

MENKAURE (17th Century B.C.): PHARAOH OF THE EXODUS

THE EVIDENCE FOR THIS CLAIM IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Artapanus (c.150 B.C.) was a Jewish historian from Alexandria, Egypt. He is the first known Jewish scholar to have claimed to have identified any of the Pharaohs that lived during the life of Moses (120 years). Only a few sentences of his book on Jewish history has survived and that is in the writings of the Christian historians, Clement of Alexandria (c.155-c.215) and Eusebius (c.265-c.340)¹.

That Artapanus would have identified Menkaure (4th dynasty) as The Pharaoh of the Exodus is based upon the fact that he claims (according to these historians) that Moses had a face to face encounter with the Pharaoh of Egypt, Chenephres, before he (Moses) fled Egypt 40 years before the Exodus. Now Chenephres was the son of Cheops and the father of Menkaure.² Therefore, Artapanus would have identified Menkaure as The Pharaoh of the Exodus!³

Also, Artapanus would have had access to the MASSIVE library at Alexandria and to the book, if it did exist at that time, the *Aegyptica*, that the Egyptian historian, Manetho (c.280 B.C.), allegedly wrote (see below). He also would have access to the (still extant) book on Egyptian history by the Greek historian, Herodotus (c.450 B.C.). The source for his book was the Egyptian scholars in Egypt. Artapanus also would have been in a better position than we are today to have known if Manetho(?) or Herodotus had intentionally wrote anything false or had omitted any important information or had been misinformed in anything that they wrote pertaining to Cheops, Chenephres, Menkaure, Ahmose, the 3 GREAT Giza pyramids, the life of Moses, the Hyksos, the slavery in Egypt of the Israelites, the Exodus and The Pharaoh of the Exodus.

Moreover, if we accept the Biblical account as being accurate in all that it teaches pertaining to the Exodus, then obviously this would have been a MAJOR source of embarrassment to the Egyptian historians of the ancient world. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that a Jewish historian, such as Artapanus, would be more credible on these matters than would have been the Egyptian historians of that era.

This means that it would have been in the best interest of the latter to have denied, distorted or ignored anything in the above that would make the Egyptians look bad - which Josephus (c.90 A.D.), a Jewish historian, claims that Manetho had done (*Against Apion*). And that they would have done this is attested to by the fact that the ancient Egyptians were known to have not recorded their military defeats. So by Manetho(?) or any of the other ancient Egyptian or pagan scholars before Josephus (see p. 3), identifying Ahmose, and not Menkaure, as The Pharaoh of the Exodus would not require that the 3 GREAT Giza pyramids were built by the Israelites⁴ and that the 7 years of famine in the 3rd dynasty was the one with Joseph in the Bible.

Furthermore, Artapanus would have been familiar with the ideas of the educated Jews and Egyptians in Egypt. All of this means that he would have been MORE QUALIFIED to have known about the above matters than we are today (see also p. 6, # 8, paragraphs 2 and 3). This fact would make weak the claim by Egyptologist that the *Aegyptica* got it right when it taught that Menkaure had died at c.2500 B.C.⁵

Lastly, it is not credible to believe that Artapanus would have made the above claim if Menkaure had died at c.2500 B.C.⁶ This is seen from the fact that if he had died at c.2500 B.C. then Artapanus would have known about this and he would not have dated Chenephres and therefore the Exodus under Menkaure in the 17th century B.C. And that he would have done this is seen from the fact that the Biblical date for the Exodus was in the middle or latter half of the 17th century B.C. This is seen from the fact that it was about 600 years (594: Anstey) from the Exodus until the 4th year of Solomon (latter half of the 11th century B.C.) given the fact that The Book of Judges requires 390 years (*The Romance of Bible Chronology*, 1910, by Martin Anstey).

*This book by Anstey mentions many other Biblical chronologist since Demetrius. This includes Dr. William Hales (19th century) who wrote 5 books called, *A New Analysis of Biblical Chronology*. Incidentally, Dr. Hales dated the Exodus around the middle of the 17th century B.C.

Anstey claims that Paul had his "about 450 years" in Acts 13:20 inclusive of the Judges. This, if accurate, would require that Paul had about 600 years for the above time period and that he would have dated the Exodus in the middle to the later half of the 17th century B.C. That Paul did have this "about 450 years" inclusive of the Judges has the support of many (but not all) N.T. manuscripts. This would include the ancient Aramaic/Syriac Bible called the *Peshitta* (see the edition by George Lamsa).

