

## ~PHARAOH (423)

- A title given to the kings of Egypt. It is derived from an Egyptian word for, **Great House**. In the earliest documents of Egypt, the word apparently designated the royal palace and in course of time came to apply to the head of government, the king.
- Scholars hold that this latter application came about the middle of the **Second Millennium B.C.E.** If so, this would mean that Moses used the term as applied in his day, **1593-1473 B.C.E.**, when recording the account of Abraham's visit to Egypt.
- So it happened that, as soon as Abram entered Egypt, the Egyptians got to see the woman, that she was very beautiful. (**Genesis 12:14**)
- And the princes of **Pharaoh** also got to see her and they began praising her to Pharaoh, so that the woman was taken to the house of Pharaoh. (**Genesis 12:15**)
- And he treated Abram well on her account, and he came to have sheep and cattle and asses and menservants and maidservants and she-asses and camels. (**Genesis 12:16**)
- Then Yehowah touched **Pharaoh** and his household with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. (**Genesis 12:17**)
- With that **Pharaoh** called Abram and said; What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? (**Genesis 12:18**)
- Why did you say; She is my sister, so that I was about to take her as my wife? And now here is your wife. Take her and go! (**Genesis 12:19**)
- And **Pharaoh** issued commands to men concerning him, and they went escorting him and his wife and all that he had. (**Genesis 12:20**)
- On the other hand, it is entirely possible that the title was so applied in Abraham's day, **2018-1843 B.C.E.**, if not in official documents, then at least in common usage.

- The first document in which the title is connected with the king's personal name comes from the reign of Shishak, who ruled contemporaneously with Solomon and Rehoboam. In the Bible the title is similarly linked with the name in the cases of **Pharaoh** Nechoh.

- In his days **Pharaoh** Nechoh the king of Egypt came up to the king of Assyria by the river Euphrates, and King Josiah proceeded to go to meet him, but he put him to death at Megiddo as soon as he saw him. (**2 Kings 23:29**)

- And **Pharaoh** Hophra.

- This is what Yehowah has said; Here I am giving **Pharaoh** Hophra, the king of Egypt, into the hand of his enemies and into the hand of those seeking for his soul, just as I have given Zedekiah the king of Judah into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar the king of Babylon, his enemy and the one seeking for his soul. (**Jeremiah 44:30**)

- Of the late seventh and early **Sixth Centuries B.C.E.** By this time Egyptian documents were also inserting the title in the cartouches especially reserved for writing the royal name.

- The **pharaohs** named in the Bible are **Shishak**, **So**, **Tirhakah**, **Nechoh**, and **Hophra**, each of these being considered under separate articles here.

- There is some question as to whether Zerah the Ethiopian was a ruler of Egypt or not. Other **pharaohs** are left anonymous. Because of the confused state of Egyptian chronology, it is not possible to connect these **pharaohs** to those of secular history with certainty.

- These anonymous pharaohs include, the one who tried to take Abraham's wife Sarah.

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- The **pharaoh** who promoted Joseph's rise to authority.
- After that **Pharaoh** said to Joseph; Since God has caused you to know all this, there is no one as discreet and wise as you are. (**Genesis 41:39**)
- You will personally be over my house, and all my people will obey you implicitly. Only as to the throne shall I be greater than you. (**Genesis 41:40**)
- And **Pharaoh** added to Joseph; See, I do place you over all the land of Egypt. (**Genesis 41:41**)
- With that **Pharaoh** removed his signet ring from his own hand and put it upon Joseph's hand and clothed him with garments of fine linen and placed a necklace of gold about his neck. (**Genesis 41:42**)
- Moreover, he had him ride in the second chariot of honor that he had, so that they should call out ahead of him, Avrèkh! Thus putting him over all the land of Egypt. (**Genesis 41:43**)
- And **Pharaoh** further said to Joseph; I am **Pharaoh**, but without your authorization no man may lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt. (**Genesis 41:44**)
- After that **Pharaoh** called Joseph's name Zaphenathpaneah and gave him Asenath the daughter of Potiphera the priest of On as a wife. And Joseph began to go out over the land of Egypt.

