

CANAANITE COLONIES OF IMPERIAL EGYPT:  
TOWARDS A DECONSTRUCTION OF THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVE

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*The article addresses the question of the relationships between an Ancient Near Eastern Empire of Egypt and its colonies. The term 'empire' already frequently appears in modern western academic literature in correlation with the models of ancient civilizations, but we do not have any equivalent term nor a conception from ancient texts, which could be a counterpart to these notions and could be discussed in terms of relationship between imperial policies (ruler) and ancient states (subject). The primary goal of this article is to bring a multidisciplinary approach to a comparative study of the Ancient Near Eastern Empire of Egypt during the 2nd millennium BC (New Kingdom Period), from the perspective of 'modeling' Egyptian civilization from the biblical narratives, and comparing these narratives to the archaeological evidence. Bringing together various pieces of biblical textual information, with their diverse aspects, helps us to reconstruct many historical data and perceptions of Imperial Egypt and the way in which it was perceived as an 'Imperial State' by Canaanite people. Four scriptural passages in particular may characterize Egypt's position in the biblical narrative:*

“You also played the harlot with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbours, multiplying your harlotry, to provoke me to anger” (Ezekiel 16:26).

“Behold, you are relying on Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of any man who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him” (Isaiah 36:6).

“In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border. It will be a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt” (Isaiah 19: 19-20).

“This was to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son” (Matthew 2:15).

## Introduction

The article questions the relations between the Ancient empire of Egypt and its colonies in Palestine, which have only recently become an object of fundamental research (Garnsey/Whittaker 2006; Redford 1992). The term ‘empire’ frequently appears in modern western scientific literature to characterize models of ancient civilizations, including that of Egypt (Kemp 2006, 7-57). The first and major problem in discussing ‘empire’ and ‘imperialism’ is one of definition. Generally, in modern scholarship the doctrine of ‘imperialism’ in the ancient world rests on inter-state relations: one state makes a whole series of territorial conquests of the other one, or gains political profit (mostly economical) and after all these political actions it becomes difficult to concede that a state which made a whole progression of territorial subjugation was acting without having foreseen possible political consequences (Garnsey/Whittaker 2006, 2). Consequently, the object of our study is the relationship of a ruler to its vassal state, and the result can be framed in some set of criteria. These criteria – in which power might be exercised by one state over another – could have variations such as: restriction of freedom, political interference, and compulsory service, confiscation of land or emigration, and other forms of economic exploitation or subordination (Garnsey/Whittaker 2006, 4). However, we should realise that this typology is not generally applicable and every single model could have its own criteria. Thus, Egyptian scenes and texts contain elements of a fairly consistent and coherent view of Egyptian political domination in the Syro-Palestinian geographical setting. The implied themes of conquest<sup>1</sup> and dominance over vassals<sup>2</sup> were made visible in the decoration of palaces (Petrie 1894, pl. II; Holscher 1941, Fig. 25, pls. 6, 7, 33, 35; Hayes 1937), tombs, on state barges (Cooney 1965, 80-85), and in the designs on pieces of jewellery. This would have accorded well with the growing fashion for militarism in the New Kingdom (Kemp 2006, 13).

On the other hand, our view on this historical conception must not be filtered through the eyes of only one of the actors, that means that for further analyzing the phenomenon of the Imperial Egypt, I would suggest to make an investigation in several directions: 1) To take in consideration how other ancient neighbouring – in our case the Syro-Palestinian – societies of the same periods reacted to the salience of this supra-state (both negative and positive evaluations should be taken in consideration); 2) How images of the ancient Egyptian State remain in contemporary and later historical memory of biblical literary heritage (*OT* and *NT*

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<sup>1</sup> The most revealing case of proclaiming of this nature is the Battle of Megiddo text of Tuthmosis III, see Grapow 1947; Spalinger 1974, 221-229.

