

KING HEZEKIAH: The 'Caged Bird' That Got Away

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*When there was
no way out, this
king made the right
choice and lived.*

By Paul Kroll

Imagine yourself living about 2,700 years ago in the small mountain kingdom of Judah. Your capital city, Jerusalem, is, by today's standards, a tiny and insignificant village.

Your nation is locked in a struggle with Assyria—the superpower of the day. Assyria intends to wage a merciless war against your nation.

As a citizen of Jerusalem you know your city is a prime target of the Assyrian king, Sennacherib.

But Jerusalem's story will be a tale of *two* cities. She is living through the worst of times now, but soon will live through the best of times.

Your days will provide future generations with exciting exam-

ples of the Bible's historical accuracy. Jerusalem also will offer great encouragement to future generations of God's people. For your city's ultimate victory will be proof positive that Almighty God protects his people in time of trouble.

The king on Judah's throne, Hezekiah (circa 715-686 B.C.), is an extraordinary person. He is quite unlike his father Ahaz, the former king, who failed to trust in God (II Chronicles 28:22-23).

In the very first year of his reign, Hezekiah rid the land of pagan religious practices. He began a spiritual rebirth in the na-

tion and reaffirmed the national covenant with the true God of Israel, as chapters 29 through 31 of II Chronicles show.

Hezekiah determined to obey God's law and to trust God. It will be written in the Bible that Hezekiah "trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any who were before him" (II Kings 18:5-6).

A worried Assyria

The Assyrian king has a different view of Hezekiah. He sees the Judean king as the ringleader of a revolt against his authority.

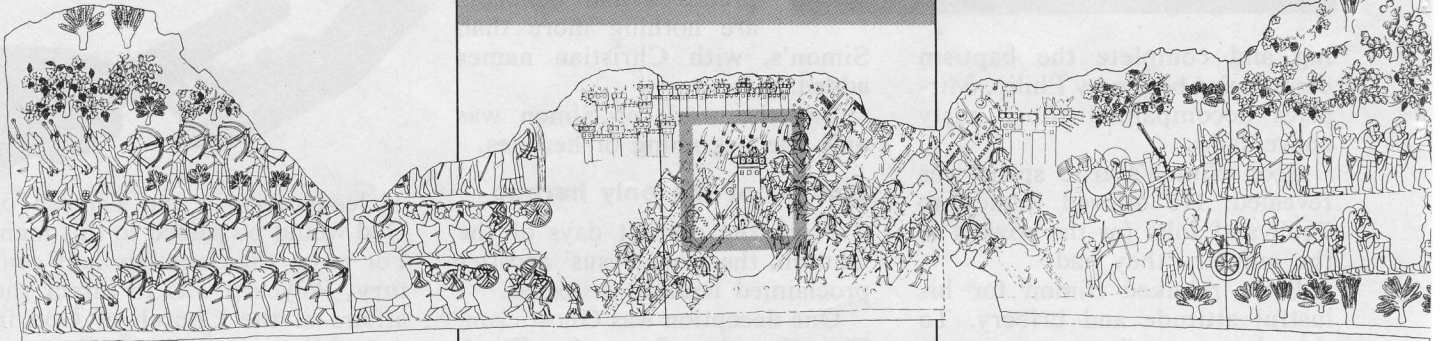
Hezekiah, by putting his faith in God, threw off Assyrian domination. He even won some military successes in the western plains. Under Hezekiah, Judah gained control of the major trade routes connecting Egypt to the Fertile Crescent.

The Assyrian leadership is determined that Judah must not remain an independent power. Judah's position is too strategic. Judah is becoming too serious a competitor to Assyria.

In 701 B.C., Sennacherib carries out a terrifying blitzkrieg war against the west and Hezekiah in particular.

The Assyrians quickly advance westward across the Fertile Crescent. They reach the Mediterranean Sea north of the Holy Land. Then Sennacherib starts down the Phoenician coast in a show of force.

Tribute comes from most of the petty kinglets and city-state rulers of the coastline from Byblos to Ashdod. Cities that refuse



the Samaritans—the peoples who lived just north of Judea. The bulk of the Samaritans descended from the peoples transplanted by the Assyrians into the region in the eighth century B.C. They had brought their Chaldean religious customs with them.

Over the centuries, living near the Jews, the Samaritans had adopted some Jewish practices while retaining their ancient Chaldean customs. They had also added Greek philosophies and Persian customs. This mixing of religious customs and beliefs is called *syncretism*.

When Philip, the first Christian minister to preach in Samaria, powerfully proclaimed Christ's message, the Samaritan high priest believed his preaching—or at least he appeared to.

The apostles at Jerusalem, learning how many Samaritans were becoming believers, sent Peter and John to continue preach-

purchase a church office *simony*, after Simon Magus.

Simon left without truly being converted. He did not have hands laid on him and did not receive the Holy Spirit. But Simon saw the attraction of this new Christian doctrine and way of life.

To his already mixed religious philosophies, Simon added something new—Christian words and practices. Of course those practices were twisted and distorted. They were combined with Jewish ceremony, Babylonian superstitions, Greek mythology and Persian mysteries.

Like the true apostles of Jesus, Simon carried his message from city to city. In time he arrived in the capital city of Rome.

He attracted a significant following. So great were Simon's power and influence that some people honored him as a god. They even erected a statue of him on the Tiber River, an action reserved only for the most important dignitaries.

Then Simon yielded to his great vanity. The traditions about his death vary, but two that are popular involve an attempt to prove his supernatural powers.

One tradition says he asked to be buried alive, promising to reappear in three days just as Jesus had done. Another tradition tells that Simon, to prove his powers, tried to fly off a tall building.

In any case, Simon died. His heresies, however, live on today! Many modern religious practices and concepts are nothing more than

Simon's, with Christian names added.

But the work of Simon was only the beginning of heresies.

Simon not the only heretic

From the earliest days of the Church, the truth Jesus' apostles proclaimed became distorted.

One deception was Gnosticism. The Gnostics, from the Greek

word *gnosis*, meaning "to know," exerted a powerful influence on first-century religion.

A careful study of the New Testament books reveals numerous confrontations with gnostic influence even among members of the true Church of God. You can read the second chapter of Colossians as an example.

Late in the first century, another influential heretic, Cerinthus, confronted the apostle John. The Bible does not name Cerinthus, but concerns John expressed in his three epistles refer, without a doubt, to this man's teaching and influence.

The first century ends

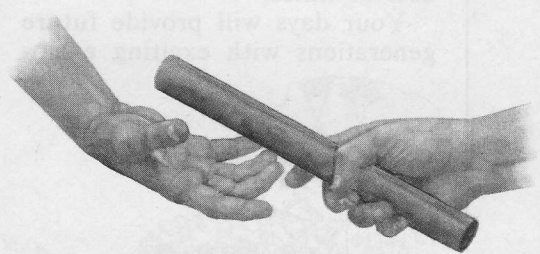
Late in his ministry, the aging John prepared for the passing of leadership in the Church to a new generation.

John probably lived past the turn of the first century. He would have been more than 100 years old when he died.

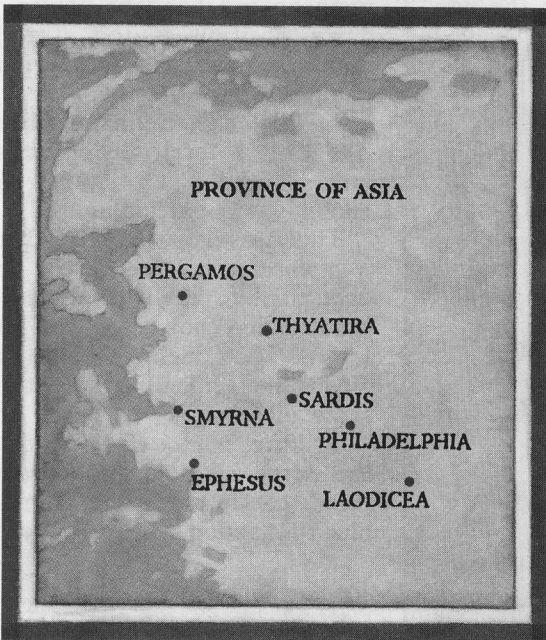
During the decade of the 90s the Roman emperor Domitian (81-96) exiled John to the Aegean isle of Patmos. The Bible does not document much of this period, but God did inspire the visions of the Book of Revelation while John was imprisoned there.

