

# Ancient Literature

Significant Excerpts from the Books of  
Classical Authors Which You Can Use to  
Supplement Your History Curriculum

## Volume Four Ancient Egypt

Compiled by Laurie Bluedorn

May be used with Ancient History from Primary Sources: A Literary Timeline  
by Harvey and Laurie Bluedorn

September, 2008  
Trivium Pursuit

Ancient Literature: Significant Excerpts from the Books of Classical Authors Which You Can Use to Supplement Your History Curriculum -- Volume Four: Ancient Egypt  
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# Contents

Moses – NAME OF AUTHOR

Bible: Genesis – NAME OF BOOK

The Tower of Babel – DESCRIPTION OF SIGNIFICANT EXCERPT

Josephus

Antiquities of the Jews

Where the children of Ham settled after the Tower of Babel

David

Bible: Psalm

Egypt was called the land of Ham or the land of Mizraim

Herodotus

The History

Min, first king of Egypt

Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

Early history of Egypt

Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

Cheops builds the pyramid

Herodotus

The History

The pyramids

The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep

Considered the oldest book in the world; a compilation of wise sayings; written c. 2450 B.C.

Letter of Pepi II

Letter of Egyptian pharaoh Pepi II (ruled 2161-2067 B.C.) to Harkhuf (an Egyptian official)

Moses

Bible: Genesis

Abram is called by God and travels to Canaan (c.1875 B.C.)

The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus

Earliest known surgical document; written around the 16th century B.C.

Epitaph of Beka

Inscription on a funeral pillar; Beka, the person who died, was the great steward of the Public Granary

The Laboring Classes

Compares the different occupations and their hardships with the easy occupation of a scribe

Moses

Bible: Genesis

Jacob is established in Egypt (c.1660 B.C.)

Herodotus

The History

Farm labor in Egypt is easy because of the Nile

Herodotus

The History

The people and customs of Egypt; embalming

Herodotus

The History

Egyptian crocodile and other animals

The Shipwrecked Sailor

A man tells of his fantastic adventure

Moses

Bible: Exodus

Moses leads the Israelites out of Egypt (c.1445 B.C.)

Justin

Epitome of the Philippic Histories

Roman view of the early history of the Jews and of the Exodus

Pliny the Elder

Natural History

Description of Egypt

Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

Description of Egypt

Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

How the pharaohs lived

Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

Customs of the early Egyptians

Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

Egyptian medicine

Products of Arabia

Inscriptions on the inner walls of an Egyptian temple giving an account of the conquest of Arabia during the time of Thutmose III (ruled c. 1138-1085 B.C.)

Jeremiah

Bible: I Kings

David reigns over Israel (c. 1010-970 B.C.)

El-Amarna Letters

Tablets of Tel El-Amarna; Palestine is under Egyptian rule and the governor of Jerusalem (plus other Egyptian rulers in Palestine) tells pharaoh Akhenaten (ruled c. 1022-1006 B.C.) of a general revolt of the natives

Jeremiah

Bible: I Kings

The foundation of Solomon's temple is laid (c. 966 B.C.)

Ramesses at Kadesh

Poem recording the battle between Pharaoh Ramesses II (ruled c. 940-873 B.C.) and the Hittite King Muwatallis II; called the Battle of Kadesh (c. 936 B.C.).

Treaty Between Ramesses II and the Hittites

A treaty of peace was signed between Ramesses II (ruled c. 940-873 B.C.) and the Hittite king after the battle called Kadesh (c. 936 B.C.).

The Mouse as Vizier

Ancient Egyptian Tale; unknown date

Jeremiah

Bible: I Kings

The kingdom of Israel is divided; Rehoboam rules Judah (c. 930-913 B.C.) and Jeroboam rules Israel (c. 930-909 B.C.)

Jeremiah

Bible: I Kings

Ramesses II (the Great) -- called Shishak in the Bible -- sacks Jerusalem (c. 925 B.C.)

Spoliation of Tombs

Extract from a longer document from the time of Ramesses IX (ruled c. 835-816 B.C.) showing that tomb robbery was common even during ancient times.

Strabo

Ancient Geography

Description of ancient Egypt

Sulpicius Severus

Sacred History

Hoshea makes an alliance with the Ethiopians, who at that time held Egypt (c. 726 B.C.)