The above Exodus date was taught by most of the ancient Jewish and Christian scholars who dated this event. Two examples of the former are Demetrius (c.260 B.C.) - see www. and Josephus - see his *Antiquities*, etc. And three examples of the latter are Clement of Rome at c.97 A.D. (*A.N.F.*, vol. 1), Clement of Alexandria (*A.N.F.*, vol. 2) and Origen (c.185-c.254). Origen, the student of Clement, taught that the number of years from the Exodus until the birth of Jesus was about the same as that from the Creation of Adam and Eve* until the Genesis Flood (*A.N.F.* vol. 3). This would have been about 1656 years according to the Hebrew O.T. in Genesis 4-5. Lastly, this Exodus date has the support of the scholar, Porphyry (3rd century A.D.). He claims that Moses lived 1100 years before Ezra (c.500 B.C.) - see *Porphyry Against the Christians*, translated by R. Joseph Hoffman.

*None of the ancient Jewish or Christian writers, to my knowledge, ever dated the Creation of Adam and Eve or the Universe any earlier than c.5500 B.C. This Creation date was clearly taught by Demetrius

(see www.), Clement of Alexandria (*A.N.F.*, vol. 2), Julius Africanus (*A.N.F.* vol. 6) and Augustine in the early 5th century (*City of God*).

2. The successor to Menkaure, Shepseskaf, was not his first born son. His first born son was Knuenre and he died before his father did (*Wikipedia*, Menkaure, March, 2018). This is what we would expect to find if Menkaure was The Pharaoh of the Exodus. This is because the Bible teaches (Ex. 11:4-12:30; Ps. 105:36, 135:8) that his first born son died in the 10th plague - the death of the first born.
3. Menkaure died sometime around the end of March or the beginning of April.⁷ This is the time of the year for the Jewish holiday called, Passover (Num. 33:3) - when Moses brought the Israelites out of Egypt.
4. The body of Menkaure has never been discovered. This is what we would expect to find if he was The Pharaoh of the Exodus given the fact that he drowned in the Red Sea (Ex. 14; Ps. 136:15). Also, the historian Diodorus (46 B.C.) tells us that the bodies of Cheops and Chenephres were buried in a tomb. However, he does not mention Menkaure as being buried anywhere (Diodorus, in *Loeb Classical Library*, vol. 1). This is what we would expect to find if Menkaure had drowned in the Red Sea and was The Pharaoh of the Exodus.

NOTE: The body of Ahmose was discovered in the 20th century. This fact, given what was just mentioned in # 4, would make it IMPOSSIBLE for him to have been The Pharaoh of the Exodus. This was taught by several writers in the Hellenistic era (c.300 B.C. to c.500 A.D.). This means that they would have identified the Hyksos that Ahmose expelled out of Egypt as the Biblical Israelites. Those who taught that Ahmose was The Pharaoh of the Exodus are the pagan scholars Manetho(?), Polemon, Apion and Ptolemaeus (see Josephus and Justin Martyr in *A.N.F.* vol. 2); Josephus (*Against Apions*. See also p. 6, # 8); and the Church Fathers Justin Martyr, Tatian, Theophilus, Clement of Alexandria and Julius Africanus (see *A.N.F.*, vols. 1, 2, 6).

The best explanation for the Hyksos occupation of Egypt is as follows: After Egypt was DEVASTATED by all of the events pertaining to the Exodus, then this country would have been weak and vulnerable to an invasion from foreign nation. The Hyksos took advantage of this situation and conquered and, more or less, ruled Egypt until they were expelled by Ahmose at c.1545 B.C.⁸ This claim is attested to by an article on the Hyksos in *Wikipedia* (2,18, 2020, p.5). It says, "The Hyksos...capitalizing on a weak moment in Egypt's history managed to conquer the entire country briefly as far south as Thebes." The statement, "A weak moment in Egypt's history" is exactly what we would expect to find if the Hyksos conquest of Egypt occurred after the Exodus and before this country had enough time to rebuild its Army, Infrastructure and Economy.