<sup>2</sup> In this type of context the only relationship which could be appropriate between Egypt and other countries was that of overlord and vassal. Diplomatic gifts from foreign rulers, as well as levies exacted from places that were actually subject, all is depicted and referred to the same way, as if tribute. The foreign princes or envoys bring “tribute” “on their backs” in attitudes of obeisance, e.g. *Urk IV* 2006, 341.13-342.5, 1094-1102, and in some cases in return for the “breath of Life” from the King, e.g. *Urk IV* 2006, 15-20.

texts); 3) What was the ‘cultural tribute’ Egyptians had to pay to the ancient Palestinian cultural setting?

I presume that ‘modeling’ Egyptian imperial characteristics as perceived by the ‘colonial eyewitness’ of Hebrew writers would be especially interesting. Furthermore, real and hidden motives of this relationship (relationship of the leader country versus subordinate country) can be understood only with reference to the motivations of both societies. Apparently, it might be that different perceptions occur in the texts of the *OT* in case of Egyptian domination in Palestine.

### **Political actors in the Egyptian empire**

It is generally accepted by scholars that the concepts of ‘empire’ and ‘imperialism’ are applicable to the New Kingdom Egypt; chronologically it covers the periods of *ca.*1575-1087 BC (Redford 1992, 125-213; Kemp 2006). The authors of the *Old Testament* narratives had never applied the term ‘empire’ and ‘imperialism’ in case of the classification of the Egyptian state’s status and its ideological course in Palestine. Though, in the record of biblical memory Egypt appears frequently in different contexts, in various periods (see Table 1), and generally, later Israel and Egypt appear as antagonistic worlds (Assmann 1998, 6). The Ancient Egyptians themselves seem to have known of no words which can be translated as ‘imperialism’, ‘empire’, and were not applying these terms in their sources for their political and military activities in Palestine (Kemp 2006, 7). In both cases we may observe that they (the narrators of the *OT* and the authors of the Egyptian political inscriptions) acted without seeing the need to abstract, conceptualize, and generalize particular facts and events as the political process in its entirety, which was carried by Egypt in Canaan; whilst they refer to the facts separately, as single and independent events, and described this single phenomenon in particular occasions. As for Egyptian imperial ideology only the Egyptian king himself has produced his own beneficial religious ideology among those subjects who have cooperated. Their conquest and subjection of the outside world, justified in religious terms, seem firmly rooted in political reality, and were described properly, and dated in accordance of Egyptian common chronological cliché<sup>3</sup>.

The historical reconstruction of political systems based on the regional context (van de Mieroop 2007, 131-134), shows that in the case of the ‘Egyptian imperialism’ in ancient Canaan, we are dealing with the relationship which rests on two main ‘actors’; it appears that Egypt was attempting to assert itself in Canaan vis-à-vis the Palestinian city-states<sup>4</sup>. Egypt, which had been a territorial state, at this time developed into a large empire extending into foreign lands, stretching from

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<sup>3</sup> From the New Kingdom, a considerable body of inscriptions and scenes has survived related to the theme of conquest and subjection of the outside world to the rule of the king of Egypt. Cf. Kemp 2006, 8.

<sup>4</sup> The system of Egyptian control over Canaan is well documented in the Amarna letters, see van de Mieroop 2007, 165.

Nubia to northern Syria<sup>5</sup>. In this political interaction the actors, Egypt and the Syro-Palestinian city-states could have their own roles, motives, interests and perceptions while staying and keeping *status quo* in this ‘alliance’<sup>6</sup>. Each participant in this system knew his place in the political hierarchy and how to interact with each other (van de Mieroop 2007, 133-134). The division of Syria-Palestine between Hatti and Egypt remained stable until the beginning of the nineteenth dynasty in Egypt, when kings Seti I and Ramesses II tried to extend their control further north. Subsequently, after the battle of Qadesh in 1274 BC Egypt’s control over southern Syria and northern Palestine seems to have slipped, and Ramesses II built a number of fortresses close to the Egyptian border (van de Mieroop 2007, 166). After the collapse of the regional system in the Near East, which obviously happened after 1200 BC, when the Hittite state disappeared and Syria-Palestine underwent turmoil, Egypt was cut off from Asia (van de Mieroop 2007, 200). In 1075 BC the Egypt of the Ramesside Empire still existed<sup>7</sup>, although weakened and impoverished. In the aftermath of the Egyptian decline the international rearrangement of powers followed, and by the emergence of the new political actors in Palestine the situation changed<sup>8</sup>. The Philistines began to broaden their horizons, bursting out of their fortresses, founding new towns<sup>9</sup>, and in the south they took over way stations formerly belonging to the Egyptian administration (Redford 1992, 290-291). Another political actor, which appears in the region by 1020 BC, is the Israelite monarchy – so-called the “United