Jeremiah

Bible: II Kings

Hoshea, the king of Israel, conspires with the king of Egypt/Ethiopia and stops paying tribute to the king of Assyria; Sargon of Assyria carries away the people of Israel (c. 722 B.C.); New Chronology says this king of Egypt/Ethiopia was Hedjkheperre Shoshenq Si-Bast (Shoshenq IV)

Isaiah

Bible: Isaiah

The prophet Isaiah predicts the war of Assyria against Egypt (c. 713 B.C.)

Josephus

Antiquities of the Jews

How Sennacherib made an expedition against Hezekiah (King of Judah); what threatenings Rabshakeh made to Hezekiah when Sennacherib was gone against the Egyptians; how Isaiah the prophet encouraged him; how Sennacherib having failed to success in Egypt, returned to Jerusalem; and how upon his finding his army destroyed, he returned home (c. 704-701 B.C.)

Ezra

Bible: II Chronicles

The Battle for Jerusalem (c. 704-701 B.C.)

Herodotus

The History

Herodotus' report of the invasion of Egypt by Sennacherib

Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

Civil disorder in Egypt for two years followed by a twelve-man aristocracy (c. 687-670 B.C.)

Herodotus

The History

The twelve-man aristocracy diverts the flow of the Nile

Herodotus

The Histories

Psammetichus Sais took over Egypt and reigned there 54 years (c. 670 B.C.)

Herodotus

The Histories

The son of Psammetichus Sais -- Necho or Pharaohnecho -- rules Egypt for 16 years (c. 616 B.C.)

Ezra

Bible II Chronicles

Pharaohnecho, king of Egypt, set out to fight against the king of Assyria/Babylon by besieging Carchemish on the Euphrates River; Josiah, King of Judah, interferes and is killed (c. 610 B.C.)

Jeremiah

Bible: II Kings

Another version of Josiah's death (c. 610 B.C.)

Josephus

Antiquities of the Jews

How Josiah fought with Neco and was wounded and died; Josiah's son Jehoahaz (Shallum) becomes king of Judah (c. 610 B.C.)

Josephus

Antiquities of the Jews

When Necho returned from Assyria, he deposed Shallum and made Eliakim (Jehoiakim), his older brother, king of Judah (c. 610 B.C.)

Jeremiah

Bible: II Kings

When Necho returned from Assyria, he deposed Shallum and made Eliakim (Jehoiakim), his older brother, king of Judah (c. 610 B.C.)

Jeremiah

Bible: Jeremiah

Jeremiah makes a prophecy that Nebuchadnezzar would conquer Egypt (c. 607 B.C.)



Jeremiah

Bible II Kings

Nebuchadnezzar took all the land between Egypt and the Euphrates River (c. 605 B.C.)

Herodotus

The Histories

Psammis rules Egypt for 6 years (c. 600-594 B.C.) and his son Apries (Pharaohhophra) rules for 25 years (c. 594-570 B.C.)

Ezekiel

Bible: Ezekiel

Ezekiel makes a prophecy about Apries (Pharaohhophra) (c. 588 B.C.)

Ezekiel

Bible: Ezekiel

Ezekiel makes another prophecy concerning Egypt (c. 587 B.C.)

Ezekiel

Bible: Ezekiel

More prophecy concerning Egypt (c. 587 B.C.)

Jeremiah

Bible: Jeremiah

Pharaohhophra came with his army from Egypt to help Zedekiah, king of Judah, while the Chaldeans were raising a siege of Jerusalem (c. 587 B.C.)

Jeremiah

Bible: Jeremiah

Jerusalem is taken by the Chaldeans/Babylonians (c. 586 B.C.)

Jeremiah

Bible: Jeremiah

The remnant of the Israelites force Jeremiah to go with them to Egypt; Jeremiah predicts the destruction of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar (which occurred c. 571 B.C.) and makes a prophecy about Apries (Pharaohhophra) (c. 586 B.C.)

Ezekiel  
Bible: Ezekiel  
Ezekiel's prophecy against Egypt (c. 586 B.C.)

Sulpicius Severus  
Sacred History  
The remnant Jews flee to Egypt (c. 586 B.C.)