After his release from prison, John continued his ministry in western Asia Minor (modern Turkey) in the seven-congregation circuit mentioned in chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation. His principal headquarters was at Smyrna. There he took under his special care and tutelage a young man named Polycarp.

After John's death, the baton



of leadership in the Church of God would be passed to this man. For more than another half century, Polycarp was to direct the affairs of the Church of God in Asia Minor. □



ing and complete the baptism ceremonies begun by Philip. Miracles accompanied those early conversions.

Soon Simon's true spirit was revealed. He offered money to Peter and John for the powers of the ministry they had.

Peter rebuked Simon for his lustful attitude and bribery. To this day we call an attempt to

to do obeisance are taken by siege.

Sennacherib begins to systematically subjugate Judah's cities and towns. He attacks the southwestern Judean fortresses of Azekah, Philistine Gath (annexed earlier by Hezekiah), Lachish and Libnah.

The siege of Lachish

The most important of these strongholds is Lachish, in the lowlands 30 miles southwest of Jerusalem. Lachish protects the southern Judean hill country from invasions from the southern Philistine plain.

Sennacherib launches a massive siege against the fortress (II Chronicles 32:9). Scholars disagree on whether the Assyrian occupation of Lachish mentioned in II Kings 19:8 refers to a second, later campaign by Sennacherib. This article takes the position that he conducted a single campaign against Hezekiah's kingdom in 701 B.C.

Neither the Bible nor Sennacherib's own annals will say more about the fate of Lachish. But reliefs from his palace at Nineveh will show how the Assyrians stormed and eventually took this citadel.

During these hostilities, Hezekiah decides on two courses of action. First, his resolve apparently weakens and he sues for peace. Hezekiah sends a message to Sennacherib while he is besieging the Lachish fortress:

"I have done wrong," Hezekiah tells him, "turn away from

me; whatever you impose on me I will pay" (II Kings 18:14).

Sennacherib pretends to accept

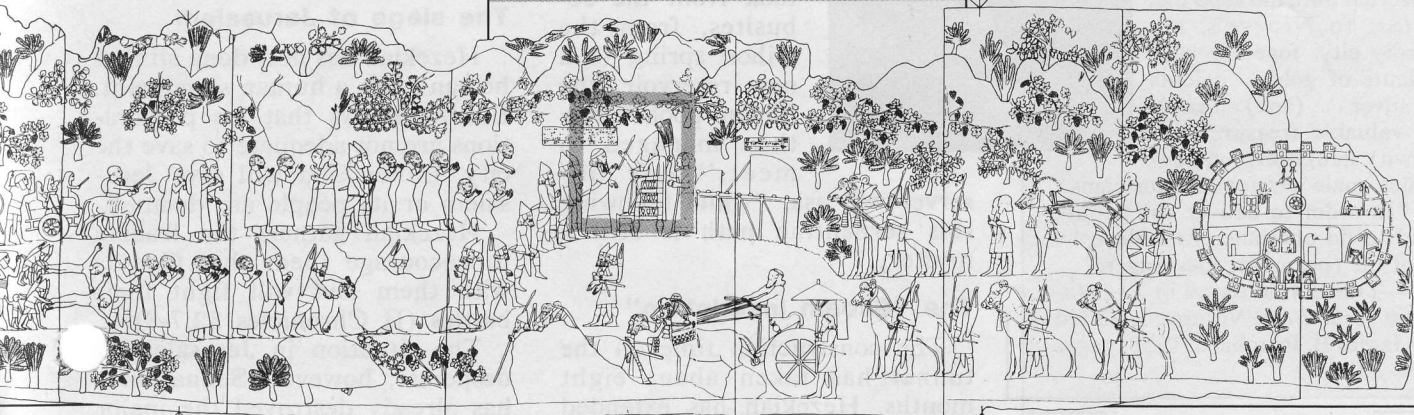
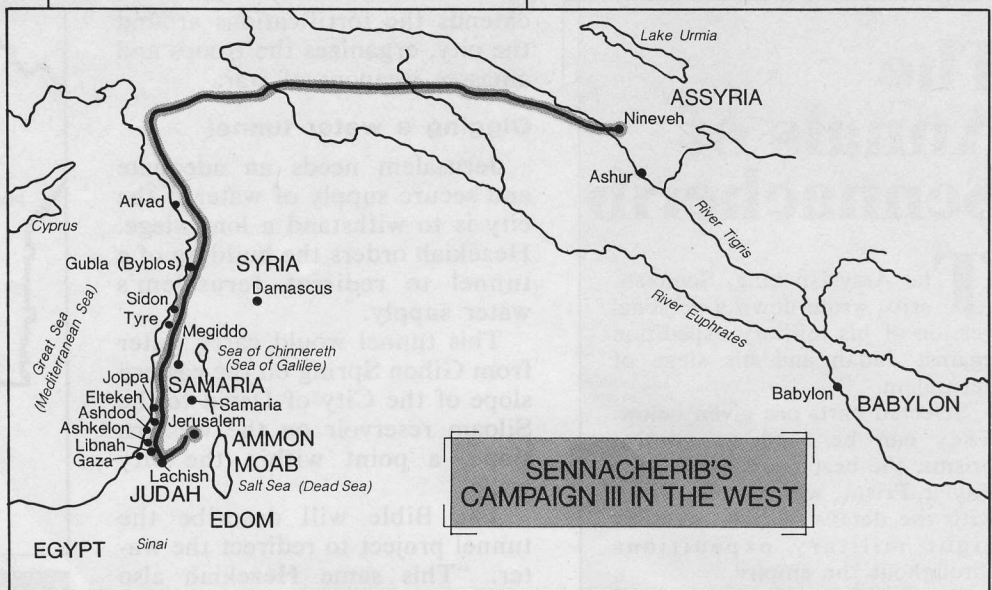


the offer. Hezekiah pays him 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold, among other treasures. He is forced to strip the gold from the doors of the Temple to amass the tribute money.

But events prove that Sennacherib has no intention of sparing either Judah or Jerusalem. Hezekiah realizes that he and the leading citizens are to be put to death for their rebellion.

But Hezekiah is no fool. He has also been hurriedly preparing Jerusalem's defenses for a possible siege. The king reinforces and

Below: Drawing of Sennacherib's relief of his siege of Lachish. Far left: Section of relief showing assault on Lachish. Left: Detail of relief showing Sennacherib on his throne receiving the booty taken from Lachish. (Photos and drawing: Trustees of the British Museum.)



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The Annals of Sennacherib

The Assyrian king, Sennacherib, wrote down a personal version of his military expedition against Judah and his siege of Jerusalem.

Selected parts are given below. They can be read on several prisms, the best known being the Taylor Prism, which is inscribed with the details of Sennacherib's eight military expeditions throughout the empire.

"As to Hezekiah, the Jew, he did not submit to my yoke, I laid siege to 46 of his strong cities, walled forts and to the countless small villages in their vicinity, and conquered (them). . . .

"I drove out (of them) 200,150 people, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, donkeys, camels, big and small cattle beyond counting, and considered (them) booty. . . .

