

## Evidence for the Exodus

(March 7, 2020)

Frank: How many times have you heard, There is no evidence for the Exodus, particularly no evidence for the exodus in Egypt. That statement, ladies and gentlemen, appears to be demonstrably false. And in fact, I have two guests today that will show you why that statement is false. In fact, they're going to present to you 10 findings, if we can get through all them, here on this program. Most of the findings are from Egypt, that the exodus actually did occur. In fact, the evidence points in that direction quite strongly. And you'll see why here in just a minute.

Frank: My guest is somebody we've had on the program quite a bit. You know, Dr. Stephen Meyer, who has his PhD from Cambridge University. He is one of the leaders of the Intelligent Design movement. But what many people don't know about Steve is that he's also a student of Christian apologetics and biblical archaeology. And he met a young scholar a number of years ago, by the name of Titus Kennedy, who is now a doctor. Has his PhD from the University of South Africa in archaeology? And we're going to introduce Titus here in a minute. But I want to start with Steve. Steve, tell us how you met Dr. Kennedy and how this interest in the exodus began.

Dr. Meyer: Well, I actually met him on a basketball court when I was a young 40 something faculty member and he was, I think, a senior in high school. And he was dunking over all the old guys on the court. And I was sort of impressed with his skills and we got talking afterwards. And I asked him where he went to high school and he told me. And I asked him where he wanted to go to college, and what he wanted to do. He said he wanted to major in Biblical Archaeology. At the time, I was teaching a course at Whitworth University, where I was a professor, called Reasons for Faith. And the course was built around three questions. Does God exist?, Is the Bible reliable?, and Who is Jesus Christ? And in the second section of that course, I always address the rather extraordinary evidence that has been compiling over the last couple decades, and even before, for the historical reliability of the biblical text from Abraham to Jesus.

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Dr. Meyer: I'd had the opportunity, when I was in grad school, to make an extended trip to Israel and discovered that there was fascinating evidence for the reliability of the Bible. Just look at, for example, the extraordinary account of Christ's trial. It takes up about half the gospel of John and a third or more of the synoptics. And all of the major figures in that trial, Jesus, Pilot, Peter, Herod, and Caiaphas, whose burial crypt was discovered in the early 1990s, have been attested by archaeological inscriptions in the last 50 years. And so, when I went to Israel, I was just kind of blown away by the amount of evidence that had been unearthed, confirming both the Old and New Testament historical narratives. And so, I started teaching some of that stuff, because I do think that were very curious, and probing, and asking tough questions about whether the Bible was true. And so, I ran into Titus and discovered he had this same passion and interest and wanted to go study it formally. So, we kept in touch over the years. Later, I did a series for Tyndale Publishers, Focus on the Family, and Coldwater Media called, True You.

Frank: That's an excellent series.

Dr. Meyer: Well, thank you.

Frank: That's an excellent series, Steve.

Dr. Meyer: I'll let you plug it more. That's great. Thanks. But yeah, the first part of it was the question, Does God Exist? Ten lectures. Second was ten lectures on, The Historical Reliability of the Bible. And by that time, Titus had completed his master's in Ancient Near Eastern Studies from University of Toronto. And so, I hired him to do a fact check on everything I'd been teaching. And we upgraded the material in preparation for filming, and tossed out anything that we couldn't absolutely provenance, and added some new things that Titus knew about that had been discovered that provided additional evidence for the reliability of the Bible. So, he was kind of the, behind the scenes genius, that helped us shape that second series. And then he went to do his PhD in Biblical Archaeology from University of South Africa. He specifically was focused on the evidence for the biblical conquest under Joshua, which, of course, is the complement to the case for the exodus, because the exodus has two parts. It's the evidence for the Israelites in Egypt, prior to the biblical date for the exodus event, but then it's also the evidence for the Israelite entrance into Canaan, after the time period that the Bible specifies that they were in wandering. And it turns out there's very solid evidence for both of those

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aspects of the Exodus. The presence of Israel as slaves in Egypt, and then later their entrance into Canaan.

Frank: Well, that's actually the first finding. We have ten findings we want to try and get through on this program. I don't know if we'll get through them all. But the first finding is that the Hebrew slaves were in Egypt about 1700 BC. And Titus, you have verified some of this through something known as, The Brooklyn Papyrus. Can you explain what that is? And what that says?

