

had been upon a visit. It seemed that a great council had been held there in the largest hall of one of the largest temples. At this council, which was open to all the people, Amenmeses had given report on the matter of the Israelites who, he stated, were departing in their thousands. Also offerings were made to appease the angry gods of Egypt. When the ceremony was finished, but before the company broke up in a heavy mood, her Highness the Princess Userti rose in her place, and addressed Pharaoh.

'By the spirits of our fathers,' she cried, 'and more especially by that of the good god Meneptah, my begetter, I ask of you, Pharaoh, and I ask of you, O people, whether the affront that has been put upon us by these Hebrew slaves and their magicians is one that the proud land of Egypt should be called upon to bear? Our gods have been smitten and defied; woes great and terrible, such as history tells not of, have fallen upon us through magic; tens of thousands, from the first-born child of Pharaoh down, have perished in a single night. And now these Hebrews, who have murdered them by sorcery, for they are sorcerers all, men and women together, especially one of them who sits at Memphis, of whom I will not speak because she has wrought me private harm, by the decree of Pharaoh are to be suffered to leave the land. More, they are to take with them all their cattle, all their threshed corn, all the treasure they have hoarded for generations, and all the ornaments of price and wealth that they have wrung by terror from our people, borrowing that which they never purpose to return. Therefore I, the Royal Princess of Egypt, would ask of Pharaoh, is this the decree of Pharaoh?'