5. The death of Menkaure was unexpected (*Wikipedia*, Menkaure and Shepseskaf, March 2018 and Diodorus in his above book on the history

of Egypt). This is what we would expect to find if he was The Pharaoh of the Exodus given the fact his unexpected death by drowning in the Red Sea - the Gulf of Aqaba (implied in Ex. 13:18 and Judges 11:16). NOTE: According to archeological evidence, Ahmose ruled for several years after he expelled the Hyksos. This fact, given what was just mentioned in #5, would make it IMPOSSIBLE for him to have been The Pharaoh of the Exodus.

6. There is no evidence that Shepseskaf ever undertook any kind of military activity or even that he had inherited an army or an empire - which would require an army to maintain (*Wikipedia*, Shepseskaf, March, 2018). This is what we would expect to find if he was The Successor to the Pharaoh of the Exodus. This is because The Pharaoh of the Exodus lost his entire army in the Red Sea (Ex. 14-15; Ps. 136:15).

7. Money and other resources was scarce when Shepseskaf became the Pharaoh of Egypt (*Wikipedia*, Shepseskaf, March, 2018). This is what we would expect to find if he was The Successor to the Pharaoh of the Exodus. This is because when the Israelites left Egypt that they took much of the Gold and Silver and a lot of other stuff of the Egyptians with them (Ex. 11:2; Ps. 105:37).

8. That the Exodus occurred under Menkaure is also attested to by the fact that at the time of this event the ENTIRE Egyptian army was in Egypt (Ex. 14:3-28; Ps. 137:15). This fits with the time of Menkaure when Egypt did not have an empire - which would require an army on foreign soil to maintain. This means that The Pharaoh of the Exodus MUST have been someone before Ahmose began to rule at c.1550 B.C. This is because all of the Pharaohs from him to Ramses II (c.1250 B.C.), and no one dates the Exodus after him, had an empire in which some or much of the Egyptian army was present on foreign soil. This was especially true from the time of Thutmose III (c.1470 B.C.) until sometime after 1200 B.C.

9. Given the fact that Egypt was DEVASTATED by the events pertaining to the Exodus (Ex. 6-15), then it would have been IMPOSSIBLE for The Successor to the Pharaoh of the Exodus to have inherited an Egypt that had an Army, an Empire and that was a Major World Power. Now ALL of the Pharaohs from Amenhotep I (the successor to Ahmose) to Merneptah (the successor to Ramses II), did, more or less, inherited these 3 characteristics of the Egyptian government. Therefore, The Successor to the Pharaoh of the Exodus MUST have been someone who came into power at least a few decades before Ahmose began his rule. This would allow for the time that the Egyptian government would have needed to rebuild its Army, Infrastructure and Economy.

CONCLUSION: Given the evidence against Ahmose (or any other Pharaoh after him) as being the Pharaoh who expelled the Israelites, and the evidence for Menkaure as having done this, then we MUST conclude that he was The Pharaoh of the Exodus!

1. See Moses in Hellenistic Literature, in *Wikipedia* and for Clement's quotation of Artapanus, see *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 2, Strom., 1, 2, 3.

2. Some would claim that Menkaure was, like Chenephres, the son of Cheops. Also, these Pharaohs were responsible for the building of the 3 GREAT pyramids at Giza. This would indicate that Artapanus (unlike Egyptologist today) was convinced that they were built by the Israelites when they were slaves in Egypt for about 90 years. Furthermore, that this is the correct number of years is based upon the fact that the Pharaoh who began the oppression (i.e. Cheops) was the same one under whom Moses born (Ex. 1:1-2:10; Acts 7:17-20). Lastly, that they were in Egypt for 215 years (and not 430 years) was taught by the apostle Paul (Gal. 3:17), Demetrius and Anstey.

3. One writer claims that Dr. Leonhard Schmitz (1807-1890) identified Menkaure as The Pharaoh of the Exodus.* If he did teach this then perhaps it can be located in one of his extant books (see *Wikipedia*).

*See the book, *The Black Man* (c.1900), by Rev. James M. Webb.

4. Herodotus tells us that the 3 GREAT Giza pyramids were built by slaves and Josephus tells us that the Israelites built pyramids when they were slaves in Egypt.