Dr. Kennedy: Yeah, so Papyrus Brooklyn was found somewhere in southern Egypt, probably around Thebes, which is one of the ancient capitals. And it was just a list of slave names. So, in the grand scope of things, not that interesting of a document. But it had on here 37 names that were Semitic, so that's from the language group to which Hebrews belongs. And of those Semitic names, at least nine are biblical Hebrew names. Most that we find in the Bible. One that is not a biblical name, but it's definitely an ancient Hebrew name. So, that attests that there were actually people with Hebrew names living in Egypt before the Exodus. And in this case, they were employed as household servants, or used as household servants. So, that's one of the major objections,` is that there's no evidence that Israelites or Hebrews were even in Egypt before the time of the Exodus. But we really can't ask for better evidence than an Egyptian document that is giving us all these names of Semites that are Hebrew names.

Frank: And are there other pieces of evidence that would corroborate the fact that there may have been slaves in that area? Or Canaanite people in that area at that time?

Dr. Kennedy: Oh, yeah, definitely. So, there's a huge amount of evidence for people who had come over from Canaan into Egypt, and lived in that Nile Delta area, what the Bible refers to as Goshen, or the land of Ramses. So, Tell el-Dab'a is a site that's been excavated for decades now. And it was one of the major cities of Egypt, called Avaris, and then Pi-Ramesses later on, the city of Ramses the Bible refers to. And in this city, the archaeologists there found an immense amount of evidence showing that people from Canaan lived there. People, just like the Israelites and those who had come from the same region that they did, according to the pottery that they found there, the types of weapons and tools, the burials, temple architecture for the Canaanites that were polytheists, sheep had even been brought over, a long haired type of

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sheep that came from Canaan. And even a couple of statues were found, of officials, that were sort of like Joseph's situation. They were not Egyptians. They were from the Canaan region. They had moved over and then they had risen up through the ranks.

Frank: And I think you had also mentioned - I saw a presentation you did online, which was fascinating on all this - is there any tomb artwork? I thought you mentioned that, regarding Semitic slaves making bricks.

Dr. Kennedy: Yes. Yeah. It's called the Tomb of Rekhmire. He was a Vizier under Pharaoh Thutmose III, which was just before the time of the Exodus. And on that tomb, we have all these wall paintings. And that artwork shows Semitic slaves making mud bricks, and then building buildings with those. So, exactly the type of activity that we see in Exodus.

Frank: And why haven't we heard this before, ladies and gentlemen? How many times do you hear people say, There's no evidence for the exodus? Well, we're going through ten findings with Dr. Stephen Meyer and Dr. Titus Kennedy. They verified all this and we're going to talk about the other nine when we come back. Don't go away. You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek on the American Family Radio Network. We're back in two minutes.

Ad: Ladies and gentlemen, can you help me with something? Can you help me get this podcast before more people? Not only tell your friends about it but go up to iTunes and put a five-star review on the, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist podcast. If you do that, it will help us move the podcast up the charts so more people will hear it. Thank you so much for partnering with me on this.

Frank: Is there evidence for the exodus in Egypt? Ladies and gentlemen, you've probably heard there isn't but actually there is. Dr. Stephen Meyer, Dr. Titus Kennedy are here to walk us through ten findings, most of them from Egypt. And before we get into more specifics, Steve, I want to come back to you. Frame this up for us. Give us the view from 30,000 feet here.

Dr. Meyer: Yeah, absolutely. In fact, that's a good vantage point to see what really happened. You imagine the map, you've got Egypt on the southern eastern end of the Mediterranean, and

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then along the coastline you go up to Canaan, which is on the very eastern edge of the Mediterranean. And so, the Israelite slaves, according to the Bible, were in the region of Goshen there, the Nile Delta, that South Eastern end of the Med. And somehow, they escaped and entered into Canaan.

Dr. Meyer: And what Titus and I developed when I taught this lecture series called, True You, we had a separate lecture on the Exodus, and one on the conquest. And I call it our, A to D Argument. We know that the Israelites were in Egypt at Point A, Time One. Time One is before 1446, the biblical date for the exodus. You can calculate from the biblical text in a couple of different ways. And Titus was just talking about the evidence for the presence of Israelites played in Egypt prior to that time. So, we know we can put a dot on the map, and in fact, a bunch of x's on the map, in Egypt at that time period. But then we have extensive evidence of the entrance of Israelites into Canaan at Point B and Time Two. Point B is Canaan, on that very western edge of the Mediterranean. And then we've got extensive evidence of their entrance thereafter, about 1400-1410 BC. So, we know they were in Egypt as slaves. We know that got into Canaan as conquering people, and were no longer slaves, therefore, there had to be an exodus. It's a simple deduction from those two key classes of evidence.