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<sup>5</sup> The Egyptian annals, especially those of Tuthmose III (1479-1425 BC) provide great detail on this military activity: Three provinces were established, Amurru, Upe and Canaan, each with an administrative center governed by an Egyptian official, see van de Mieroop 2007, 165.

<sup>6</sup> See: the letters from Amarna, the correspondence between the Egyptian Pharaoh and the princes of the city-states of Palestine and Syria, and the letters from Egyptian officials resident in these city-states addressed to the Egyptian Pharaoh. Kemp 2006, 17; von Dassow/Greenwood 200, 201-209.

<sup>7</sup> By that time Egypt was under rule of the last king of New Kingdom, Ramesses XI (ca.1104-1075 BC), and the last imperial Pharaoh. For the chronology of Egyptian history, see Sasson 2000, 713. For the period of Ramesses XI ruling in Egypt, see Redford 1992, 284-285.

<sup>8</sup> During the Dark Age an almost complete restructuring of society took place over most of the Near East. The crisis of the states enabled foreign peoples to migrate into the region and international population movements were numerous. It is very often stated that the Peleset of the Sea People became the Philistines, who inhabited the coastal area just north of Egypt in the early first millennium. See more details in van de Mieroop 2007, 204.

<sup>9</sup> Our textual evidence by and large confirms the archaeological. The Onomasticon of Amenemope (dated to around 1100 BC) follows a list of the toponyms, with six place-names of which the first three are certainly in the Philistine plain: Ashkelon (262), Ashdod (263), Gaza (264), Yasur (265), Subaray (266), and one lost in lacuna (267). These are then followed by three names of Sea Peoples (Sh)ardana, Teukrians, and Philistines. In all probability the six town-names designate the principal *municipia* that the three groups in question occupied in the period after Egypt withdrew from Asia, but while the first two may have initially been present, they were soon swallowed up in the much larger Philistine matrix, see Redford 1992, 292.

Monarchy”, led by the kings Saul, David and Solomon<sup>10</sup>. “With the rise of monarchy, we arrive at the time when Israel’s history becomes more focused; the Age of David and Solomon gave political, economic, and social form to an identifiable nation with the past and future. David’s monarchy, in particular was a radical innovation that transformed an informal and somewhat isolated community into a power among the powers” (Flanders Jr./Wilson Crapps/Smith 1988, 230). The two kingdoms of Israel and of Judah had separate (Divided Monarchy 922-587 BC), yet closely related histories, and also adhered to Canaanite tradition (van de Mieroop 2007, 222-224). These states are always reconstructed on the basis of the Hebrew Bible, a very difficult source for the historian to use (van de Mieroop 2007, 222).

### **Methodological approaches: ‘Historical deconstruction’ of the biblical narratives on modeling the features of Imperial Egypt**

#### *Preliminary considerations*

All historians of the Near East in the first millennium BC are confronted with the question of the historicity of the account in the Hebrew Bible. However critical the scholar’s attitude towards the biblical text may be, it is impossible to ignore it completely as it is such a powerful narrative. The text gives a reconstruction of the earlier histories of the region’s inhabitants from the time of creation to the establishment of a large unified kingdom under David and Solomon in the tenth century BC, with in the aftermath the breakdown of the United Monarchy – followed by the history of political decline of the Hebrew states. We do not know the date of the composition of most of the composing books, and it seems safe to assume that, in the format known to us, they are from the period after the Babylonian Exile in the late sixth century (van de Mieroop 2007, 223), and thus from the time when Egypt had been already discarded as a political actor in the Near East. The problem of other secondary sources for that time (after the tenth century BC) of the Levant is threefold: the almost total silence of written sources, our inability to evaluate critically many later sources on the period, and the equivocal nature of the archaeological record (Redford 1992, 300).