(Genesis 41:45)

- And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before **Pharaoh** the king of Egypt. Then Joseph went out from before **Pharaoh** and toured about in all the land of Egypt. (Genesis 41:46)
- The **pharaoh**, or **pharaohs**, of the period of oppression of the Israelites prior to Moses return from Midian (Exodus Chapters 1,2), the pharaoh ruling during the Ten Plagues and at the time of the Exodus (Exodus Chapters 5-14), the father of Bithiah, wife of Mered of the tribe of Judah.
- As for his Jewish wife, she gave birth to Jered the father of Gedor and Heber the father of Soco and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. And these were the sons of Bithiah the daughter of **Pharaoh**, whom Mered took. (1 Chronicles 4:18)
- The **pharaoh** who gave asylum to Hadad of Edom in David's time.
- So they rose up out of Midian and came into Paran and took men with them from Paran and came into Egypt to **Pharaoh** the king of Egypt, who then gave him a house. Also, bread he assigned to him, and land he gave him. (1 Kings 11:18)
- And Hadad continued to find favor in the eyes of **Pharaoh**, so much that he gave him a wife, the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the lady. (1 Kings 11:19)
- In time the sister of Tahpenes bore him Genubath his son, and Tahpenes got to wean him right inside the house of **Pharaoh**, and Genubath continued at the house of **Pharaoh** right among the sons of **Pharaoh**. (1 Kings 11:20)
- And Hadad himself heard in Egypt that David had lain down with his forefathers and that Joab the chief of the army had died. So Hadad said to **Pharaoh**; Send me away, that I may go to my own land. (1 Kings 11:21)
- But **Pharaoh** said to him; What are you in need of while with me that here you are seeking to go to your own land? To this he said; Nothing, but you ought to send me away without fail. (1 Kings 11:22)
- The father of Solomon's Egyptian wife,

- And Solomon proceeded to form a marriage alliance with **Pharaoh** the king of Egypt and to take **Pharaoh's** daughter and bring her to the City of David, until he finished building his own house and the house of Yehowah and Jerusalem's wall all around. (**1 Kings 3:1**)
- And the **pharaoh** who struck down Gaza during the days of Jeremiah the prophet,
- This is what proved to be the word of Yehowah to Jeremiah the prophet concerning the Philistines before **Pharaoh** proceeded to strike down Gaza. (**Jeremiah 47:1**)

**See Also CHRONOLOGY (Egyptian Chronology]**  
**See Also EGYPT, EGYPTIAN (History)**

- The Egyptians viewed the ruling **pharaoh** as a god, the son of the sun-god Ra, and not merely as a representative of the gods. He was thought to be the incarnation of the falcon-headed god Horus the successor of Osiris.
- Among the pompous titles accorded him were **the sun of the two world's, Lord of the Crown, the mighty god, offspring of Ra, the eternal, and many, many others.** [History of Ancient Egypt, by G. Rawlinson, 1880, Vol. I, pp. 373,374][History of the World, by J. Ridpath, 1901, Vol. I, p. 72]
- Fastened to the front of his crown was an image of the sacred uraeus, or cobra, which supposedly spat out fire and destruction upon his enemies. The image of the **pharaoh** was often placed in temples among those of the other gods.
- There are even Egyptian pictures of the reigning pharaoh worshipping his own image. As god, **Pharaoh's** word was law, and he ruled not according to a Law code but by decree. Nevertheless, history shows that his supposedly absolute power was considerably limited by other forces within the empire, including the priesthood, the nobility, and the military.
- These points help in understanding how difficult Moses assignment was in appearing before **Pharaoh** and presenting Yehowah's requests and warnings.
- And afterward Moses and Aaron went in and proceeded to say to