Dr. Meyer: Titus will, of course, share some more about the evidence for their entrance into Canaan. And interestingly, because of a fascinating expedition he took into northern Sudan, which was very southern Egypt in biblical times, he's also verified an extraordinary inscription describing the movement of the Israelites through Moab and Edom during the wandering periods. So, we know they were in Egypt at Time One, Point A, they got to Canaan at Time Two, Point B. And we can even track them along the way with extra biblical archaeological findings. So, it's kind of a fascinating case, and it's very simple. They got from A to B at the right time.

Frank: In fact, we're gonna look at that expedition that Titus took into Sudan here a little bit later. That's one of one of the findings that he has found but let me just go to finding number two. Finding number one is, we know they were in Egypt prior to 1446 BC. Finding number two, you may have mentioned already, Titus, Pharaoh's palace found on the Nile. What else was found there?

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Dr. Kennedy: They found these large storage silos when they were excavating Avaris, or the city of Ramses And that seems to fit exactly with what we read about Exodus one, saying that the Israelites were forced to build these large storage facilities for Pharaoh, at Ramses, and Pithom, and then the Septuagint adds Heliopolis. And it's right at the time before the Exodus. So, it seems to be corroborating that construction project.

Frank: And Steve you had mentioned, which is finding number three on our list here, that the Old Testament dates the exodus to 1446 BC. How so?

Dr. Meyer: Well, there is a calculation you can make, and First Kings tells us that the exodus occurred a certain number of years before the time of Solomon. And so, you can just simply back calculate, and there's a couple of other methods as well. So, what scholars have typically done is they've just assumed that if the exodus happened, it happened much later. And there's a complicated story behind this, but there was a misstating of Jericho by an archaeologist in the 1950s named Kathleen Kenyon, and a kind of scholarly consensus built up around that. And so, the consensus has been, either that the exodus didn't occur, or if it did occur, it happened around 1200 BC. And scholars have looked for evidence. Archaeologists have looked for evidence of the Exodus in that time period. They don't find any, but the biblically derived dates actually put the exodus much earlier. So, if you're going to test the reliability of the Bible, and you really need to test it against its own account, not against what you presume it meant based on scholarly consensus that developed for reasons that had to do mainly with skepticism about the Bible.

Frank: Yeah, friends, if you're keeping score at home, as Steve mentioned, First Kings 6:1 will help you. You can also look at Judges 11:26. And also, First Chronicle 6 shows there's 19 generations from the time of Moses to Solomon. All those will put the Exodus in the 1400s BC, not the 1200s BC. So, if scholars are saying there's no evidence for the Exodus, one reason might be, they're looking at the wrong time period. They're about 200 years off.

Dr. Meyer: Looking at the wrong time. Looking in the wrong place. I forget the exact numbers right offhand, but I think it's 480 years from 976 BC. You back calculate and you get a very precise date. And it's before that time that we should be looking for an Israelite presence in Egypt. If you look around 1200, they would have already been gone.

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Frank: Okay. Right. Let's go to finding number four, Titus, because you've established, and I guess other scholars too, that Amenhotep the Second was the Pharaoh in 1446. Tell us a little bit about him.

Dr. Kennedy: He was the son of this very famous and powerful Pharaoh named Thutmose the Third. And he rose to power about 1450 BC. And then the exodus, we have that biblical date in 1446. So, just looking at chronology would place him in there. But there are also a number of pieces of circumstantial evidence that show us that Amenhotep the Second fits, is the exodus Pharaoh II. First of all, if you just look at his character, he seems really bullheaded and arrogant in the exodus narrative, and that's exactly what we get from reading his own texts about himself. He made outlandish claims. And that's typically thought of by scholars as, he's just trying to show his deity, or his association with the gods and that He is such a great Pharaoh and everyone should revere him and worship Him and follow Him, but they don't expect all those things actually happened. We also see that during his reign, there was a massive change in the military power of Egypt. It sort of disappears. The previous Pharaoh had led at least 17 major military campaigns, and then Amenhotep the Second, he leads one at the beginning of his reign. And then after the Exodus, he leads this slave raid, and that's it. For about the next 100 years there's almost nothing in terms of large scale military conquest. So, something seems to have occurred.

