

SPECIAL  
ARTICLES

## Our Contributors

BOOK  
REVIEWSA HEBREW RULER IN EGYPT—  
SIGNIFICANCE OF NAMES  
AND RELIGION.

By J. M. Reimensnyder, D.D.

One of the most striking facts and interesting studies is the religious character of the kings of the ancient nations of Egypt and Babylon. One would suppose that without the true God there would be no religion at all, but strange as it may seem we find no such nations of intelligence and of civilization. In Christian nations Satan seems to strive to root out of the national life, thought and feeling all religious sentiment; but among the superstitious and speculative, imaginative and traditional and mystic peoples he has encouraged apparently a strong religious sentiment. Hence we find amongst the misguided peoples, strong religious thoughts and worship prevailing. One thing is a fact however, that is, that such religions did not have much effect upon the character, that is upon its moral status, hence it in no way interfered with Satan's purposes. That may account for its being fostered or at least not hindered by Satan. Surely in many instances it was the very gate to immorality. Dreams are defined as a series of thoughts, feelings, and acts of the imagination occurring in sleep. In some cases the reasoning powers are abnormally active in dreams, but in general the mental action is incongruous. Dreams usually are evidence of imperfect sleep. They take their character from some preceding state of the mind, and are often modified by the conditions of the health. The Bible speaks of dreams as being sometimes prophetic or suggestive of future events. This belief has prevailed in all ages and countries and there are numerous modern examples, apparently well authenticated, which would appear to favor this hypothesis. The interpretation of dreams was a part of the business of the soothsayers at the royal courts of Egypt, Babylon and other ancient nations (Johnson's Encyclopedia). Jacob's dream was a real revelation. Joseph's brethren called him the dreamer in derision, as we sometimes speak now of one who has unreal and fanciful ideas, such as day dreams and air castles. The prophets had dreams which were used as means of divine communications; though Israel was commanded to avoid the interpreters of dreams. Many of the poets wrote as in dreams. The word dream has a double derivation which signifies joy and pleasure and also to harm and to hurt. Almost all persons and children have had dreams. Mostly they are treated lightly, but occasionally they are attended with such vividness that they alarm or fix our attention with the assurance that they indicate something which requires our earnest consideration. Pharaoh's dreams were of a religious character. He stood by the river, that is, the Nile, which river was sacred in Egypt. Presumably he was in an act of worship when he dreamed. The Nile is the great river of Egypt. Its entire length is about, 4000 miles. Rain seldom falls in Egypt, hence the life of millions depended upon the annual overflow and consequent irrigation and enrichment of the valley of Egypt. In it the people bathed and on its banks they worshipped. Thus the daughter of Pharaoh found the infant, Moses. She had no child and "drew him out of the water," as a gift of the gods—an heir to the throne of Egypt. It supplied water for tens of thousands of men, women, children and cattle. For hundreds of miles it turned a desert into a garden. It was the nourisher of the people, hence it was defied as sacred as a god. This accounts for the fact that two of the ten plagues were directed against the sacred river. This is the beginning of the religious side of Pharaoh's character.

Names and their religious significance, showing the uppermost thought of the early people and ancients on both sides, Hebrews and other nations:—

First. Pharaoh—the Sun.

Second. Potiphar—Pet-P Ra, belonging to the Sun—the man to whom Joseph was sold, captain of the guard to Pharaoh.

Third. Potipherah—Priest or prince of On, father of Joseph's wife, same as Potiphar.

Fourth. Zaph-e-nath-pa-ne-ah, the name Pharaoh gave to Joseph, a revealer of secrets. Egyptian, the preserver of the age. God speaks, he lived, or the man so whom secrets are revealed. That meant a high priest of Egypt.

Fifth. On—Heliopolis. On—the abode of the sun. Heliopolis—city of the sun. Helios—sun—Polis—city. One of the oldest shrines, temples and schools of the priests in the world. Obelisks have been standing there for 3,000 years. A priestly residence near the capital of Egypt, Memphis, where Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians.

Sixth. Asenath—Name of Joseph's Egyptian wife—Favorite of Neith—an Egyptian goddess; Minerva.

This heathen nature worship was really the result of gratitude and the recognition of nature's gifts and the food supplied.

Now the Christian names of the Holy line:

First. Abram—High Father, showing his standing in Ur of the Chaldees.

Second. Abraham—Father of a multitude, showing the purpose of his calling—the promise.

Third. Isaac—Laughter, a historical note of the promise, hence joy at the fulfillment.