The present paper attempts to investigate the history of the Bible’s ‘remembering’ Egypt, with its characteristics, that also describe the notion of Imperial Egypt, which might be radically different from Egyptian self evaluation (in their sources)<sup>11</sup>. Realizing the complexity of the above stated problem, our method-

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<sup>10</sup> The United Monarchy, 1020-922 BC (Saul: 1020-1000 BC; David: 1000-961 BC; Solomon: 961-922 BC). For the Chronology of Israel history, see Flanders Jr./Wilson Crapps/Smith 1988, 462-463.

<sup>11</sup> In our sources, both Egyptian and West Asian, there are virtually no references to Israel, its congeners, or biblical associates prior to the 12th century BC, and beyond that point in four centuries a mere half dozen allusions can be elicited. Cf. Redford 1992, 256-257.

ological approach is highly selective: for retrospect materials on Egypt, we follow the sequence of biblical memory, highlighting the broad thematic scope, and in the restoration of the image of ‘imperialism’, selectively grouping some materials, which have common causes; on the one hand, we are free to juxtapose them to each other and, on the other hand, to compare them with the Egyptian materials. Within a historical ‘deconstruction’ of the biblical materials, we do not aim to stick to the line of the historical sequences, neither to follow the chronological order of the facts, but recapitulate biblical information for interpretation of the contextuality of the “understanding/meaning” of Empire that emerged from the idea of cognitive mapping of the biblical authors.

#### *The Old Testament textual evidence*

“You also played the harlot with the Egyptians, your lustful neighbours, multiplying your harlotry, to provoke me to anger” (Ezekiel 16:26).

We may presume that the authors of the *Old Testament* exaggerated the importance of Egypt in the Palestine region, while simply recollecting and adhering to the Canaanite ancient tradition in reference to the earliest glorious image of Imperial Egypt (see Table 1: “*The Patriarchs in Egypt*”, “*Egypt in the narrative of Joseph*”, “*Egypt in the times of Moses*”, “*Egypt in the times of David and Solomon*” with the citations of the Bible). But, how we can explain their peculiar perceptions towards Egyptian policy and political activities? While we comprehend, that – when the later authors of the *Old Testament* recorded almost contemporary history of their times (after the fall of the Egyptian empire 1065 BC), where the images of Egypt arose in the subtexts – these images still kept those connotations that were applicable to the criteria of earlier, imperial state of Egypt (see Table 1: “*Egypt in the times of David and Solomon*”, “*Egypt in the times of Divided Monarchy and after*” with the citations from the Bible). According to these different passages from the *Old Testament*, Egypt is represented as the strongest political state of the Ancient Near East, and the diplomatic marriage which occurred between Egypt and Israelite State may well count as a political success of the last one (Solomon’s marriage to the Egyptian princes); Egypt is still actively involved in internal conflicts of the Palestinian States and practiced ‘divide-and-rule’ imperial policy (Edomite prince Hadad’s confrontation with David and Solomon); Egypt over and over again demands obedience and tribute from its former vassals and, in the case of refusal, organized military raids; during the times of Dynastic conflicts in Israel Egypt provides an asylum to the insurgent party (Jeroboam’s case); throughout international conflicts in Palestine (between Egypt and Assyria) there was a group of Judeans who allied with Egyptians, gave preference to Egyptian domination in the region and found shelter in Egypt. We may bring some vivid examples from the *OT* texts below. They are well applicable to the policy of post-Imperial Egypt in Palestine, which would be especially interesting in two directions: on one side, we may observe that the writers recorded events without seeing the need to abstracting, conceptualizing, and generalizing particular facts of the whole political process in its entirety, which was car-