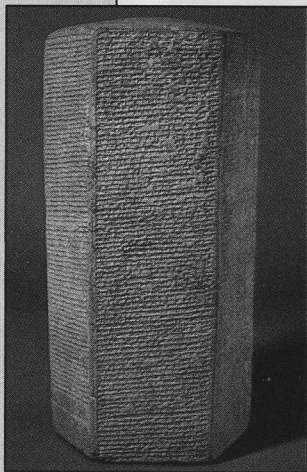
"[Hezekiah] himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem, his royal residence, like a bird in a cage.

"I surrounded him with earthwork in order to molest those who were leaving his city's gate. His towns which I had plundered, I took away from his country. . . .

"Hezekiah himself, whom the terror-inspiring splendor of my lordship had overwhelmed and whose irregular and elite troops which he had brought into Jerusalem, his royal residence, in order to strengthen (it), had deserted him, did send me, later, to Nineveh, my lordly city, together with talents of gold . . . talents of silver . . . (and) all kinds of valuable treasures, his (own) daughters, concubines, male and female musicians.

"In order to deliver the tribute and to do obeisance as a slave he sent his (personal) messenger."

—Translation found in *The Ancient Near East*, Volume 1, edited by James B. Pritchard, 1958, pages 199-201. □



extends the fortifications around the city, organizes the troops and amasses weapons of war.

Digging a water tunnel

Jerusalem needs an adequate and secure supply of water if the city is to withstand a long siege. Hezekiah orders the building of a tunnel to redirect Jerusalem's water supply.

This tunnel would carry water from Gihon Spring on the eastern slope of the City of David to the Siloam reservoir on the western slope, a point within the city walls.

The Bible will describe the tunnel project to redirect the water: "This same Hezekiah also stopped the water outlet of Upper Gihon, and brought the water by tunnel to the west side of the City of David" (II Chronicles 32:30).

It will go down as Hezekiah's major engineering exploit, recorded for posterity (II Kings 20:20).

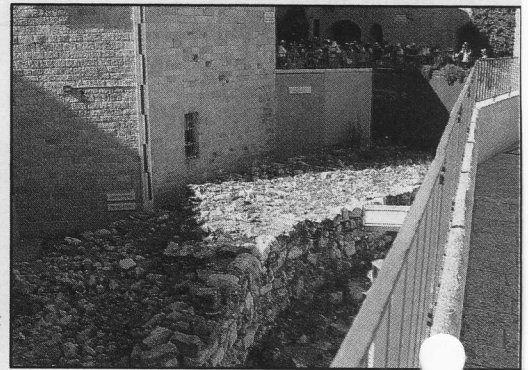
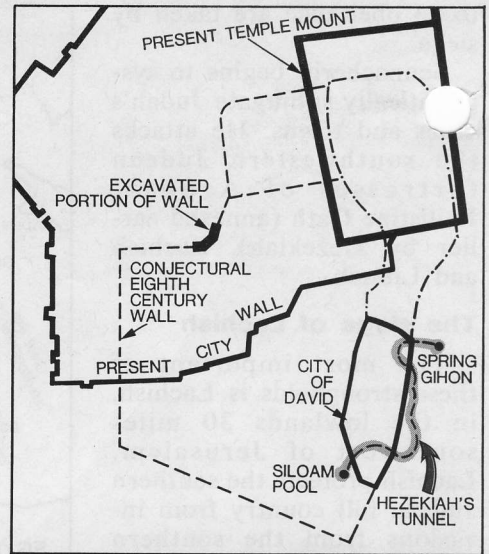
* The tunnel is an incredible underground aqueduct 533 meters, or 1,749 feet, long. It was cut out of solid rock. *

Workmen, digging from two ends, used iron hand tools to cut this tunnel, which is more than a half mile long. The project was accomplished without surveyors or instruments—not even a magnetic compass.

The tunnel follows an S-shaped path under the oldest part of Jerusalem, which David took from the Jebusites, from the Gihon spring to a new reservoir, the Siloam pool. "How they managed to meet," one observer will ask, "while following this serpentine path is still a mystery."

The "Siloam Inscription"

The construction time on the tunnel has taken about eight months. Hezekiah has extended



Jerusalem's wall so that the reservoir will be within the protected city limits.

The diggers carve an inscription in the rock wall of the tunnel about 20 feet from the Siloam entrance.

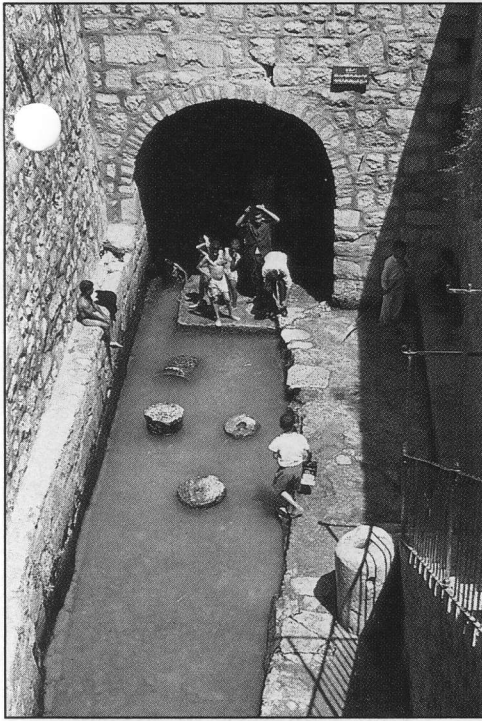
This inscription, written in classical Hebrew, will enable scholars to date other Hebrew inscriptions by reference to it. The Siloam inscription will be the longest and oldest ancient Hebrew inscription found in Israel.

The siege of Jerusalem

Hezekiah has now done all that he can from a human standpoint. But he knows that his preparations are not adequate to save the city. Either God will save Jerusalem or its people are doomed.

Hezekiah gathers the leaders to encourage them that God is with them and will fight their battles (II Chronicles 32:7-8).

The situation in Jerusalem is desperate, however. Sennacherib has already destroyed the major



Far left: Taylor Prism, one of several clay prisms inscribed with details of Sennacherib's military campaigns (Photo: Trustees of the British Museum). **Left:** Hezekiah's wall in the Old City of Jerusalem (Photo: Paul Kroll). **Above:** Pool of Siloam entrance to Hezekiah's tunnel (Good News photo). **Right:** Museum-quality replica of the Siloam Inscription found in Hezekiah's tunnel (Photo: G.A. Belluche Jr.).

fortress cities and controls the Judean countryside. Jerusalem is Sennacherib's final plum to pick.

The destruction of Jerusalem is to be the crowning achievement of Sennacherib's victorious military campaign in the west. But Sennacherib's plan for Jerusalem's destruction goes awry.

— The "caged bird"

Some of Sennacherib's own writings on clay prisms, called the Annals, will describe this third military campaign and crusade against Hezekiah in the year 701 B.C.

These, some of the most detailed Assyrian accounts of an episode related in the Bible (II Kings 18:13-16), will thoroughly support the historical accuracy of Scripture in the report of Judean cities Sennacherib captured and the tribute Hezekiah paid.

The most revealing of Sen-

nacherib's statements is this one: "Hezekiah . . . himself I made a prisoner in Jerusalem . . . like a bird in a cage."

But Sennacherib *never claims* to have destroyed Jerusalem. Why didn't he breach the walls?

Certainly, the purpose of caging up Hezekiah like a bird—to lay siege to the city—was to starve out the inhabitants, to break through the city walls or in some other way get inside the city and destroy it.

What happened? Why did Sennacherib fail to take Jerusalem? The reason is because God intervened.

When Sennacherib threatened to annihilate Jerusalem, Hezekiah beseeched God to save the city (II Kings 19:14-34, Isaiah 37:14-35).