Dr. Kennedy: A couple other brief things. We also see his palace at Avaris on the Nile Delta, that that was abandoned during his reign. And then we see his son, his firstborn son, kind of disappears from the historical record. And the next son in line is the one who becomes the Pharaoh. But he has this special steely, with an appeal to the gods, to show that he was actually the one selected by the gods to be the Pharaoh. So, seems to be something going on there that could be connected to the death of the firstborn.

Dr. Meyer: Yeah, the slave raid [unintelligible] is interesting, too, because Amenhotep the Second is clearly looking to replenish his slave population, at just the time the Bible says he lost a big chunk of it with the Exodus. So, there's a whole bunch of puzzle pieces that fit together to support this guy as the Pharaoh of the Exodus.

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Frank: Now, Titus, I heard you say that, scholars believe that his slave raids were exaggerated. That he said he went into Canaan and he somehow took a whole bunch of slaves, 100,000 slaves, back to Egypt or something. And most think that's exaggerated to save face. Why would he do that?

Dr. Kennedy: Yes. Well, one reason is, it just fits his character, that he's trying to show himself as larger than life and better than all Pharaohs, which suggests that he was compensating for something. Some kind of failure, some kind of turmoil during his reign, where he felt that he needed to push propaganda about himself so hard, so that he could retain power, or look good in the eyes of the people and the gods. But when he makes this claim of 100,000 slaves that he brings back from Canaan, if we compare that to other lists of similar actions by Pharaohs, the next highest number is about 5,900. So, it's obviously way bigger than anything else seen in Egypt in history. And that's why Egyptologists would say, ok, he might have gone there and got some slaves, but he's obviously exaggerating this massively to try to make a point, or to try to save face for some kind of failure.

Frank: Now, you mention, too, a couple minutes ago, that Amenhotep's first son seems to have disappeared from the record, and therefore his second son had to somehow make a divine claim to the throne. Where was this inscription found for Thutmose IV? Is it Thutmose IV his second son?

Dr. Kennedy: Yes.

Frank: Where was the inscription found where he makes this claim?

It was found on a Stele, which is a large inscribed monument on stone, in between the paws of the Great Sphinx at Giza. And he had a whole story constructed, that he was out hunting, that he went down to the Sphinx to take a nap, and then the god of the Sphinx came to him in a dream and told him that he was going to become the next Pharaoh. And so, he's making this story that the gods have chosen him. It's not because his older brother died, and he just happens to be next in line. It's that this was the plan of the gods. And so, that gives his claim to the throne a stronger case.

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Frank: Steve Meyer with a minute to go before the break, how do how do people miss this? It's on the Sphinx.

Dr. Meyer: It's all of these things are public evidence. One of the things though, that we've discovered in looking at this, and many other biblical events that have been attested to by extra-biblical archaeological evidence, is that there is a tendency for archaeologists and scholars to be very narrowly focused on an individual dig, or an individual region. And so, if you have that kind of narrow focus, and in addition to that, you have an assumption that miracles can't possibly happen, and therefore the biblical narrative can't possibly be true, you tend to miss the larger pattern of events. And so, what we see here is the 30,000 foot view that helps. You pull back and you see, wow, you've got evidence for the Israelites. You've got evidence for their entrance into Canaan. And so, that's just really fascinating. I'm sure we'll talk about it after the break.

Frank: And there's more coming. Don't go away. You're on with Frank Turek, Steve Meyer, and Titus Kennedy. Back in two.

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Frank: Evidence for the Exodus. If you're like me, you're hearing much of this stuff for the first time. You're hearing it from Dr. Stephen Meyer, of The Discovery Institute, and also Dr. Titus Kennedy, who, by the way, teaches at Biola University. And he's got a new book coming out June. It is called, *Unearthing the Bible*. And once that comes out, we're gonna have Dr. Kennedy back on to talk more about these archaeological discoveries. He's been all over the world verifying these discoveries. And just during the break, we were talking a little bit about this, Titus. And you said something about, two of the most critiqued aspects of the Old Testament,

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by scholars, are actually some of the best detested archaeology. What are those two stories that are most criticized, which actually have great archaeological evidence for?

Dr. Kennedy: Yeah, the two that take some of the most heat from the entire Old Testament, archaeologically anyhow, are the Exodus and the conquest of Jericho. Those are usually put up as poster child for the unhistorical, biblical text. And yet, those are actually two of the stories for which we have the best archaeological corroboration, and so many details that we can show from those narratives. So, if I were someone who was critical of the historicity of the biblical text, I would choose other stories to critique, rather than those two.