Diodorus Siculus  
Historical Library  
Apries (Pharaohhophra) rules Egypt (c. 594-570 B.C.) and after him, Amasis, his son, rules while paying tribute to the Babylonians (c. 570-525 B.C.)

Herodotus  
The Histories  
Cambyses, son of Cyrus, conquers Egypt (c. 525 B.C.)

Arrian  
Anabasis of Alexander  
Alexander the Great conquers Egypt (332 B.C.)

Diodorus Siculus  
Historical Library  
Alexander the Great conquers Egypt and founds Alexandria (332 B.C.)

Vitruvius  
On Architecture  
How Alexander chose the man who designed Alexandria (332. B.C.)

Josephus  
The War of the Jews  
Alexander the Great moved a colony of the Jews (along with other groups of people) to Alexandria in order to populate it (331 B.C.)

Arrian  
Anabasis of Alexander  
Alexander settles affairs in Egypt before leaving (331 B.C.)

Lucian

Octogenarians

After the death of Alexander the Great, all of Egypt, was given to Ptolemy (323 B.C.)

Daniel

Bible: Daniel

Daniel tells (200 years earlier) of Alexander and what happens at his death

Justin

Epitome of the Philippic Histories

Ptolemy takes over Egypt and wins over the people

Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

Ptolemy brings the body of Alexander the Great to Egypt to bury (321 B.C.)

Josephus

Antiquities of the Jews

How Ptolemy took Jerusalem and transported many Jews to Alexandria (320 B.C.)

Vitruvius

On Architecture

Ptolemy Philadelphus establishes a library at Alexandria (277 B.C.)

Tertullian

Apology

Ptolemy Philadelphus calls for a Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures (277 B.C.)

Josephus

Antiquities of the Jews

Ptolemy Philadelphus calls for a Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures (277 B.C.)

Plutarch

The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans: Antony

The Ptolemys rule Egypt until the death of Cleopatra in 30 B.C.; Egypt becomes a Roman province

# Moses

Bible: Genesis

## 11:1-9 The Tower of Babel

1 And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. 2 And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. 3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. 4 And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. 5 And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. 6 And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. 7 Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. 8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. 9 Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of

all the earth.

# Josephus

Antiquities of the Jews

## 1.5.2 Where the children of Ham settled after the Tower of Babel

2 The children of Ham possessed the land from Syria and Amanus, and the mountains of Libanus; seizing upon all that was on its sea-coasts, and as far as the ocean, and keeping it as their own. Some indeed of its names are utterly vanished away; others of them being changed, and another sound given them, are hardly to be discovered; yet a few there are which have kept their denominations entire. For of the four sons of Ham, time has not at all hurt the name of Chus; for the Ethiopians, over whom he reigned, are even at this day, both by themselves and by all men in Asia, called Chusites. The memory also of the Mesraites is preserved in their name; for all we who inhabit this country of Judea called Egypt Mestres, and the Egyptians Mestrians. Phut also was the founder of Libya, and called the inhabitants Phutites, from himself: there is also a river in the country of Moors which bears that name; whence it is that we may see the greatest part of the Grecian histori-

ographers mention that river and the adjoining country by the appellation of Phut: but the name it has now has been by change given it from one of the sons of Mesraim, who was called Lybyos. We will inform you presently what has been the occasion why it has been called Africa also. Canaan, the fourth son of Ham, inhabited the country now called Judea, and called it from his own name Canaan. The children of these four were these: Sabas, who founded the Sabeans; Evilas, who founded the Evileans, who are called Getuli; Sabathes founded the Sabathens, they are now called by the Greeks Astaborans; Sabactas settled the Sabactens; and Ragmus the Ragmeans; and he had two sons, the one of whom, Judadas, settled the Judadeans, a nation of the western Ethiopians, and left them his name; as did Sabas to the Sabeans: but Nimrod, the son of Chus, staid and tyrannized at Babylon, as we have already informed you. Now all the children of Mesraim, being eight in number, possessed the country from Gaza to Egypt, though it retained the name of one only, the Philistim; for the Greeks call part of that country Palestine. As for the rest, Ludieim, and Enemim, and Labim, who alone inhabited in Libya, and called the country from himself, Nedim, and Phethrosim, and Chesloim, and Cephthorim, we know nothing of them besides their names; for the Ethiopic war which we shall

describe hereafter, was the cause that those cities were overthrown. The sons of Canaan were these: Sidonius, who also built a city of the same name; it is called by the Greeks Sidon

Amathus inhabited in Amathine, which is even now called Amathe by the inhabitants, although the Macedonians named it Epiphania, from one of his posterity: Arudeus possessed the island Aradus: Arucas possessed Arce, which is in Libanus. But for the seven others, Eueus, Chetteus, Jebuseus, Amorreus, Gergesus, Eudeus, Sineus, Samareus, we have nothing in the sacred books but their names, for the Hebrews overthrew their cities; and their calamities came upon them on the occasion following.