God gave Hezekiah a positive answer: "Thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: 'He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor build a siege mound against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return; and he shall not come into this city'" (II Kings 19:32-33).

Jerusalem is saved

Shortly thereafter, God sent an angel into the Assyrian military camp and killed 185,000 soldiers. The Assyrian king now found himself far from his home base and with a substantial part of his army dead.

To the south were the Egyptians and Ethiopians. To his northern flank was Hezekiah's intact fortress at Jerusalem. And what would happen back home when the Babylonians got word of his army's defeat?

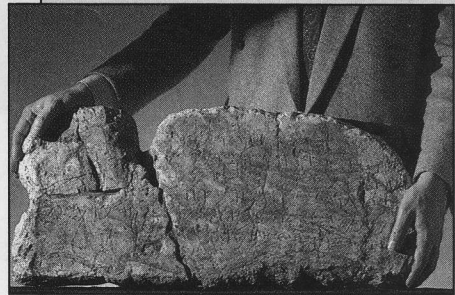
Sennacherib had no choice but to scurry away as fast as possible from the west and escape to his own land—back to his fortress capital.

"So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away," the Bible will write, "returned home, and remained at Nineveh" (verse 36).

God had saved Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem. □

The Siloam Inscription

This exciting inscription was carved by workers digging Hezekiah's tunnel. It was found in the east wall of the tunnel, about 20 feet from the Siloam Pool entrance.



The inscription graphically describes the drama of the final moments before the two groups of tunnelers broke through to each other—allowing the water to flow from the Gihon Spring to the Siloam reservoir.

The inscription was found in A.D. 1880. After it was discovered, the inscription was cut away from the tunnel wall. Eventually it was acquired by the Ottoman government then in control of Palestine. The inscription was placed in the Istanbul Archaeological Museum, where it now resides.

"This is the story of the boring through. While the tunnelers lifted the pick-axe each toward his fellow and while 3 cubits [remained yet] to be bored [through, there was heard] the voice of a man calling his fellow—for there was a split [or overlap] in the rock on the right hand and on [the left hand].

"When the tunnel was driven through, the tunnelers hewed the rock, each man toward his fellow, pick-axe against pick-axe.

"And the water flowed from the spring toward the reservoir for 1,200 cubits. The height of the rock above the head of the tunnelers was a hundred cubits."

—Translation from Hershel Shanks, *The City of David: A Guide to Biblical Jerusalem*, 1973, page 55. □



*Read here
Egyptian accounts
of the pharaohs
who ruled at the time
of the oppression
and the Exodus.*

In 1898, local *felaheen* — Egyptian peasants — drew the attention of Loret, the French archaeologist, to a remarkable find in the Valley of the Kings.

It was an ancient tomb, carved long ago into the sandstone cliffs of the Theban hills opposite Luxor by the Nile.

As an excited Loret entered the tomb, he found a corridor, rough and undecorated, leading downward, deep into the hills. Following the sloping corridor, Loret eventually arrived at what proved to be a false burial chamber, created by ancient architects to confuse tomb robbers.

In the floor of this chamber, the archaeologist found a stairway descending into the actual tomb chamber, a large room supported by six pillars.

The false burial chamber had obviously failed in its purpose, for the stairway had been uncovered in ancient times by tomb robbers.

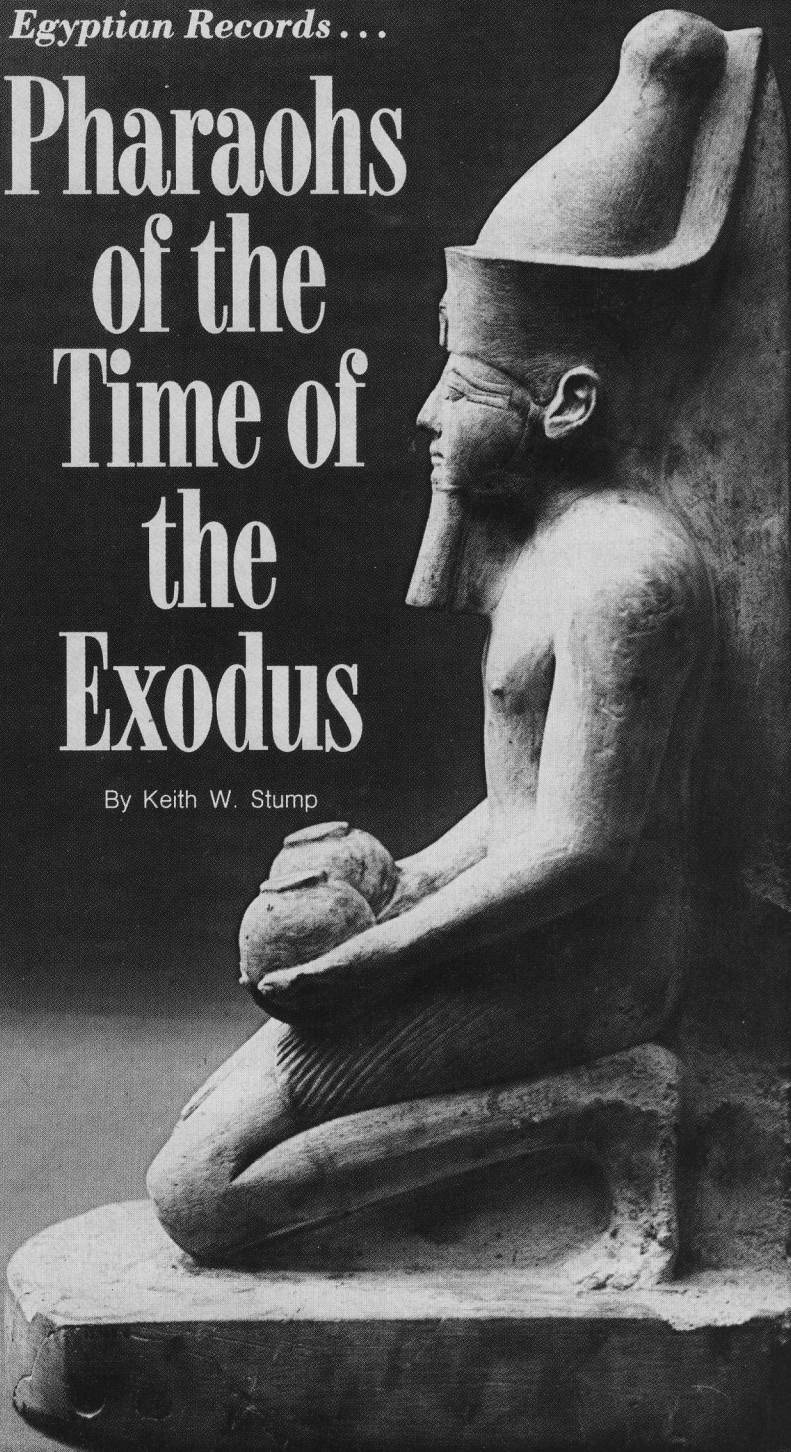
As he entered the funerary chamber, Loret found a magnificent quartzite-sandstone sarcophagus (stone coffin). The sarcophagus was all that ancient grave-robbers had left when they plundered the chamber long ago.

Inside the sarcophagus lay a mummy, festooned and garlanded. Loret quickly read the

*From Ancient
Egyptian Records . . .*

Pharaohs of the Time of the Exodus

By Keith W. Stump



Photos: Metropolitan Museum of Art



hieroglyphs to discover the identity of the mummy.

This was the tomb of Amenhotep II, a pharaoh of Egypt's Eighteenth Dynasty!

The find was significant. It was the first tomb ever opened in which a pharaoh was found where he had been laid, undisturbed by tomb robbers. And the burial chamber proved to be one of the most beautiful and impressive in the entire Valley of the Kings.