Frank: All right, so let's add another piece of evidence to the exodus here. So far, we've had four findings. The Hebrews were in Egypt prior to 1446 BC. The Pharaoh's palace is finding number two, that was found on the Nile. Finding number three is the Old Testament dates of the Exodus, it's 1446 BC. Finding number four is that Amenhotep the Second was the Pharaoh in 1446. Now, finding number five is a papyrus from Egypt and I've never heard of this until you told me about it, Titus. Explain this papyrus and what it says.

Dr. Kennedy: This papyrus is commonly referred to as, the Ipuwer Papyrus, although it's got a fancier name, like The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage. But this is a papyrus for which there's only one known copy in the whole world. And it's been around for a while, yet scholars typically date it to an earlier period. Usually they put it in, what's called the Second Intermediate Period. This would kind of be like Joseph's time. But the reason that they do that is based on their presupposition that it is just sort of an allegorical poem, talking about a period of Egyptian history, in which there's no centralized power and things are kind of in a little bit of turmoil. And yet, if you look at the details of it, such as the linguistics, then you see all these words, and names, and phrases that come into it that suggests it was composed in what's called the 18th Dynasty. That's kind of the time of Moses, and Joshua, and so on. The general time of the Exodus. In fact, the author of it, Ipuwer, this name actually appears in a text from the period of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, who are in power just before the Exodus.

Dr. Kennedy: Now, I couldn't say if that's exactly the same, Ipuwer, but it at least shows us that the name was in use during that period, which is more evidence suggesting placing this composition just before the Exodus. The copy that we have is from the 13th century BC, so you

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know, we throw that somewhere in between 1300 and 1200 BC. So, we know it's describing events before that, at least. But it seems to connect really well with the Exodus story. In fact, so well that, who probably the foremost scholar in the world on this papyrus, who wrote his dissertation on it, published a book on it, even acknowledges that there are all these literary and thematic links between the Ipuwer Papyrus and the Exodus. But he says, there couldn't be a real connection, because neither of those documents is describing an historical event. So, that's the presupposition there.

Frank: Right. Okay. What are some of the things that this says that lines up with the Exodus; that this papyrus says?

Dr. Kennedy: So, if you know the exodus plagues narrative, or at least a brief familiarity with it, you know some of the things like the Nile River gets turned to blood, and there are all these different plagues that go on. And then there's the death of the firstborn [unintelligible] the death of people and children. The sun isn't seen, and then these slaves, the Israelites slaves, they're given this gold and silver [unintelligible], right. So, here are some of the things that I just picked out of the Ipuwer Papyrus that seem to match up with this plagues narrative.

Dr. Kennedy: First of all, it says the river is blood, and there's blood throughout the land. So, that's one really odd coincidence right there. But we have a lot more that suggests it's not just a single coincidence. Fields are burned, there's lamination throughout the land, plague and pestilence throughout Egypt. Children of all these different classes and descriptions have died, and it talks about burying people all over the land of Egypt. There's a lot of death, and death of children, apparently. It says the power of Ra, who is the sun god, is not seen, which is quite possibly a reference to not being able to see the sun for some period. It talks about how the kingship is overthrown. This could relate to the firstborn and the Pharaoh dying, or at least showing that the pharaoh is powerless at the time. And then it also says that the slaves take gold and silver. And so, we have several things that match up, which suggests that it's more than just a mere coincidence of one really odd parallel.

Frank: So, we actually have a document written in Egypt, and this document is at least 1300 BC or so, and it has all these parallels to the Exodus. And people say there's absolutely no evidence from Egypt for the Exodus. Steve, what do you say about this?

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Dr. Meyer: Well, it's clearly an Egyptian account and it's happening so long after the time, to which it has been dated. Back to 1700-1800 BC. Dating it that far back is implausible, and it's especially implausible for the reason that Titus cited. For one, it was talking about the kingship being overthrown. Well, scholars have wanted to date it back to a time when there wasn't a centralized authority, so that doesn't make sense. And yet, you have all these multiple points of agreement that suggest that this is actually an Egyptian account of the Exodus event. Sometime, probably after the fact, certainly not before. And I consulted on a documentary, on the history of the exodus, several years ago. We called the museum where this was held, and they said, Oh, well, if you're calling about this, because you think it has something to do with the Exodus, it can't, because it was written at the wrong time. But this is another example of the way in which scholars has presuppositions about the timing of the event. In fact, these guys told us it was written in 1300 BC, and the exodus happened in 1200, so it must have happened before the Exodus. Which again shows that they just were presupposing the wrong window of time in which to be looking for evidence. And if you look at the right time, the time the Bible itself specifies, what we're finding is this extensive pattern in which there are multiple points of agreement between the extra biblical record, both with documentary history and archaeology, and the biblical text.