## David

Bible: Psalm

105:23 Egypt was called the land of Ham or the land of Mizraim

23 Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

# Herodotus

## The History

### 2.4 Min, first king of Egypt

4 But as to those matters which concern men, the priests agreed with one another in saying that the Egyptians were the first of all men on earth to find out the course of the year, having divided the seasons into twelve parts to make up the whole; and this they said they found out from the stars: and they reckon to this extent more wisely than the Hellenes, as it seems to me, inasmuch as the Hellenes throw in an intercalated month every other year, to make the seasons right, whereas the Egyptians, reckoning the twelve months at thirty days each, bring in also every year five days beyond the number, and thus the circle of their seasons is completed and comes round to the same point whence it set out. They said moreover that the Egyptians were the first who brought into use appellations for the twelve gods and the Hellenes took up the use from them; and that they were the first who assigned altars and images and temples to the gods, and who engraved figures on stones; and with regard to the greater number of these things they showed me by actual facts that they had happened so. They said also that the first man who became king of Egypt was Min; and that in his time all Egypt except the

district of Thebes was a swamp, and none of the regions were then above water which now lie below the lake of Moiris, to which lake it is a voyage of seven days up the river from the sea:

# Diodorus Siculus

## Historical Library

### 1.43-45, 50 Early history of Egypt

43 As for their means of living in primitive times, the Egyptians, they say, in the earliest period got their food from herbs and the stalks and roots of the plants which grew in the marshes, making trial of each one of them by tasting it, and the first one eaten by them and the most favoured was that called Agrostis, because it excelled the others in sweetness and supplied sufficient nutriment for the human body; 2 for they observed that this plant was attractive to the cattle and quickly increased their bulk. Because of this fact the natives, in remembrance of the usefulness of this plant, to this day, when approaching the gods, hold some of it in their hands as they pray to them; for they believe that man is a creature of swamp and marsh, basing this conclusion on the smoothness of his skin and his physical constitution, as well as on the fact that he requires a wet rather than a dry diet. 3 A second way by which the Egyptians subsisted was, they say, by



the eating of fish, of which the river provided a great abundance, especially at the time when it receded after its flood and dried up. 4 They also ate the flesh of some of the pasturing animals, using for clothing the skins of the beasts that were eaten, and their dwellings they built out of reeds. And traces of these customs still remain among the herdsmen of Egypt, all of whom, they say, have no other dwelling up to this time than one of reeds, considering that with this they are well enough provided for. 5 After subsisting in this manner over a long period of time they finally turned to the edible fruits of the earth, among which may be included the bread made from the lotus. The discovery of these is attributed by some to Isis, but by others to one of their early kings called Menas. 6 The priests, however, have the story that the discoverer of the branches of learning and of the arts was Hermes, but that it was their kings who discovered such things as are necessary for existence; and that this was the reason why the kingship in early times was bestowed, not upon the sons of their former rulers, but upon such as conferred the greatest and most numerous benefits upon the peoples, whether it be that the inhabitants in this way sought to provoke their kings to useful service for the benefit of all, or that they have in very truth received an account to this effect in their sacred writings.