Few scholars suspected the full significance of this monumental discovery. For, unknown to Loret and his colleagues, the French archaeologist had entered the tomb of the Pharaoh of the Exodus — the very king who confronted Moses more than 33 centuries earlier!

Needless confusion

Much needless confusion exists regarding the historical setting of the biblical Exodus.

Most Bible scholars, ignoring or rejecting the explicit chronological information of I Kings 6:1, have not properly understood the time scheme of the Exodus. They have placed that great event around 1290 B.C. or somewhat later, during the reign of Ramses the Great of Egypt's Nineteenth Dynasty — a full century and a half *later* than it actually occurred! This late date must be rejected.

A careful consideration of all biblical and extra-biblical evidence reveals that the Exodus occurred in the middle of the 15th century B.C. — specifically, in the year 1443, during the reign of Amenhotep II, whose tomb Loret

excavated. *He* was the pharaoh who ruled from Thebes in Upper Egypt when the Egyptians would not let Israel go.

This date — 1443 — was 430 years after the covenant with Abraham, made in the spring of 1873 B.C. (Genesis 17:1, Exodus 12:40-41, Galatians 3:17). And it was in the 480th year before the laying of the foundation of the Temple in Solomon's fourth year (964 B.C.), as required by I Kings 6:1. An Exodus date of 1443 also harmonizes nicely with the Amarna Letters of ancient Egypt, which tell of "Habiru" (Hebrew) incursions into Canaan around 1400 B.C. — after the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.

Now notice what Egyptian records say about this remarkable king and his dynasty.

Eighteenth Dynasty

The dynasty that enslaved Israel is known in Egyptian history as Dynasty XVIII, inaugurated by Pharaoh Ahmose about 1570 B.C. Amenhotep II — a descendant of Ahmose — was the sixth pharaoh of this dynasty.

Moses (born in 1523) was brought up as a prince of this

ruling family. The "daughter of Pharaoh" (Exodus 2:5) who raised him would therefore be known in Egyptian history as Hatshepsut. She was the daughter of Pharaoh Thutmose I, a son-in-law of Ahmose.

Notice that the word *mose* — meaning "child" or "son of" — often appears as a part of royal names of this dynasty. *Ahmose*, for example, means "son of Ah" (the god of light). *Thutmose* means "son of Thoth" (the moon god).

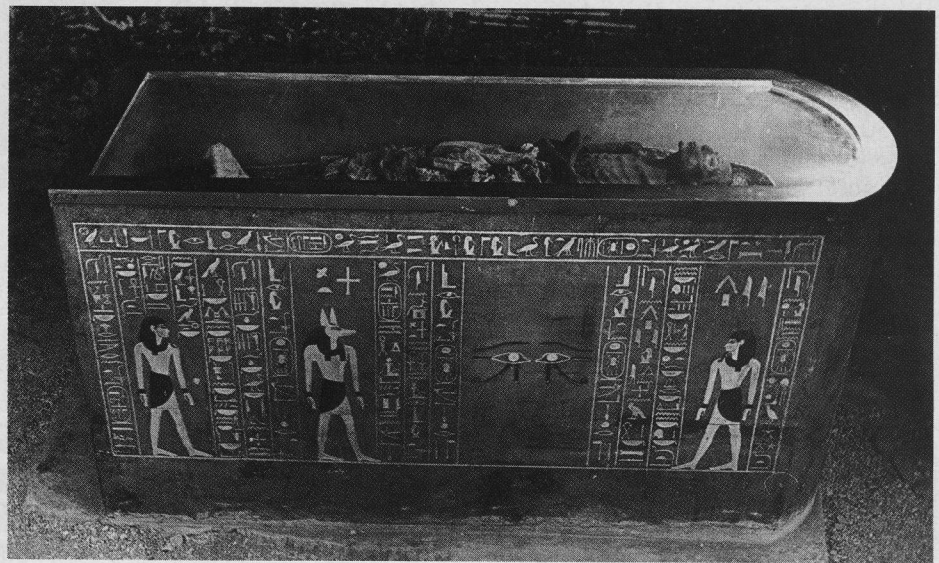
The Hebrew child drawn from the Nile by Hatshepsut was called simply *Mose* or *Moses* — for his parentage was unknown.

Amenhotep (the Greek form is *Amenophis*) was the son and successor of the great empire-builder Thutmose III, "the Napoleon of ancient Egypt." Thutmose — perhaps the greatest of the pharaohs of ancient Egypt — would therefore be the biblical "pharaoh of the oppression."

In 1483 B.C., Moses was ex-



Sarcophagus and mummy of Amenhotep II (below), discovered by Loret in the Valley of the Kings at Thebes in 1898.



Eighteenth Dynasty limestone sculpture shows Pharaoh Amenhotep II wearing the Double Crown (left). He is depicted as offering a libation (liquid sacrifice).



iled from Egypt by this Thutmose upon the death of Hatshepsut, Moses' foster mother and protector. Hatshepsut (Thutmose III's aunt) had governed as regent for Thutmose III while he was a minor. But Thutmose and his aunt had been bitter rivals. Upon the death of Hatshepsut, Thutmose III — in a fury of revenge — purged her name and image from everything she had built throughout Egypt.

It was during Thutmose' long reign that Moses lived in exile in distant Midian, tending the flocks of his father-in-law Jethro.

“The lord of glories”

In the latter part of 1453 B.C., as the long-lived Thutmose III felt his strength failing, he named his son, Amenhotep II, as his co-regent. Their reigns thus overlapped somewhat.

Upon the death of Thutmose in 1450, Amenhotep assumed the sole leadership of the country. By his side was his beautiful queen Taa. Egyptologist Sir Flinders



Sculpture of Amenhotep II (above). Oval-shaped cartouche encloses his royal name (right).

Petrie (1853-1942) estimated that Amenhotep was about 18 years of age at the time of his accession.

Now see what the ancient records reveal about this pharaoh. Amenhotep was a worthy son of the great Thutmose III. Physically, Amenhotep was a powerful man. Inscriptions reveal that no one in Egypt was his equal.

To illustrate: Amenhotep had a great bow, a bow so powerful that none of his soldiers was strong enough to use it. Only Amenhotep himself could draw it. This symbol of the pharaoh's unparalleled strength remained at his side throughout his reign, and was buried with him upon his death in 1425 B.C.

The fact of his unrivaled strength goes far in illuminating the character of this pharaoh who refused to “knuckle under” to Moses' God. Never in his life had Amenhotep been required to submit to anyone! He was accustomed to getting his own way. He was second to none. A man of great pride and given to boasting, he is referred to in ancient inscriptions as “the lord of glories.”

Amenhotep's upbringing was carefully planned by his warrior father. Great emphasis was placed on athletic development and skills of warfare. Amenhotep was an apt pupil.

Supremely confident in his strength and skills as a warrior, the newly crowned Amenhotep quickly set out to establish his renown. He personally led his forces in battle. Two campaigns to quell uprisings in Palestine occurred early in his reign. During the first campaign, the proud Amenhotep displayed his archery

skills before the people of Kadesh on the Orontes, a key north Syrian city.

These and other of Amenhotep's personal exploits are chronicled in the Temple of Amon at Karnak. We are informed that Amenhotep “was as a terrible lion” against his enemies. Scenes of him slaying his foes are found on numerous monuments. A scarab inscription calls him “the good god, lion over Egypt, lord of might, giving life like the sun.”

Hard heart

God, of course, knew of this great pride and stubbornness of Amenhotep. In Midian, God warned Moses, “I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go” (Exodus 3:19). It would be necessary for God to reveal Himself and His power and authority to this unresilient pharaoh in a series of devastating plagues.