Frank: Amazing. All right, so finding number six now. And this is your specialty, Titus. You have a PhD in this. The excavated cities in Cana, or what we now know is Israel, show an influx of people around 1400 and after. Can you give us some evidence for that?

Dr. Kennedy: Yeah, so there's two things that we could look at with this. Around 1400 BC we see destruction and upheaval and war in the land. And then we also see a demographic shift on either side of 1400 BC. Archaeologically, that year is the end of one period and the beginning of another. And so, when we divide up into these periods, what we see is, there was a trend of population growth in Canaan up to about that point. And then there is a big drop. And after that a lot of new settlements popped up, and some of the settlements that had been abandoned around 1400 BC, they start to get resettled, and then there's slow population growth. So, what that suggests, just from looking at the demographics, is that there was some major event in Canaan around 1400 BC that caused the population drop, and then new settlements. It seems like a new people comes into the land to build these settlements and we can infer that by seeing that the architecture that appears in this post 1400 BC period, it's

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something different. So, there's a there's a new people. And scholars, they're generally going to say, yeah, this is the emergence of the Israelites.

Frank: So, when Joshua came into the land around 1400 BC, you see that in the archaeology, that there was burn layers, there was a conquest. In fact, you've actually excavated some of these sites. What sites have you excavated, Titus?

Dr. Kennedy: Relating to the conquest, specifically, I've excavated at Hazor and Ai. And we could say that Jericho, and Hazor, and Ai, these all have evidence of destruction and abandonment about 1400 BC, fitting with that Joshua conquest narrative. And then Shechem, that we know was not conquered by the Israelites. It was obtained peacefully. We see that in the archaeological record. But then there's this corpus of documents called the Amarna letters, which not only talk about people coming into the land, they call them the Habiru or Apiru, and fighting all these different Canaanite cities, and the Canaanite kings asking the Egyptians for help and never getting it. So, there's war, there's documentary evidence of a war and takeover. But also, these letters contain a couple messages which says that, the king of Shechem gave his land to the Habirus. So, there is some kind of peaceful transaction, which explains what we see happening in Joshua, at Shechem.

Frank: This is incredible.

Dr. Meyer: Well, it's just the specificity of this is breathtaking, because there was, for a long time, controversy among scholars about whether the Habiru or the Apiru referred to the Hebrew, or not. But when you get into the details of these Amarna letters, and find that there are specific descriptions of how each city fell, and in particular this description Shechem, which is anomalous, there was a peaceful transfer of power according to the Joshua account. The king of Shechem gave the keys of the city to Joshua. And then you have a parallel description in the Amarna tablets of the exact same event. It wasn't destroyed, it wasn't conquered, it was handed over peacefully. And so, that specificity of description allows you to identify the Israelites as the equivalent to the Habiru or the Apiru, which means that the whole corpus of the Amarna tablets is actually an extensive piece of corroborating evidence for the entrance of the Canaans.

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Frank: Well, there's more evidence that the exodus had to be prior to 1200 BC and we're going to talk about it right after the break. You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Dr. Stephen Meyer and Dr. Titus Kennedy. They're my guests today. I'm Frank Turek. And Dr. Kennedy teaches at Biola. He is a PhD in Archaeology. And you all know Dr. Steve Meyer, PhD from Cambridge University. And we're going to go through a couple of more findings when we come back, so don't go away. Back in two.

Ad: Ladies and gentlemen, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, is a listener supported radio program and podcast. If you like what we do, would you please consider going to [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org) and giving us a tax deductible donation? 100% of your donations will go to ministry, zero percent to buildings. Thanks so much.

Frank: Welcome back to, Evidence for the Exodus, with my guests, Dr. Titus Kennedy and Dr. Stephen Meyer. Before we get back to them, I want to mention, I'll be in spring, Texas this weekend at a church just north of Houston, Texas. And you can go to our website, [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org). That's crossexamined with a D on the end of it. And you will see the Frank Turek calendar there, right under events. I'm going to be doing the morning services. And then in the evening we'll continue at North Central Church in Spring, Texas at 5pm. We will go through, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. Don't forget, spring forward this weekend. So, that'll be extra early for the first service. And then next week I'll be out at Calvary Chapel, Chino Hills. One of my favorite churches, with the great Jack Hibbs, doing all the services there on March 15. Check our website for more.