**Pharaoh;** This is what Yehowah the God of Israel has said; Send my people away that they may celebrate a festival to me in the wilderness. (**Exodus 5:1**)

- But **Pharaoh** said; Who is Yehowah, so that I should obey his voice to send Israel away? I do not know Yehowah at all and, what is more, I am not going to send Israel away. (**Exodus 5:2**)
- At this Yehowah let **Pharaoh's** heart become obstinate, and he did not consent to send them away. (**Exodus 10:27**)
- So **Pharaoh** said to him; Get out from me! Watch yourself! Do not try to see my face again, because on the day of your seeing my face you will die. (**Exodus 10:28**)
- There is nothing to indicate that the daughter of **Pharaoh** given to Solomon in marriage abandoned her false worship.
- And Solomon proceeded to form a marriage alliance with **Pharaoh** the king of Egypt and to take **Pharaoh's** daughter and bring her to the City of David, until he finished building his own house and the house of Yehowah and Jerusalem's wall all around. (**1 Kings 3:1**)
- And King Solomon himself loved many foreign wives along with the daughter of **Pharaoh**, Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian and Hittite women. (**1 Kings 11:1**)
- From the nations of whom Yehowah had said to the sons of Israel; You must not go in among them, and they themselves should not come in among you, truly they will incline your heart to follow their gods. It was to them that Solomon clung to love them. (**1 Kings 11:2**)
- And he came to have seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives gradually inclined his heart. (**1 Kings 11:3**)
- And it came about in the time of Solomon's growing old that his wives themselves had inclined his heart to follow other gods, and his heart did not prove to be complete with Yehowah his God like the heart of David his father. (**1 Kings 11:4**)
- And Solomon began going after Ashtoreth the goddess of the

**Sidonians and after Milcom the disgusting thing of the Ammonites. (1 Kings 11:5)**

- **And Solomon began to do what was bad in the eyes of Yehowah, and he did not follow Yehowah fully like David his father. (1 Kings 11:6)**
- **Such marriages were often employed by ancient kings, as also by modern ones, as a means for strengthening their relations with other kingdoms.**
- **The record does not show whether the initial proposal for the alliance came from Solomon or from Pharaoh. Solomon's likening the Shulammitte maiden to a mare in the chariots of Pharaoh reflects the fame of Egypt's chariots at that time.**
- **To a mare of mine in the chariots of Pharaoh I have likened you, O girl companion of mine. (Song of Solomon 1:9)**
- **And a chariot customarily came up and was exported from Egypt for six hundred silver pieces, and a horse for a hundred and fifty, and that was the way it was for all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Syria. It was by means of them that they did the exporting. (1 Kings 10:29)**

### **See Also ALLIANCE**

- **Isaiah's prophecy, written in the Eighth Century B.C.E, describes a confused, disconcerted state as existing or due to exist within Egypt and on the part of Pharaoh's counselors.**
- **The princes of Zoan are indeed foolish. As regards the wise ones of Pharaoh's counselors, their counsel is something unreasonable. How will you men say to Pharaoh; I am the son of wise ones, the son of kings of ancient time? (Isaiah 19:11)**
- **Where, then, are they, the wise men of yours, that they may now tell you and that they may know what Yehowah of armies has counseled concerning Egypt? (Isaiah 19:12)**
- **The princes of Zoan have acted foolishly, the princes of Noph have been deceived, the keymen of her tribes have caused Egypt to wander about. (Isaiah 19:13)**