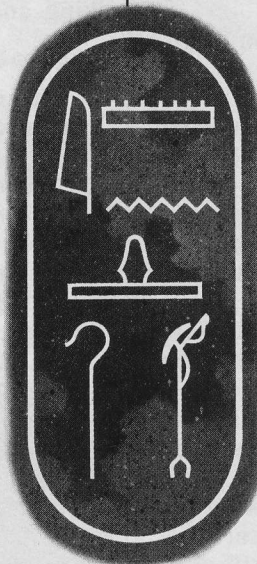
Time and again, Amenhotep grudgingly conceded to Moses'

demands — but only temporarily. His pride and stubbornness would quickly reassert themselves and he would change his mind — “harden his heart,” as the Bible says.

The carnal mind is indeed “enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be” (Romans 8:7). And Pharaoh Amenhotep was carnal! From his earliest youth, his pride and glorying were in the flesh — in his physical prowess, in his

skills of warfare.

Stubborn Amenhotep refused to humble himself. Only the death of his firstborn son got his full attention. With his once proud and powerful nation shattered, Pharaoh at last ordered the





Israelites out. But even then, he afterward changed his mind and pursued them to the Red Sea.

As mentioned earlier, the Exodus occurred in 1443, 40 years after Moses' exile in 1483 (Acts 7:30). This was at the beginning of Amenhotep's 10th year (as counted from his appointment as co-ruler in 1453).

The destruction of Amenhotep's armies in the sea at that time is indirectly reflected in the Egyptian records. Not surprisingly, there are no further records of foreign wars following the time of the Exodus. There is little information of any kind about Amenhotep's later years.

"Of the remainder of his reign we know nothing," Petrie observes. Egypt is silent about its great defeat by a "foreign god." The Egyptians obviously did not wish to record their misfortunes.

More corroboration

The events of that momentous year are well-known from the biblical record, and need not be recounted in detail here. But a few additional historical notes will prove of interest.

Egyptian history reveals that Amenhotep II was not himself a firstborn. Likewise, Amenhotep's son and successor — known to history as Thutmose IV — was not Amenhotep's firstborn. Thutmose IV was not at first designated to be his father's successor.

Historians do not know why Thutmose IV — a second-born son — succeeded to the throne instead of his elder brother. The Bible reveals the answer. Amenhotep's firstborn son died in the 10th and final plague on Egypt — the death of the Egyptian

firstborn on the night of the Passover (Exodus 12:29-30).

Also of interest from a biblical standpoint is a wall-painting dating from early in Amenhotep's reign, found in the tomb of the high-ranking official Rekh-mi-Re in the Tombs of the Nobles at Thebes. The remarkable painting shows captive foreign laborers — including bearded Semites — making mud bricks (compare Exodus 5).

Pharaoh's future

Contrary to the common notion about the Pharaoh of the Exodus, Amenhotep II did not drown in the Red Sea with his army. Read carefully Exodus 14:23-31. Ancient records reveal that Amenhotep II's reign

lasted no less than into his 26th year. (This has been corroborated by a wine jar docket dated in his 26th year that was discovered in Egypt near the beginning of this century.) Sixteen of those 26 years followed the Exodus.

Upon Amenhotep's death in 1425, he was interred like his ancestors in the Valley of the Kings. There he lay undisturbed until Loret's discovery in 1898.

A controversy then arose as to whether Amenhotep's mummy should be left on site or whether it should be removed to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. It was finally allowed to remain *in situ*, but with an armed guard to protect it.

But three years later, in November, 1901, when the guards' backs were turned, the tomb was rifled and the mummy was damaged by looters seeking overlooked treasures in the folds of the cloth wrappings. Amenhotep's body — much the worse for

wear — was then quickly removed to Cairo, where it rests to this day.

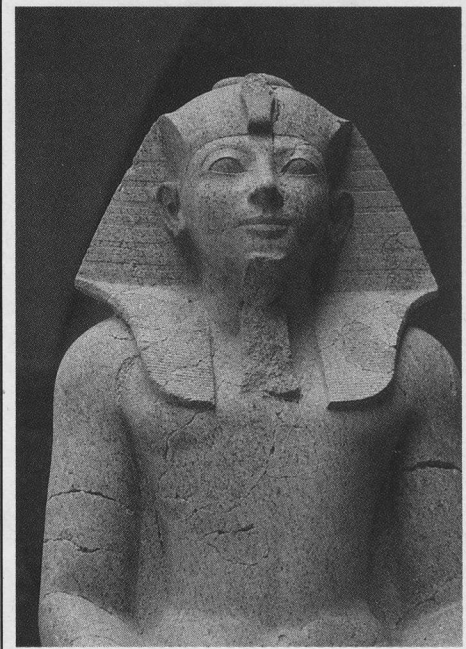
His limbs, now thin and withered, were in life robust and muscular. One day, just over a millennium from now, those limbs will regain their former vigor and Amenhotep will again walk the earth. The Word of God will be opened to his understanding (Revelation 20:12).

He will be shown the error of his ways and offered the gift of God's holy spirit — the power to overcome his self-will and obstinacy — by a merciful God who holds no grudge against him for his past rebellions!

Yes, one day Amenhotep and Moses will have the opportunity to again stand face to face — as friends and brothers in the Family of God. □



Queen Hatshepsut (below), shown wearing a false ceremonial beard as was customary on state occasions. Her cartouche is pictured at left.





Ken Tunell

The Untold Story of the Exodus

By George M. Kackos

The Israelites are finally free. After escaping the bondage of slavery, multiple thousands begin a jubilant march out of Egypt. After a few exhausting days of travel they reach an area near the Red Sea, free from the harsh Pharaoh.

But then the Pharaoh decides to pursue them with his mighty army. On the sixth day the Egyptians overtake the Israelites. But to the army's dismay, a cloud supernaturally separates them from the Israelites.

That night, Moses steps to the shore of the sea, stretches his hand over it, and a strong wind miraculously begins to blow. By morning, walls of water form and dry land

appears. The Israelites march across the dry pathway to safety.

But the Egyptians are less fortunate when they try to follow. Their chariot wheels fall off and the walls of water crash down, drowning the men and their horses. In safety on the opposite shore, the Israelites rejoice over their deliverance.

You've probably heard of these events since childhood. But what does this story have to do with *your* life?

Symbolic events

Let's consider the meaning of these events that took place more than 3,000 years ago as they apply to us today.

First, Israel leaving Egypt is symbolic of Christians coming out of sin. Both Egypt and leavened bread (the bread they were not to eat during the Exodus) are types of sin (I Corinthians 5:7-8, Hebrews 11:24-27).

Pharaoh represents Satan and the slavery of sin (Romans 6:16-18).

In contrast, Moses foreshadows and symbolizes Jesus Christ, our Deliverer from sin (Acts 3:20-22). The Israelites picture true Christians, and the promised land that the Israelites strove for symbolizes God's Kingdom (Hebrews 4:8-9).

Lessons for us

But more than just understanding what these events picture, what are some of the lessons we should learn from that Last Day of Unleavened Bread in 1443 B.C.?

• *Satan doesn't want us to escape from sin.* Just as those newly freed Israelites were pursued by Pharaoh, so Satan pursues newly baptized Christians (as well as older Christians). He is angry that we are escaping sin and wants us back under his evil dominance (I Peter 5:8-9).

• *We may want to return to sin.* Does this surprise you? When Pharaoh appeared with his army, what did the Israelites want to do? Return to Egypt, where their surroundings were familiar and less threatening (Exodus 14:10-12).

The same reaction can happen to us. Under temptation, we can easily want to sin because we are far more accustomed to leaning toward our own carnal, human ways than disciplining ourselves to be righteous.

• *God can deliver us from sin.* By themselves, the Israelites had no way of escape from Pharaoh and his army. They were trapped by the

mountains and the Red Sea. But God made a way of escape that led to the promised land.