Fourth. Jacob—Supplanter, because he bought his brother Esau's birthright.

Fifth. Israel—His new name—God's Fighter or a Prince with God, because he prevailed in his prayer with the angel of God.

Sixth. Joseph—Increase. Showing how his father looking forward to the fulfillment of the promises in his favorite son.

Seventh. Manasseh—Joseph's first-born son in Egypt—Forgotten, signifying that his great sorrow was forgotten in God's blessings.

Eighth. Ephraim—His second born son in Egypt—Double land, two-fold increase, very fruitful—Showing his recognition of divine blessings.

Ninth. Moses—Drawn from—That is from the water. Pharaoh's daughter named him when she found him.

Tenth. David—Beloved.

Eleventh. Solomon—Pacific, peaceful—The one thus fitted to build the temple as the house of God, which was to stand for peace and which his father, David, was forbidden to build because he was a man of war.

Twelfth. Christ—Anointed, Jesus, Saviour, Messiah—The Promised One. Benjamin—Son of the Right Hand; Bethel—House of God; Bethesda—House of Mercy; Bethlehem—House of Bread; Zion—Sunny; Jerusalem—Sight of peace, inheritance of peace, foundation of peace, holy city, city of the Great King, lion of God; Palestine—Was called the Land of Promise the Holy Land.

This was in that early day a splendid way of fixing great principles in the mind of coming generations, when books, histories and biographies were few. Though Pharaoh gave Joseph a heathen name, a priestess of the sun for a wife and made him ruler of Egypt, he did not succeed in changing his religion. And Joseph gave his sons and his wife Christian names and held his own name and place amongst his own Hebrew people and nation. This shows what religion is when it is properly founded and rooted in character. The same was true with

Moses. All the learning of the Egyptians and all their mysteries and religious forms could not eliminate the true religion taught by his own pious parents, and his own Hebrew nation and people were never forgotten. What a tribute this is to the love of country and loyalty to a spiritual and conscientious religion. Now as to the presence of a Hebrew ruler in Egypt.

First. Egypt was not always governed by native kings. The Dynasty was several times overthrown. At this time it is believed that Egypt was ruled by the Shepherd Kings (called Hyksos.) These were foreign rulers who conquered Egypt, and who would naturally be favourably inclined to the Hebrews, who were shepherds. This accords in history with the time of Joseph.

Second. It was customary in ancient peoples to adopt royal foreign captives of special gifts and give them new names and educate them in the national religion and learning and give them prominent places, as Daniel in Babylon.

Third. The special reason perhaps is the one given by Pharaoh in the Scriptures. Joseph had revealed or interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh, which the wise men of Egypt could not interpret. This classed him as a Chaldean priest. The special mission of the Chaldeans was the interpretation of dreams. They were soothsayers, belonged to a priestly office, as students of the stars, and were held in the highest regard by all ancient nations who had them at their courts. The name given Joseph by Pharaoh signifies "a revealer of secrets." And Pharaoh said unto his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the spirit of God is?" What a religious lesson and example to Christians.

## CONCERNING GUIDANCE.

By W. J. Mosier.

Ample provision is made for the guidance of God's people, yet how many come to grief because they do not allow themselves to be guided aright. Abraham was definitely led into the promised land, but when famine came he failed to stand the test and fled without divine direction into Egypt; but while out of God's order he has no vision, voice or revelation from above. His fellowship is broken, his faith dimmed, his worship interrupted, his growth arrested, his testimony lost. Silence and darkness reign over that unfortunate period of his life. Not until he returns to the land is his altar rebuilt, his communion restored and his blessings regained.

Lot pitches his tent toward Sodom, contrary to the divine will, and receives the penalty that is meet.

Jacob practises trickery, deception and lying to get the promised birthright and blessing, rather than wait God's time and order, and for twenty-one long years, as a result, suffers as an exile in a strange land.

Naomi, bereft of husband and sons in the land of Moab, where they had gone without divine guidance, confesses with grief her loss when she answers the joyful greetings of her friends on her return. "Call me not Naomi (pleasant), but call me Marah (bitter), for the Lord hath dealt very bitterly with me."

"Jehoshaphat had riches and honor in abundance and joined affinity with Ahab," but he paid dearly for the unholy alliance. Prosperity seemed to make him forget his need of God, and in an evil hour he linked himself and the kingdom of Judah to wicked Ahab and apostate Israel. With them he went up to Ramoth-Gilead to war, even though warned by God's faithful prophet, and, in consequence, he barely escaped with his life and returned to a discouraged, depleted and demoralized