Frank: All right, let's go back. We got more findings to discover with regard to the exodus. Finding number seven, an amazing Stele, which shows that the Hebrews had to be in the land quite early. Why don't you take that one Titus? What is the Stele that has been discovered?

Frank:

Dr. Kennedy: That's the Merneptah Stele. Sometimes it's called the Israel Stele. And it was actually discovered way back in 1896 by this famous early British archeology named, Flinders Petri. And it was found in the Mortuary Temple of Pharaoh Merneptah. And the information on this inscription, and what we know about Merneptah's reign, puts the date of it around 1210 BC. And part of this stele, which is commemorating his victories, discusses how he went into

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Canaan and he conquered these three cities, which he lists in the north, the central area, and the south. And then it says that, he laid waste to Israel and their seed is no more. And that's the only group of people that he specifies in Canaan, which tells us that they were the dominant people in Canaan by 1210 BC, the late 13th century BC, when he was in there. Because the Egyptians are only going to mention their greatest hits, basically. Whoever was the most formidable. And that, then, tells us that, not only were the Israelites in Canaan by the late 13th century BC, but they were already the most powerful group of people there, which shows us they had been there for a while. They'd already fought, conquered, settled, established themselves. And this is telling us then, that the conquest and the exodus happened quite a bit earlier than the late 13th century BC.

Frank: Hmm. Another piece of evidence that is often overlooked. By the way, the reason I call it a stele (Frank pronounces it "stella"), that's because my friend, Eli Shukron, the archaeologist who discovered the pool of Siloam, he calls it a "stella", but that's maybe just his accent. "Steely", I guess, is the right way to say it.

Dr. Kennedy: That's one of the accepted ways. It's an older way to say it, but it comes from a Greek word, so of course, there's different options.

Dr. Meyer: Either way is fine, Dr. Turek.

Frank: That's right. Well, thank you, sir. Thank you. Well, finding number eight is one of the most incredible archaeological discoveries, I think, in history, related to the Bible. And Steve, you originally told me about this. And Titus, himself, went and verified it. Steve, why don't you start it and then Titus will pick it up.

Dr. Meyer: Yeah, you bet. When we were working on this, True You series, our second lecture in that series was the, Evidence for the Exodus. And so, Titus came in one day, to the office and said, Hey, I found a mention of a potentially very significant finding. And it was in a fairly obscure old theology journal and it described a group of people called the Ta Shasu Yahweh, the nomads of Yahweh. And it describes their movements through the provinces of Moab and Edom. And it was on an inscription from a pharaoh, who was alive about the time of the conquest, the biblical conquests, or entrance into Canaan, just before it around 1410-1420 BC,

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something like that. So, a couple years ago, Titus made an expedition to see if he could verify the existence of this inscription. And I'll hand it off to him.

Frank: Take it away, Titus.

Dr. Kennedy: One of the reasons that this finding is so significant is because, Stephen mentioned the A to B argument. There's evidence that there were Hebrews in Egypt prior to the Exodus, and then we have Israelites showing up in Canaan. But what about that in between time? The wandering? And there's virtually no archaeological traces for nomadic groups in the Bronze Age. It's just not something that you can find. And so, one could say, Where were they? There's no evidence for the wandering period. Right? You know, we don't have anything with hard archaeological proof. And yet, this is something that fills in the gap. So, in northern Sudan, which was Southern Egypt in ancient times, there was a temple built for the Pharaoh Amenhotep the Third. And it was constructed around 1400 BC, or just for just before that, and this inscription was put on there, right at that time. And the inscription is part of a list, which shows all these places and people that the pharaoh supposedly had power over. He had dominated them, he had subdued them, etc. Probably hadn't conquered them, because there's no military campaigns that we know of, but he's just sort of copying the traditions of his previous Pharaohs. And on one of the list sections, which is actually both, on a pillar, and on a wall, there are groups of nomads listed. And these nomads are specified, according to some other qualifier. And in one case, they seem to all be connected to a god that they worship. And one of these Nomad people groups is called, The Nomads of Yahweh. That is, they are nomads who worship Yahweh.

