Khufu (4th Dynasty) would have lived and ruled at the same time as the powerful pharaohs of the 11th and 12th Dynasties.

Given the unsuitability of the choices of pharaohs and names for Joseph above, is there a suitable pharaonic candidate who meets the biblical requirements? Mentuhotep II appears to meet these requirements perfectly, needing a movement of three centuries rather than the stress-inducing seven centuries required by Wyatt above.

For Mentuhotep II, whom I propose to have been the pharaoh of the Great Famine during Joseph's time in Egypt, there is a huge variation in regnal dates between the secular and my revised proposal—see table 2 below.

When Nebhepetre Mentuhotep began his reign, the south of Egypt was ruled from Thebes—from Asyut (Egy. Sawty *s3wty* 𓂏𓂏𓂏) to the First Cataract of the Nile. The remainder of the country was ruled by a different king at Heracleopolis (Egy. Henen-nesut; *nni nsw* 𓂏𓂏𓂏). Mentuhotep re-established the foreign policies of the Old Kingdom, sending military expeditions against the Libyan tribes to the west, and the Bedouin to the east in Sinai. He began the process of bringing Nubia back under Egyptian control, for the purposes of mining and trade.³⁸

Mentuhotep's first fourteen years of reign are thought to have been generally peaceful. In the 14th year of his reign, an uprising occurred in the north, probably connected with the

Table 2. Variance in regnal dates.

Variations in dates for Mentuhotep's reign	
Source	Date
ib205.tripod.com/mentuhotep2.html	2117–2069 bc
Dodson, A., <i>Monarchs of the Nile</i> , gives the name as Montjuhotpe II	2066–2014 bc
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mentuhotep_II	2061–2010 bc
diggingsonline.com/pages/rese/dyns/middle.htm (calculated from chart)	2061–2010 bc
Clayton, P.A., <i>Chronicle of the Pharaohs</i> , gives the name as Mentuhotep I (not II)	2060–2010 bc
Shaw, I., (Ed.) <i>Oxford History of Ancient Egypt</i> , gives the name as Mentuhotep II	2055–2004 bc
British Museum	2055–2004 bc
metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/07.230.2	2051–2000 bc
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mentuhotep_II (same page as the above wikipedia ref.)	2046–1995 bc
digitalegypt.ucl.ac.uk/chronology/mentuhotepII.html	2046–1995 bc
Grimal, N., <i>A History of Ancient Egypt</i> , Mentuhotpe II (original spelling)	2040–2009 bc
britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/375448/Mentuhotep-II	2008–1957 bc
Rohl, D., <i>A Test of Time</i> , gives the name as Montuhotep II	2007–1956 bc
Clarke, P., new revised date for Mentuhotep's reign	c. 1757–1706 bc

ongoing conflict between Thebes and Herakleopolis, which had threatened to invade Upper Egypt. The situation deteriorated when the Herakleopolitan king decided to ransack the ancient royal necropolis of Abydos.

During the period of chaos leading up to Mentuhotep II's reign, the nomarchs or provincial rulers held important powers over Egypt. Selve noted:

“At the end of the Old Kingdom, central power, and in particular Pepy II [Pepi II], developed the regional particularisms whose rivalries had progressively excited a thirst for dynamic power, by the heredity of the nomarch responsibility: the rights and the advantages acquired in one period were passed on to the successor who supplemented them with new privileges. The state, weakened by the political situation, was unfit to manage the overflow of regional confrontation, which again weakened it more.”³⁹

The nomarch office had become hereditary during the 6th Dynasty of Egypt and the collapse of central power gave all nomarchs tremendous power over their domains.

How the nomarchs were tamed

When the famine predicted by Joseph arrived, his first political move, acting on Pharaoh's behalf, was to offer grain for ‘money’ (Genesis 47:14—Heb. כֶּסֶף *keceph* i.e. silver⁴⁰). All the monetary silver was placed in Pharaoh's treasury. A year later the people exchanged their second-most-valuable commodities—their livestock—for grain. In the third year,

all the people clamoured for more grain (Genesis 47:19) and offered their most valuable commodities—their bodies and land—in exchange for grain. In the space of just three years Joseph had achieved what decades of internal struggles had failed to do. In an amazing *tour de force*, he handed the land of Egypt, along with its people, back into Pharaoh's power, as in the days of the Old Kingdom; only the temples, their estates, and the priesthood were exempted.⁴¹

The actual cost in all of this to Pharaoh? Nothing? The gain for Pharaoh? Everything—absolute control of Upper and Lower Egypt.

It is not unreasonable to say that Joseph had, in the process, helped create a semi-feudal system not dissimilar to the later European feudal system of the Middle-Ages; and this almost 3,000 years before the Europeans.

Coupled with Joseph's grain policies, Mentuhotep II was free to initiate a strong policy of centralization, reinforcing his royal authority by creating the posts of Governor of Upper Egypt *imy r sm'w* 𓄏𓄏𓄏 and Governor of Lower Egypt *imy r t3 mhw* 𓄏𓄏𓄏𓄏, who had power over the broken nomarchs.⁴² Mentuhotep also, importantly, created a mobile group of royal court officials who further controlled the activities of the nomarchs. Eventually nomarchs who had supported the Herakleopolitan kings of Lower Egypt, such as the governor of Sawty (modern Asyut), lost their power to the benefit of the pharaoh.

Unfortunately, most of the tombs of 11th Dynasty officials have been vandalized, which makes it impossible to identify a named official of the time as Joseph.

Summary and postscript

I have shown how the evidence that may be deduced from the title the Bible says Pharaoh conferred upon Joseph fits with the other biblical data about Joseph. It also fits the notion that this took place in the early part of the Middle Kingdom. Consistent with the revised chronology for which I have been laying the foundation via successive papers in this Journal,⁴³ I propose that Mentuhotep II's reign was c. 1757–1706 BC, and that he was the pharaoh of Joseph's time. This is consistent with the data presented here, as well as with the Egyptological evidence surrounding his reign.

Future papers aim to show that this will point to the pharaoh (and the likely timing) of the Exodus in a manner that is fully consistent with the biblical chronological data without violating Egyptological data—only the faulty Conventional Egyptian Chronology (CEC). This is important, as it has long been known that there are major discrepancies between the CEC and the chronology of the Bible. Previous attempts to reconcile these via chronological revisions have, particularly where they trusted the writings of Velikovsky, suffered from major Egyptological blunders and contradictions. Some of these have already been shown in my papers referenced above. And as will also be shown in papers pending, these attempts lead unintentionally into contradicting the Bible itself.

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- Indo-European (mainly Germanic and Anglo-Norman influences, but English is essentially a 'borrowing' language).
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