ried by Egypt in Palestine, but on the other side, whilst depicting the single facts from the contemporary history, they are referring to the same criteria of Imperial Egypt, which were actual for Egypt in earlier periods, and in their descriptions recapturing the past. The Edomite prince Hadad and Jeroboam (later, he becomes the first king of Israel) fled to Egypt after the conflict with the official authorities of the Davidic Kingdom and found protection and support of the third party. Herein, fine parallels can be drawn from the earlier sources, and can be juxtaposed with the set of criterions established by Imperial Egypt in West Asia: in the first occasion, we may recall the letters from the Amarna archive, when the Levantine vassals complained against their neighboring kings. A constant element is denunciation of a neighboring prince on the grounds of disloyalty to the king of Egypt. The two vassal rulers are both subjects to the Egyptian empire and subordinated to the Pharaoh, who seems to be the supreme arbitrage in the region (von Dassow/Greenwood 2007, 201-202). The second event is from the example of the common Egyptian policy of giving an Egyptian court education to the children of foreign princes (Kemp 2006, 36, 47); and the third event is related to the tradition, when the western Asiatic city-states continued to retain kings and princes once they had sworn an oath of allegiance to Pharaoh and paid tribute<sup>12</sup>. The biblical accounts concern Pharaoh Necho<sup>13</sup>, who sends dethroned Joahaz into the exile to Egypt (2Chron. 36), subsequently makes Eliakim king of Judah (2Kings 23:34), and changes his name to Jehoiakim. The latter starts the raising of tax to pay Necho (2Kings 23:35)<sup>14</sup>, which could be naturally incorporated in historical context of the New Kingdom, because it well fits to the criteria and policy of Imperial Egypt. Jeroboam, the first King of Israel, as an Egyptianized leader<sup>15</sup>, came back as a victorious leader of Israel, set up calf images at Dan and Bethel (1Kings 12:26-33), a religious import influenced by his Egyptian exile (see *NIDB* 1987, 297). A further area in the New Kingdom where the extent of the Imperial Egyptian penetration into the colonial society can be seen is religion<sup>16</sup>. The passage in question somehow reflects a tradition – common for the Egyptian and the Canaanite peoples – of worshipping a bull, as a symbol or manifestation of the god<sup>17</sup>. On the archaeological level, the most revealing site in this respect of religious syncretism is Beth-Shan, where in the later temple belonging

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<sup>12</sup> Kemp 2006, 45. An Edomite prince was married to the aristocratic Egyptian woman, a sister of Queen Tahpenes, and later went back to Edom and became an adversary to Solomon (1 Kings 11: 14-25).

<sup>13</sup> The King of the 26th Dynasty, 609-595 BC.

<sup>14</sup> Naturally, an important feature of domination in Palestine was the assessment of tribute paid in kind and probably on annual basis, cf. *Urk* IV 1442.3-7; Kemp 2006, 47.

<sup>15</sup> It is conceivable that Pharaoh's court could have given aid and comfort to dissidents and rebels against Solomon, cf. Kitchen 1973, 274-275.

<sup>16</sup> For the Nubian model: Kemp 2006, 37; for the Egyptian and Canaanite religious syncretism in the Palestinian model, cf. Mazar 1992, 253.

<sup>17</sup> For a bull worship in Egypt, cf. Mercer 1949, 21, 28, 230, 232.1; Wallis Budge 1915, 110, 230; Langner 2003.

to the period following the end of the New Kingdom, the Egyptian cult statues were erected, in the shape of a ruler cult (Kemp 2006, 54). Later references on Pharaoh Sheshonq's march<sup>18</sup> towards Jerusalem and plundering the Temple of God and the palace of the King (1Kings 14:26) may have parallels with the Imperial Egyptian sources: the capture of spoil during Egyptian campaigns, and levying of taxes in those areas where a certain degree of the imperial control could be exercised (Kemp 2006, 19). Egypt had still a strong influence in Judean politics in the days of Isaiah and Jeremiah, who were aware of the weakness of Egypt against the Assyrian threat, though it seemed that there was a group of Judeans which still relied on "Egypt, that broken reed of a staff" (Isaiah 36:6).