Likewise, we, by ourselves, are unable to overcome sin (Romans 8:7). But with the help of God we can overcome. He can give us strength of mind and character to resist evil (I Corinthians 10:13).

For the Israelites, it was a watery grave that destroyed their adversary. For us, it is also a watery grave (baptism) that helps us leave behind our sinful way of life.

More importantly, God gives us the power of His holy spirit to overcome temptation (Romans 6:4, 6, Acts 2:38). However, this overcoming doesn't happen automatically. We must diligently call upon God — then put forth the effort to do the right thing.

• *Our deliverance from sin brings happiness.* The pursuing Egyptians were dead. The Israelites were finally free. Read Exodus 15 to capture their feelings of immense joy and jubilation.

For us, deliverance from sin brings much happiness, too. No longer must we eat the bitter fruit of sin, suffer the pangs of guilt or deny ourselves the joy of righteousness. Our life is much different — much better! And the end result is our promised land — eternal life!

"But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life" (Romans 6:22). No longer are we slaves to sin, but we are now servants to the great God who will guide us.

So think about it! Those momentous events have a lot to do with you and God's plan of salvation. Allow God to free you from sin so you can enjoy the fruits of righteousness — now and forever! □

FOR MORE INFORMATION . . .

The Worldwide Church of God offers, free, these fascinating booklets concerning God's true festivals:

• *Pagan Holidays or God's Holy Days — Which?*

• *The Crucifixion Was Not on Friday*

• *The Resurrection Was Not on Sunday*

• *The Plain Truth About Easter*

For your copies, write to the *Good News* address nearest you. You will find our addresses on the inside front cover of this magazine.

OBSOLETE

What Are the "SHIPS OF TARSHISH"?

TODAY the world's biggest ship-building nation — and the nation that builds the world's biggest ships — is Japan. A generation ago Britain had that distinction.

Great Britain became the world's dominant power when she took command of the seas away from the Spanish fleets in the sixteenth century.

These three peoples — the Japanese, Spanish and English — significantly, play an important role in Bible history and in Bible prophecies about Tarshish and the "ships of Tarshish."

Tarshish, son of Javan (Gen. 10:4), was the ancestor of two major peoples intensely interested in sea trade. Tarshish (it's also spelled "Tharshish") was of mixed Oriental and White ancestry.

The three primary races in the pre-Flood world passed through the Flood as a result of Japheth's and Ham's intermarriages. Japheth and Ham were White, but their wives were not. Japheth was the patriarchal ancestor of all Orientals and of many East and South European Whites.

The children of Tarshish — like other sons and grandsons of Japheth — divided. That branch of the family inheriting Oriental traits migrated into East Asia. The other branch of his family, intermarrying with some of the children of Shem, settled first in Asia Minor near the city of Tarsus (where, centuries later, Paul was born). From Tarsus this branch of the family migrated through the Mediterranean into Spain and founded the great Spanish emporium of Tartessus. When Jonah fled from the Lord, he left for Tarshish on a ship out of Joppa, Israel's port on the Mediterranean (Jonah 1:3).

Ships making the distant runs to the lands of Tarshish came to be known in history as the "ships of Tarshish." The vessels that king Jehoshaphat built were

called "ships of Tharshish" (I Kings 22:48). Solomon's navy was known as the "navy of Tharshish" (I Kings 10:22). Israel's naval power in Solomon's day was one of the prime reasons for her national greatness. Centuries later the English-speaking nations — the modern-day descendants of the ancient so-called Lost Ten Tribes of the House of Israel — reacquired national greatness through sea power.

Though the United States is still a great military sea power — Britain has already lost her sea power and national greatness — a new nation in the Orient is rising to greatness through commercial sea power. That nation is Japan.

Now look at Bible history once again. Israel anciently had another seaport, Ezion-gaber, on the Red Sea. This port served shipping headed for the Eastern or Oriental branch of the family of Tarshish, not the Western or Spanish branch of the family. Solomon's Eastern fleet "went to Tarshish" (II Chronicles 9:21) "every three years" to bring back "gold and silver" and other commodities. Jehoshaphat's fleet at Ezion-gaber was built "to go to Tarshish" (II Chronicles 20:36).

Where is *this* gold- and silver-producing Eastern Tarshish?

When the Spaniards — the Western or White branch of the family of Tarshish — first encountered the Japanese, they referred to them as "the Spaniards of Asia" — by which they meant the Tarshish of Asia! (San Agustin's Letter on the Filipinos, p. 5, quoted in *The Philippine Islands* 1493-1898, Vol. XL, p. 192.) The Spanish writer Colin, in his *Native Races and Their Customs*, lists Tarshish among the ancestors of the South and East Asians: "... the principal settler of these archipelagoes was Tharsis, son of Javan, together with his brothers, as were Ophir and Hevilath of India" (*The Philippine Islands*, Vol. XL, p.

38). The name Javan is still preserved by the Javanese of Indonesia.

Japan was known in the Middle Ages as fabulous "Cipango," a land of gold and silver and precious stones. It was anciently called "Chryse" — the land of gold. (See the map in the *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* of Abraham Ortelius, 1570.) As recently as two hundred years ago English historians described Japan thus: "But the greatest riches of this empire, and in which it exceeds most others in the east, consist in the great quantity, variety, and fineness, of their metals and minerals. . . . The mines of gold, as well as golden sand, are to be found in many of their provinces. Silver mines are not in such great number; but some of them . . . are very rich" (*The Modern Part of an Universal History*, 1759, Vol. IX, pp. 7-9).

Today Japan is again one of the great world powers. More goods in world trade are carried today in Japanese-built ships than in any other. The largest commercial ships afloat are Japanese-built. Is it any wonder that Bible prophecy takes note of the leading position of Japanese traders today? In speaking of trade with modern twentieth-century Europe, of which the ancient city of Tyre was a prophetic type, Ezekiel wrote: "Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs" (Ezek. 27:12). The merchants of Tarshish are also mentioned in Ezekiel 38:13 in connection with a final alliance of Asian nations that will come against Palestine shortly after the return of Jesus Christ. God knew long ago the part which the children of Tarshish would play in world affairs. That is why He will have to break the "ships of Tarshish with an east wind" (Psalm 48:7) in order to bring the Japanese to their knees *and to repentance*. □

How Long Were the "Days" of Creation?

Were the days of creation week "ages"? People insist that God could not set the world in order and create life forms in six literal days. Why?

WHY HAS doubt about creation entered Christian minds today? Why do men in this "enlightened age" reject the unmistakable meaning of the Word of God?

For over 3000 years men of God have believed the literal meaning of the account of creation recorded in Genesis 1 and 2. To them the Scripture said that in six 24-hour days God created the heavens and the earth and rested the seventh day.

For 3000 years righteous men have dared to take God's inspired record at face value.

No record is found of "ages" rather than days of creation in the ancient history of the Hebrews or of early Christians.

Why reject the truth of literal days of creation?

What proof is there that God created the present order of things on this earth in six literal days? What difference does it make whether one believes in "ages" of creation or literal days of creation? Let's question the record and set aside doubts once and for all time.

What the Scriptural Record Really Says

Distorted interpretations of the creation record have resulted mainly from two causes: a desire to read a false meaning into the Word of God, and a pitiful ignorance of the account itself.

A brief review of the account of creation is certainly in order here. Open your Bible and study the account thoroughly as you read further in this article and after reading it.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" — this tells about the original creation. The second verse of Genesis 1 refers to a destruc-

tion which came upon the earth through sin and rebellion of Satan and the angels who followed him. (Request our free booklet, *Did God Create a Devil?* for details.)

Darkness was upon the face of the deep. The renewing of our earth to a state of order followed in six days.