Dr. Kennedy: So, this is our earliest inscription that's ever been found mentioning Yahweh. And it's in association with a group of nomads who are contextually placed around the area of Edom and Moab, possibly Canaan. So, this is present day, kind of, Northern Sinai, southern Israel, or Jordan, just across the river. Exactly where the Israelites were at the end of the wandering period. And it's on an Egyptian temple, on a list of a pharaoh, so that tells us the Egyptians, and the Pharaoh himself, knew about these people. And it really could only be talking about the Israelites, because they're the only people in ancient times that ever worshipped Yahweh or had an association with him. And so, this really fills in the gap for us and tells us the Egyptians knew about the wandering Israelites and the name Yahweh.

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Frank: And you actually took a trip yourself to Sudan, which is not a friendly place, is it?

Dr. Kennedy: Yeah, I went there because this has never been fully published. There were a few offhand references to it in a couple of books, in a couple of articles. And then the original excavation point report, it mentions it, but there's no photograph of it. There's like a couple sentences. And so, I wanted to go and document this and do a full publication of the inscription. And there actually, there's some errors in the original report on one of the hieroglyphs. So, I went there, took quite a while just to fly to Khartoum, and then it was a day and a half of driving from Khartoum to get up to this temple, in the middle of nowhere, on the west bank of the Nile River. And then I photographed and documented it and published this article. And now, hopefully, people have more access to the actual photographs of it and know what it says, why it says that, and why it's significant.

Frank: Well, this is going to be in your new book, *Unearthing the Bible*, which comes out in June, maybe before. And we'll have you back on to talk about that. But Steve, you were gonna say something. I'm sorry I interrupted. Go ahead.

Dr. Meyer: Well, two things. One, Titus told me he'd get security for this trip, but it turns out it was just a couple of Italian guys who helped him with passport control. So, he's sort of the real deals as far as the Christian Indiana Jones. But secondly, I wanted to comment on another aspect of the significance of the find, because you know, the dominant way of thinking about the Bible among archaeologists, or people in Ancient Near Eastern studies, there's a school of thought called, Biblical Minimalism. The idea that the Bible has very minimal purchase, or relevance, to actual historical events. And the view of the biblical minimalist is that the exodus never occurred. And the Israelites didn't exist as a people group until much later. That they congealed out of the central Canaanite Hill Country, maybe around 900 BC, maybe a bit earlier. Maybe around 1200 BC. But they certainly didn't come from Egypt.

Dr. Meyer: But if that's the case, then why is the earliest mention of the Hebrew God on an Egyptian monument? Clearly the Egyptians knew about this people, they knew about their patterns of worship, they knew who they worshipped. And why were the Israelites placed, not in Canaan, but in Moab in Edom, east of the Jordan, just prior to their alleged entrance into the into the promised land, according to the Bible. This placed them exactly at the right place at the

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right time. It's a stunning piece of very specific corroboration of the biblical narrative that fits into a larger pattern that suggests that the whole of the Exodus narrative occurred from Egypt, to Canaan. And we can even again track them on the way from point A to point B in Moab and Edom, just prior to the entrance into Canaan.

Frank: I just want everyone to understand the gravity of this. I'm just gonna say the gravity of this is amazing. It's the oldest Yahweh inscription in the world that's been discovered, and you help verify it there, Titus. Titus Kennedy, Dr. Titus Kennedy. And it's going to be in your new book coming out. And it's in Egypt. Well, now Sudan, but used to be Egypt. This is just amazing. Now we're out of time here in this segment. We can't get to all the findings. There's a couple more, but we'll cover it in the next broadcast. And, Steve, you're going to be where coming up? Where can people see you?

Dr. Meyer: I'll be speaking at our Philadelphia Science and Faith Conference on April 4 and 5. I'll be speaking about my new book on, *The Return of the God Hypothesis*, which is the prior question in this cumulative case for Biblical Christianity that Titus and I worked on together, that I used to call, *Reasons for Faith*. But the first reason is that there's evidence for God's existence that comes from science. I'll be talking about.

Frank: And Titus, we're gonna have you back on here, shortly, when your book comes out. And then we'll give more information as to your new website and where people can see you. I just want to thank you guys for being on the show. Fascinating stuff. Thank you so much.

Dr. Meyer: Thank you.

Dr. Kennedy: Thank you, Frank.

Frank: That's Titus Kennedy, of Biola University, and Stephen Meyer, of The Discovery Institute. We're going to have them back on. This is fascinating material. I'll see you next week. God bless.

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