### **Conclusion**

The presented evidence makes it plausible that we cannot check the historical veracity of the biblical text and in the occasions under discussion we are inclined to wonder: what are the criteria of evaluation the biblical writers used in 'modeling' Egyptian 'empire' and 'history'? I think that in this case we should be wise to reject the application of the adjective 'biblical' to 'history'; what is needed rather is a view of the Egyptian Empire in the scope of mnemohistory<sup>19</sup>, which investigates the history of cultural memory of biblical authors, and the theme of remembering Egypt is essential and is always central for the biblical contexts.

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<sup>18</sup> Sheshonq's campaign took place probably early in his reign, *i.e.*, in the 930s BC, cf. Redford 1992, 312-315.

<sup>19</sup> For the understanding Mnemohistory, cf. Assmann 1998.



Table I. The Hebrew bible and the Canaanite's collective memory of Egypt.

Egypt in the various contexts	Historical notion(s) and event(s)	Scriptural passages	Chronology according to the order of the Old Testament	Motivations	Comments
<i>1. The name of Egypt and people</i>	Mizraim/Hebr. mitsrayim.	The Table of Nations: Mizraim is a son of Ham, Gen. 10:6; 1Chron. 1:8; etc.	The Ancient World before the Patriarchs.	Issue of the genesis.	To the Israelites, Egypt was mitsrayim, a term of which the form and derivation are unknown.
<i>2. Geography of Egypt and the Nile</i>	The Nile.	For drinking Exod. 7:18; 21; 24; for bathing Exod. 2:5; for irrigation Deut. 11:10.			The Nile's stream, Hebr. ye'or, was the main channel of commerce and travel.
<i>3. The Patriarchs in Egypt</i>	Abram's sojourn in Egypt.	Gen. 12:10.	The Patriarchal Age ca. 2000-1500 BC.	Egypt was the place to which Canaanites naturally looked in time of famine; it was an abundant Near Eastern bread-basket.	The famous scene from the wall painting of the tomb of Khnumhotep II at Beni Hasan shows a group of Asiatics in Middle Egypt for purposes of trade and illustrates several facets of Abram's descent into Egypt.
<i>4. Egypt in the narrative of Joseph</i>	Joseph in Egypt; Sojourn in Egypt; Israel's movement into Egypt.	Gen. 37:28; 39; 40:4; 42; 43; 43:32; 45; 46; 47; 50; etc.	1700-1300 BC.	Egypt was the place of destination of such migrations from Canaan; Joseph realized that God's providence was in his being sold into Egypt; Jacob was instructed by the	An Egyptian source of a record from an Egyptian frontier officer in about 1350 BC informs the Pharaoh about a group, who came begging for a home in the domain of the Pharaoh.

Egypt in the various contexts	Historical notion(s) and event(s)	Scriptural passages	Chronology according to the order of the Old Testament	Motivations	Comments
<i>5. Egypt in the times of Moses</i>	Israelites slavery in Egypt; Moses at the court of Egypt; the route of the Exodus.	Exod. 1:11; 3:14:1-17; 20:2; 23; etc.	The times of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt 1280 BC.	Lord to go to Egypt: "do not be afraid to go down to Egypt; for I will there make of you a great nation".  Israel escaped the land of Egypt to enter into Canaan.	Exodus 1:11 states that Israelites worked on the construction of the store-cities of Raamses and Pithom; having done so, they must have been in Egypt during the reigns of Seti I (1308-1290 BC) and Ramses II (1290-1224 BC), the pharaohs who built these cities.  Egyptian records make no mention of the flight of any Semitic slaves to escape forced labor in the service of the pharaohs. By that time Egypt's control over southern Syria and northern Palestine seems to have slipped, and Ramesses II built a number of fortresses close to Egyptian border.