5. For criticism of the *Aegyptica* and plausible evidence that it was not written by Manetho, see him in *Wikipedia*, March, 2018. This article claims that because Diodorus made no mention of the *Aegyptica* or of Manetho (although he, Diodorus, did mention *The History of Egypt*, by Herodotus) in his book on Egyptian history, then it must have been written after him. Another plausible explanation for this silence is that Diodorus did not consider the *Aegyptica* to be a credible source of information about the history of Egypt and this is why he made no mention of it or of Manetho. MORE EVIDENCE THAT MENKAURE HAD DIED SOMETIME AFTER 2000 B.C. IS SEEN AS FOLLOWS:

The earliest Biblical date for the Genesis flood (Gen. 4-11) was at c.3250 B.C. This was taught in the Greek O.T. called the *Septuagint*. This was a translation from the Hebrew O.T. before the birth of Christ. Now Manetho teaches, according to the Christian historian, Julius Africanus (c.165-c.240), that it was 1042 years from the time that Menes became the first Pharaoh of Egypt until the end of the 4th dynasty. And Shepseskaf became the Pharaoh about 17 years before the end of this dynasty. So when we deduct this about 1025 years from c.3250 B.C. then it brings us down to c.2225 B.C. Now when we deduct at least 300 years from the time of the flood until Egypt had enough people to require a King, then this would place the death of Menkaure AFTER 2000 B.C.

NOTE: For the sake of clarity, Africanus regarded this as being the correct number of years for this time period. The other ancient sources that preserve our knowledge of the *Aegyptica* are Josephus and Eusebius. Another source of information about Manetho is George Syncellus (8th to 9th century) in *Wikipedia*. He wrote the book, *Extracts of Chronology*.

Also, the *Septuagint* has a 2nd Canaan after the flood and before Abraham in Gen. 11:13. However, this 2nd Canaan is probably a forgery given the fact that he is not found in the Hebrew texts of Gen. 11:13 and 1 Chron. 1:24. Now the *Septuagint* teaches that this 2nd Canaan “begat” a son at age 130. So when we deduct this 130 years from the above date of c.1925 B.C., then this would put the death of Menkaure at c.1795 B.C. And this date could be lowered if we allow for about 435 to 485 years from the flood until when Menes began to rule Egypt. And this would put us in the Biblical time frame for the Exodus at c.1610 - c.1660 B.C.

⁶. This claim is strengthened by the fact that the earliest known date for the Exodus (or Moses) that any ancient Jewish or Christian scholar gave was c.1760 B.C. This was taught by Africanus (*A.N.F.*, vol. 6). He did this by having 490 years for The Book of Judges. However, this number cannot be supported by anything in the Bible.

⁷. This is seen from the fact that the successor to Menkaure, Shepseskaf, became the Pharaoh of Egypt shortly after the unexpected death of Menkaure. His ascension date was “apparently” on the 11th of April (*Wikipedia*, Menkaure and Shepseskaf, March, 2018). Obviously an event this long ago (17th century B.C.) would make it impossible to calculate an *exact* date for the accession of Shepseskaf.

⁸. The above dating of Ahmose is based upon the astronomical evidence pertaining to his successor, Amenhotep I (*Wikipedia*, Ahmose and Amenhotep I, March 2018). This means that his death would have been at c.1530 B.C. (a date much too late for the Exodus). This fact was not known by the ancient writers. This fact, along with the influence of the *Aegyptica*, and the fact that there are some similarities between the Hyksos and the Israelites, would help to explain why they dated his death before 1600 B.C. and even in some cases identified Ahmose as The Pharaoh of the Exodus.

However, that Artapanus would have been more qualified than Josephus would have been to have known who The Pharaoh of the Exodus was is seen from the fact that the former wrote much earlier and the latter was never in Egypt. Both of these facts would have limited the access that Josephus would have had to reliable sources of information regarding the Pharaohs in the life of Moses. This claim is attested to by the fact that there were MORE books (around 500,000) in the Alexandrian library in the 2nd century B.C. than there was in the time of Josephus. This is because Julius Ceasar burnt this library at c.50 B.C.

This fact would have resulted in a loss of much information pertaining to the history of Canaan and Egypt, the Hyksos, the Pyramid builders, the Exodus and the Pharaohs in the life of Moses. This loss would have made it easier for the Egyptians to have denied, distorted or ignored anything in their history or the Bible that would have been a MAJOR embarrassment to them. All of this means that Artapanus would have been more qualified to have known about the above matters than those who were writing after 40 B.C.

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