At dawn the first day, light penetrated the dense clouds. The clouds rose the second day and an expanse or heaven was formed, the one in which the birds fly. Thus the waters on the earth ("waters under") were separated from the clouds ("waters above"). The ocean receded, dry land appeared and grass and herbs were planted the third day. As the fourth day progressed the sun became visible through the thinning clouds. Toward evening the moon and stars appeared.

Notice how agreeable with the laws of science this is. Birds and sea life were created the fifth day, the land animals with Adam and Eve the sixth, and a day of rest and worship for the man the seventh. Thus in one week order was restored to the earth.

But was it a literal week? Carefully notice that no close is mentioned to the seventh day. Check this point in Genesis 2:1-3. All the other days were "an evening and a morning," but this expression does not follow the seventh day. Why?

Now if, as some teach, the seventh day hasn't ended yet, it would already be almost 6000 years long. And if it were that long couldn't the first six days be similar periods?

The Seventh Day Did End!

Here's evidence from God's Word that the seventh day did end!

Genesis 2:2. "He [God] rested on

the seventh day from all his work." Not "is resting" from all His work!

Exodus 20:11. "The Lord . . . rested the seventh day."

Again Genesis 2:3. "In it [the seventh day] he *had rested*." He blessed the sabbath after He had rested on it.

Hebrews 4:4. "God did rest the seventh day from all his works." Not "is resting"!

The seventh day of creation is past, for on it God rested. No scripture exists saying He is resting on a continuing seventh day! The seventh day of creation week did end.

Double proof of this fact is found in the scriptures telling of the work God has done since that day of rest. "My father WORKETH hitherto [even now], and I work" (John 5:17).

Jeremiah 50:25. "This is the *work* of the Lord God of hosts in the land of the Chaldeans."

Exodus 32:16. "The tables were the *work* of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables."

Joshua 24:31. "Joshua, and . . . the elders . . . which had known all the *works* of the Lord, that he had done for Israel."

God has worked since that seventh day. Both the Father and the One who became Jesus Christ by flesh birth have worked since that first Sabbath day ended!

Still See Ages

Yet in the face of God's Word, men will believe "days" to be "ages" and that God is now resting and being refreshed. Thus one sect teaches, "Measured by the length of the 'seventh day,' on which God desists from work and is refreshed, each of those days was 7000 years long."

Reread the preceding scriptures: The 24-hour day upon which God rested had passed and has been followed by nearly 6000 years in which God has worked. Then compare the above quote with Exodus 31:17, "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he *rested* and *was* refreshed." Not *is* (being) refreshed!

Here is the truth. It was on a literal seventh day that God rested. It was a literal seventh day of the week that God hallowed for the human race. The observance of the seventh day and the origin of the week go back to Adam, not Moses.

Following that rest, God blessed the seventh day and set it apart for holy use. The first week, creation week, had ended.

The Witness of Nature

Many witnesses have been given from the Word of God that these creation days were literal days and there is yet more proof. God leaves no room for doubt in the minds of those who diligently study His Word.

Consider the plants which were created on the third day. The sun did not appear until the next day. If these "days" were each 7000 years long then these plants would have had to survive 7000 years without sunshine. Those who believe the days to have been ages which were millions of years long are faced with an even greater absurdity.

Or consider this, plants were made the third day, insects on the sixth. How did certain specialized plants continue to exist through ages without their insect partners? The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* states that two groups of insects which include bees, wasps, butterflies and moths could not have existed without the honey-or nectar-bearing plants. Nor could these plants have existed without the insects. Without insects to pollinize them they could not bear seed.

The types of plants which require insects for pollinization are those with brightly colored flowers, having an odor to attract insects and containing nectar to provide them with food. They include such common plants as the maple tree, the strawberry, the blackberry, the honeysuckle, and the

poppy. The Bible states that these plants were made on the third day and that the insects were not made until three days later. Those who claim creation days were each 7000 years long are faced with the conclusion that these original plants must have had to live thousands of years before they could produce seed — an utter impossibility!

Here is the plain simple statement of scripture: "In six days God made heaven and earth." His Word is dependable. Ages will not mix with the Scripture any more than iron will mix with clay.

What Is the Meaning of "Day"?

The word "day" in the Bible is often used to represent an indefinite period of time. In fact the Hebrew word, *Yom*, translated "day" is occasionally translated "time." But in every case where the numerals first, second, third, etc. occur, the word *day* is obviously and clearly referring to a natural 24-hour day as we know it.

The Scripture speaks of the day of vengeance, the day of adversity, the day of temptation, just as we do today, meaning a time or season. Yet when it speaks of the fourteenth day of the month (Lev. 23), the seven days of Unleavened Bread or the fifty days until Pentecost, the word "day" means a 24-hour period.

Symbolically a day may represent a "year" (Ezek. 4:6), or a "thousand years" (II Peter 3:8), but symbolic interpretations may not be applied in all cases. The three days Christ was in the grave were not 3 years or 3000 years. Neither would any symbolic interpretation fit in the first chapters of Genesis where we have proven from nature that they must have been natural days of twenty-four hours.

Another Bible meaning of the word "day" as a 12-hour period is also in common usage today. When it speaks of the three days and three nights Jonah was in the great fish's belly or the three days and three nights Christ was in His grave, the word "day" refers to the daylight part of the 24-hour period. This "day" is by Christ's own definition 12 hours. "Are there not 12 hours in the day?" (John 11:9.)

The scripture used by many as an excuse to believe the days of creation were ages really suggests no such meaning. It is Genesis 2:4 which refers to the time of creation, "In the *day* that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant . . . and every herb." Lacking a numeral before it, it can refer to a longer period of time than 24 hours and it does! This "day" refers to the first six days of creation week.

It takes a great deal of imagination to use this as a proof that a day means an age or even 7000 years.

The Obvious Meaning

Can the word *day* mean 24 hours in one part of a sentence and an age in another part? It would have to if one were to believe in "ages" of creation! Exodus 20:9-11: "Six *days* shalt thou labour and do all thy work: but the seventh *day* is the sabbath of the Lord thy God . . . for in six *days* the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh *day*: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it."

The word *day* occurs five times in this one sentence. Can you believe that in the third and fourth occurrences it means an age while in the other three it means a day? Had God meant an age, wouldn't He have used the Hebrew word *dor* to mean age as in Job 8:8, "Enquire, I pray of thee, of the former age"?

In each of these five occurrences in Exodus 20, God is obviously speaking of the same unit of time, a 24-hour day. And as the word "day" means a twenty-four hour period here it has to mean the same in Genesis.

If God had created light, day and night, and then waited 1000 years (or 7000 years) to form the heavens, He would have been resting before the seventh day arrived.

If He formed the heavens on a second day and then waited 1000 years to form the seas and the land, He would have been resting again before the seventh day arrived. Note the scripture again: "For *in six days* the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and *was* refreshed." After

six days of continual labor — six days spent in bringing our earth to a state of order — God rested. He *was* refreshed on the seventh day. If that seventh day were still continuing, the scripture would read that He is now “being refreshed.”

As a final proof that the days of creation were literal days, reread Genesis 1:3-5, 14-19 with special attention on the words *evening* and *morning, night*

and *day, darkness* and *light*. All have continued since creation. We are not confused as to what they are.

Note that the sun was appointed “to divide the light from the darkness” — to divide day from night. Does sun-down divide anything but literal days?

No place in the Scripture does God imply that He took anything but a natural week of ordinary days to bring life and order to the earth.

Evenings and mornings have continued, the week has continued, the Sabbath set apart for rest at creation has continued, all pointing back to that first creation week. The truth is plain and without scriptural contradiction. There is no room to believe in ages, when you accept the Scriptures as they are in the light of the Word of God and in accordance with nature, the handiwork of God. □