- Yehowah himself has mingled in the midst of her the spirit of disconcertedness, and they have caused Egypt to wander about in all its work, just as someone drunk is made to wander about in his vomit. (**Isaiah 19:14**)
- And Egypt will not come to have any work that the head or the tail, the shoot or the rush, can do. (**Isaiah 19:15**)
- In that day Egypt will become like women, and it will certainly tremble and be in dread because of the waving of the hand of Yehowah of armies which he is waving against it. (**Isaiah 19:16**)
- And the ground of Judah must become to Egypt a cause for reeling. Everybody to whom one mentions it is in dread because of the counsel of Yehowah of armies that he is counseling against him. (**Isaiah 19:17**)
- Secular history shows internal friction and disruption within Egypt from Isaiah's time on into the following century. Though, contrary to Yehowah's word, unfaithful Judah at times turned to Egypt for military assistance, boastful **pharaohs** proved to be like a **crushed reed** providing no solid support.
- Those who are setting out to go down to Egypt and who have not inquired of my own mouth, to take shelter in the stronghold of **Pharaoh** and to take refuge in the shadow of Egypt! (**Isaiah 30:2**)
- And the stronghold of **Pharaoh** must become even for you men a reason for shame, and the refuge in the shadow of Egypt a cause for humiliation. (**Isaiah 30:3**)
- For his princes have come to be in Zoan itself, and his own envoys reach even Hanes. (**Isaiah 30:4**)
- Every one will certainly become ashamed of a people that bring no benefit to one, that are of no help and bring no benefit, but are a reason for shame and also a cause for reproach. (**Isaiah 30:5**)
- Woe to those going down to Egypt for assistance, those who rely on mere horses, and who put their trust in war chariots, because they are numerous, and in steeds, because they are very mighty, but who have not looked to the Holy One of Israel and have not searched for Yehowah himself. (**Isaiah 31:1**)



- And he is also wise and will bring in what is calamitous, and he has not called back his own words, and he will certainly rise up against the house of evildoers and against the assistance of those practicing what is hurtful. ([Isaiah 31:2](#))
- The Egyptians, though, are earthling men, and not God, and their horses are flesh, and not spirit. And Yehowah himself will stretch out his hand, and he that is offering help will have to stumble, and he that is being helped will have to fall, and at the same time they will all of them come to an end. ([Isaiah 31:3](#))
- Son of man, set your face against **Pharaoh** the king of Egypt and prophesy against him and against Egypt in its entirety. ([Ezekiel 29:2](#))
- Speak, and you must say; This is what the Sovereign Lord Yehowah has said; Here I am against you, O **Pharaoh**, king of Egypt, the great sea monster lying stretched out in the midst of his Nile canals, that has said; My Nile River belongs to me, and I, I have made it for myself. ([Ezekiel 29:3](#))
- And I will put hooks in your jaws and cause the fish of your Nile canals to cling to your scales. And I will bring you up out of the midst of your Nile canals and all the fish of your Nile canals that cling to your very scales. ([Ezekiel 29:4](#))
- And I will abandon you to the wilderness, you and all the fish of your Nile canals. Upon the surface of the field you will fall. You will not be gathered up nor be collected together. To the wild beasts of the earth and to the flying creatures of the heavens I will give you for food. ([Ezekiel 29:5](#))
- And all the inhabitants of Egypt will have to know that I am Yehowah, for the reason that they proved to be, as a support, a reed to the house of Israel. ([Ezekiel 29:6](#))
- When they took hold of you by the hand, you got to be crushed, and you caused a split in their entire shoulder. And when they supported themselves upon you, you got to be broken, and you caused all their hips to wobble. ([Ezekiel 29:7](#))
- Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Yehowah has said; Here I am bringing upon you a sword, and I will cut off from you

earthling man and domestic animal. (**Ezekiel 29:8**)

- **And the land of Egypt must become a desolate waste and a devastated place, and they will have to know that I am Yehowah, for the reason that he has said; To me the Nile River belongs, and I myself have made it. (**Ezekiel 29:9**)**
- **Accordingly Rabshakeh said to them; Please, say to Hezekiah, This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, has said; What is this confidence in which you have trusted? (**Isaiah 36:4**)**
- **Look! You have trusted in the support of this crushed reed, in Egypt, which, if a man should brace himself upon it, would certainly enter into his palm and pierce it. That is the way **Pharaoh** the king of Egypt is to all those putting their trust in him. (**Isaiah 36:6**)**