44 Some of them give the story that at first gods and heroes ruled Egypt for a little less than eighteen thousand years, the last of the gods to rule being Horus, the son of Isis; and mortals have been kings over their country, they say, for a little less than five thousand years down to the One Hundred and Eightieth Olympiad, the time when we visited Egypt and the king was Ptolemy, who took the name of The New Dionysus. 2 For most of this period the rule was held by native kings, and for a small part of it by Ethiopians, Persians, and Macedonians. Near four Ethiopians held the throne, not consecutively but with intervals between, for a little less than thirty-six years in all; 3 and the Persians, after their king Cambyses had subdued the nation by arms, ruled for one hundred and thirty-five years, including the periods of revolt on the part of the Egyptians which they raised because they were unable to endure the harshness of their dominion and their lack of respect for the native gods. 4 Last of all the Macedonians and their dynasty held rule for two hundred and seventy-six years. For the rest of the time all the kings of the land were natives, four hundred and seventy of them being men and five women. About all of them the priests had records which were regularly handed down in their sacred books to each successive priest from early times, giving the



stature of each of the former kings, a description of his character, and what he had done during his reign; as for us, however, it would be a long task to write of each of them severally, and superfluous also, seeing that most of the material included is of no profit. 5 Consequently we shall undertake to recount briefly only the most important of the facts which deserve a place in history.

45 After the gods the first king of Egypt, according to the priests, was Menas, who taught the people to worship gods and offer sacrifices, and also to supply themselves with tables and couches and to use costly bedding, and, in a word, introduced luxury and an extravagant manner of life. 2 For this reason when, many generations later, Tnephachthus, the father of Bocchoris the wise, was king and, while on a campaign in Arabia, ran short of supplies because the country was desert and rough, we are told that he was obliged to go without food for one day and then to live on quite simple fare at the home of some ordinary folk in private station, and that he, enjoying the experience exceedingly, denounced luxury and pronounced a curse on the king who had first taught the people their extravagant way of living; and so deeply did he take to heart the change which had taken place in the people's habits of eating, drinking, and sleeping, that he inscribed his curse in hieroglyphs

on the temple of Zeus in Thebes; and this, in fact, appears to be the chief reason why the fame of Menas and his honours did not persist into later ages. 3 And it is said that the descendants of this king, fifty-two in number all told, ruled in unbroken succession more than a thousand and forty years, but that in their reigns nothing occurred that was worthy of record.

50 The Thebans say that they are the earliest of all men and the first people among whom philosophy and the exact science of the stars were discovered, since their country enables them to observe more distinctly than others the rising and settings of the stars. 2 Peculiar to them also is their ordering of the months and years. For they do not reckon the days by the moon, but by the sun, making their month of thirty days, and they add five and a quarter days to the twelve months and in this way fill out the cycle of the year. But they do not intercalate months or subtract days, as most of the Greeks do. They appear to have made careful observations of the eclipses both of the sun and of the moon, and predict them, foretelling without error all the events which actually occur.

# Diodorus Siculus

## Historical Library

### 1.63-64 Cheops builds the pyramid

63 After Remphis died, kings succeeded to the throne for seven generations who were confirmed sluggards and devoted only to indulgence and luxury. Consequently, in the priestly records, no costly building of theirs nor any deed worthy of historical record is handed down in connection with them, except in the case of one ruler, Nileus, from whom the river came to be named the Nile, though formerly called Aegyptus. This ruler constructed a very great number of canals at opportune places and in many ways showed himself eager to increase the usefulness of the Nile, and therefore became the cause of the present appellation of the river.

2 The eighth king, Chemmis of Memphis, ruled fifty years and constructed the largest of the three pyramids, which are numbered among the seven wonders of the world. 3 These pyramids, which are situated on the side of Egypt which is towards Libya, are one hundred and twenty stades from Memphis and forty-five from the Nile, and by the immensity of their structures and the skill shown in their execution they fill the beholder with wonder and astonishment. 4 For the largest is in the form of a square

and has a base length on each side of seven plethra and a height of over six plethra; it also gradually tapers to the top, where each side is six cubits long. 5 The entire construction is of hard stone, which is difficult to work but lasts for ever; for though no fewer than a thousand years have elapsed, as they say, to our lifetime, or, as some writers have it, more than three thousand four hundred, the stones remain to this day still preserving their original position and the entire structure undecayed. 6 It is said that the stone was conveyed over a great distance from Arabia and that the construction was effected by means of mounds, since cranes had not yet been invented at that time; 7 and the most remarkable thing in the account is that, though the constructions were on such a great scale and the country round about them consists of nothing but sand, not a trace remains either of any mound or of the dressing of the stones, so that they do not have the appearance of being the slow handiwork of men but look like a sudden creation, as though they had been made by some god and set down bodily in the surrounding sand. 8 Certain Egyptians would make a marvel out of these things, saying that, inasmuch as the mounds were built of salt and saltpetre, when the river was let in it melted them down and completely effaced them without the intervention of man's hand. 9

However, there is not a word of truth in this, but the entire material for the mounds, raised as they were by the labour of many hands, was returned by the same means to the place from which it came; for three hundred and sixty thousand men, as they say, were employed on the undertaking, and the whole structure was scarcely completed in twenty years.

