

and it would be a hopeless labour, compared with which that of Sisyphus was child's play, to attempt to deduce from these discordant systems a consistent and harmonious scheme of comparative chronology. Happily, at least nine-tenths of the chronological theories heretofore devised may be dismissed as more or less ingenious systems of guesswork. Since the discovery of the key to the reading of hieroglyphic and cuneiform inscriptions, we are in possession of a mass of contemporaneous documents which, in many cases, enable us to check a chronological system at every step. The amount of material of this kind at our disposal is now so large, that it is time that the whole subject of comparative chronology should be reconsidered *de novo* in the light of monumental evidence. The following essay is an attempt in that direction, in which we hope to show that, by means of the monumental helps at our disposal, together with the written evidence, it is possible to determine not only the year, *but the exact day* on which the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt took place. If our attempt should be considered successful—and of this the reader must himself be the judge—it will furnish to future chronologists a fixed and absolute starting-point for their researches; to biblical scholars a new proof of the truth of the Bible; and to Egyptologists a new study of the Egyptian calendar.

3. Most Egyptologists of the present day, following the lead of Bunsen and Lepsius, seem to be agreed that the Hebrew exodus from Egypt must be placed about 1314 B.C., in the reign of Menptah, the son of Ramessu the Great. In fact, Brugsch¹ is so sure that this date is correct, that he uses the following emphatic language, italics included: "The new pharaoh 'who knew not Joseph' . . . is no other, *can be no other*, than Ramessu II." As Brugsch gives no additional proof for this dogmatic assertion, beyond what may be found in Lepsius,² we venture to assert with equal emphasis that, inasmuch as Manetho, the monuments and astronomy, are all in accord in placing Ramessu the Great nearly two hundred

¹ *Hist. of Egypt*, i. 98, 99.

² *Chronol. der Ägypter*, translated in pp. 357-506 of his *Letters from Egypt*, etc. (Bohn's edition).