Egypt in the various contexts	Historical notion(s) and event(s)	Scriptural passages	Chronology according to the order of the Old Testament	Motivations	Comments
6. <i>Egypt in the times of David and Solomon</i>	Solomon married a daughter of the Egyptian Pharaoh; Solomon's commercial relations with Egypt. An Adomite prince Hadad found asylum in Egypt as a child after the raid by David into Edomite territory. An Edomite prince Hadad, Solomon's enemy, left Egypt to become an active adversary of Solomon. Jeroboam fled to Egypt to escape Solomon/an Egyptian exile.	1Kings 3:1f.; 1Kings 9:16; 2Chron. 1:16-17; 1Kings 11:14-25.	David 1000-961 BC; Solomon 961-922 BC.	Diplomatic marriage. Commercial relations with Egypt. Egyptian Imperial foreign policy in Palestine.	1065 BC the end of Egyptian empire; Egyptian Pharaoh captured and destroyed Gezer and presented it to his daughter as dowry; Jeroboam escaped to Egypt, where pharaoh kindly received him and as soon as Solomon died he returned from Egypt.
7. <i>Egypt in the times of Divided Monarchy and after</i>	Rehoboam's reign, the pharaoh Shishak invaded	1Kings 14:25; 26; 2Chron 12:1-12; 2Kings 23:29-30; 2Chron 35:20-27;	922-587 BC; 918 BC; 701 BC;	Egyptian King carried out an expedition into Palestine that was followed by stripping of the temple from its treasures	It meant economic return of Egypt to Palestine, levying of taxes in those areas where some degree of control was

Egypt in the various contexts	Historical notion(s) and event(s)	Scriptural passages	Chronology according to the order of the Old Testament	Motivations	Comments
	<p>Judah. Hezekiah's reign and an Assyrian-Egyptian conflict for the domination in the region. Egyptian King Tirhakah (25th dynasty) led the Egyptian armies in their initial conflict with Assyria. Josiah made a fatal effort to stop the Egyptian forces of the pharaoh Necho at Meggiddo. When Josiah died, Jehoahaz was made king, but Necho dethroned him and set up in his stead his brother Jehoiakim. Egypt lost the control of the Palestine region. After the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC the Judeans again looked to Egypt as a place of refuge.</p>	<p>Isa 36:6; 37:9; 2Kings 18:21; 2Kings 19:9b; 2Kings 23:29-34; 2Chron 35:20-36:4; 2Kings 24:7; Ezek 16:26; 2Kings 25:26; Jer 41:17; 42:15-20; 43.</p>		<p>to meet his demands; Egypt tried to gain control over Palestine and came back with military forces; Egypt yet again was the place at which Palestinians looked in time of famine and troubles. It was an abundant Near Eastern breadbasket.</p>	<p>exercised, as the military intervention shows. Egypt of Tirhakah's (690-664 BC) period was correctly evaluated by an Assyrian spokesman as "that broken reed"; Egypt was a place of refuge or a means of sustaining of life. "And the king of Egypt did not come again out of his land, for the king of Babylon had taken all that belonged to the king of Egypt from the Brook of Egypt to the river Euphrates" (2Kings 24:7).</p>

Egypt in the various contexts	Historical notion(s) and event(s)	Scriptural passages	Chronology according to the order of the Old Testament	Motivations	Comments
<p><b>8. Divine impact on Egypt's future</b></p>	<p>“In that day Israel will be the third, along with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing on the earth. The Lord Almighty will bless them, saying, “Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my inheritance.” “In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border. It will be a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt;” “This was to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I have called my son”.</p>	<p>Isa. 19:24-25; cf. 19:18-23; Isa. 19:19-20; Matt. 2:15.</p>	<p>609 BC.</p>	<p>Egypt has the scriptural prediction of a wonderful future.</p>	<p>To Israelites, Egypt was somewhat of an enigma, a land of contrasts, a country that they hated but also respected as a symbol of wealth and safety.</p>

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