64 Upon the death of this king his brother Cephren succeeded to the throne and ruled fifty-six years; but some say that it was not the brother of Chemmis, but his son, named Chabryes, who took the throne. 2 All writers, however, agree that it was the next ruler who, emulating the example of his predecessor, built the second pyramid, which was the equal of the one just mentioned in the skill displayed in its execution but far behind it in size, since its base length on each side is only a stade. 3 And an inscription on the larger pyramid gives the sum of money expended on it, since the writing sets forth that on vegetables and purgatives for the workmen there were paid out over sixteen hundred talents. 4 The smaller bears no inscription but has steps cut into one side. And though the two kings built the pyramids to serve as their tombs, in the event neither of them was buried in them; 5 for the multitudes, because of the hardships which they had endured in the building of them and the many

cruel and violent acts of these kings, were filled with anger against those who had caused their sufferings and openly threatened to tear their bodies asunder and cast them in despite out of the tombs. 6 Consequently each ruler when dying enjoined upon his kinsmen to bury his body secretly in an unmarked place.

After these rulers Mycerinus, to whom some give the name Mencherinus, a son of the builder of the first pyramid, became king. 7 He undertook the construction of a third pyramid, but died before the entire structure had been completed. The base length of each side he made three plethra, and for fifteen courses he built the walls of black stone like that found about Thebes, but the rest of it he filled out with stone like that found in the other pyramids. 8 In size this structure falls behind those mentioned above, but far surpasses them in the skill displayed in its execution and the great cost of the stone; and on the north side of the pyramid is an inscription stating that its builder was Mycerinus. 9 This ruler, they say, out of indignation at the cruelty of his predecessors aspired to live an honourable life and one devoted to the welfare of his subjects; and he continually did many other things which might best help to evoke the goodwill of the people towards himself, and more especially, when he gave audiences, he spent a great amount of money, giving presents to

such honest men as he thought had not fared in the courts of law as they deserved.

10 There are also three more pyramids, each of which is one plethrum long on each side and in general construction is like the others save in size; and these pyramids, they say, were built by the three kings named above for their wives.

11 It is generally agreed that these monuments far surpass all other constructions in Egypt, not only in their massiveness and cost but also in the skill displayed by their builders.

12 And they say that the architects of the monuments are more deserving of admiration than the kings who furnished the means for their execution; for in bringing their plans to completion the former called upon their individual souls and their zeal for honour, but the latter only used the wealth which they had inherited and the grievous toil of other men.

13 But with regard to the pyramids there is no complete agreement among either the inhabitants of the country or the historians; for according to some the kings mentioned above were the builders, according to others they were different kings; for instance, it is said that Armaeus built the largest, Amosis the second, and Inaros the third. 14 And this last pyramid, some say, is the tomb of the courtesan Rhodopis, for some of the

nomarchs became her lovers, as the account goes, and out of their passion for her carried the building through to completion as a joint undertaking.

## Herodotus

### The History

#### 2.124-125, 127 The pyramids

124 Down to the time when Rhampsinitos was king, they told me there was in Egypt nothing but orderly rule, and Egypt prospered greatly; but after him Cheops became king over them and brought them to every kind of evil: for he shut up all the temples, and having first kept them from sacrificing there, he then bade all the Egyptians work for him. So some were appointed to draw stones from the stone-quarries in the Arabian mountains to the Nile, and others he ordered to receive the stones after they had been carried over the river in boats, and to draw them to those which are called the Libyan mountains; and they worked by a hundred thousand men at a time, for each three months continually. Of this oppression there passed ten years while the causeway was made by which they drew the stones, which causeway they built, and it is a work not much less, as it appears to me, than the pyramid; for the length of it is five furlongs and the breadth ten

fathoms and the height, where it is highest, eight fathoms, and it is made of stone smoothed and with figures carved upon it. For this, they said, the ten years were spent, and for the underground chambers on the hill upon which the pyramids stand, which he caused to be made as sepulchral chambers for himself in an island, having conducted thither a channel from the Nile. For the making of the pyramid itself there passed a period of twenty years; and the pyramid is square, each side measuring eight hundred feet, and the height of it is the same. It is built of stone smoothed and fitted together in the most perfect manner, not one of the stones being less than thirty feet in length.

125 This pyramid was made after the manner of steps, which some call “rows” and others “bases”: and when they had first made it thus, they raised the remaining stones with machines made of short pieces of timber, raising them first from the ground to the first stage of the steps, and when the stone got up to this it was placed upon another machine standing on the first stage, and so from this it was drawn to the second upon another machine; for as many as were the courses of the steps, so many machines there were also, or perhaps they transferred one and the same machine, made so as easily to be carried, to each stage successively, in order that they might take up the stones; for let it be told in

both ways, according as it is reported. However that may be, the highest parts of it were finished first, and afterwards they proceeded to finish that which came next to them, and lastly they finished the parts of it near the ground and the lowest ranges. On the pyramid it is declared in Egyptian writing how much was spent on radishes and onions and leeks for the workmen, and if I rightly remember that which the interpreter said in reading to me this inscription, a sum of one thousand six hundred talents of silver was spent; and if this is so, how much besides is likely to have been expended upon the iron with which they worked, and upon bread and clothing for the workmen, seeing that they were building the works for the time which has been mentioned and were occupied for no small time besides, as I suppose, in the cutting and bringing of the stones and in working at the excavation under the ground?

127 This Cheops, the Egyptians said, reigned fifty years; and after he was dead his brother Chephren succeeded to the kingdom. This king followed the same manner as the other, both in all the rest and also in that he made a pyramid, not indeed attaining to the measurements of that which was built by the former (this I know, having myself also measured it), and moreover there are no underground chambers beneath nor does a chan-



nel come from the Nile flowing to this one as to the other, in which the water coming through a conduit built for it flows round an island within, where they say that Cheops himself is laid: but for a basement he built the first course of Ethiopian stone of divers colours; and this pyramid he made forty feet lower than the other as regards size, building it close to the great pyramid. These stand both upon the same hill, which is about a hundred feet high. And Chephren they said reigned fifty and six years.

## The Instruction of Ptah-Hotep

Considered the oldest book in the world; a compilation of wise sayings; written c. 2450 B.C.

Be not arrogant because of that which you know; deal with the ignorant as with the learned; for the barriers of art are not closed, no artist being in possession of the perfection to which he should aspire. But good words are more difficult to find than the emerald, for it is by slaves that that is discovered among the rocks of pegmatite.

If you find a disputant while he is hot, and if he is superior to you in ability, lower the hands, bend the back, do not get into a passion with him. As

he will not let you destroy his words, it is utterly wrong to interrupt him; that proclaims that you are incapable of keeping yourself calm, when you are contradicted. If then you have to do with a disputant while he is hot, imitate one who does not stir. You have the advantage over him if you keep silence when he is uttering evil words. "The better of the two is he who is impassive," say the bystanders, and you are right in the opinion of the great.

If you find a disputant while he is hot, do not despise him because you are not of the same opinion. Be not angry against him when he is wrong; away with such a thing. He fights against himself; require him not further to flatter your feelings. Do not amuse yourself with the spectacle which you have before you; it is odious, it is mean, it is the part of a despicable soul so to do. As soon as you let yourself be moved by your feelings, combat this desire as a thing that is reproved by the great.

If you have, as leader, to decide on the conduct of a great number of men, seek the most perfect manner of doing so that your own conduct may be without reproach. Justice is great, invariable, and assured; it has not been disturbed since the age of Ptah. To throw obstacles in the way of the laws is to open the way before vio-

lence. Shall that which is below gain the upper hand, if the unjust does not attain to the place of justice? Even he who says: I take for myself, of my own free-will; but says not: I take by virtue of my authority. The limitations of justice are invariable; such is the instruction which every man receives from his father.

Inspire not men with fear, else Ptah will fight against you in the same manner. If any one asserts that he lives by such means, Ptah will take away the bread from his mouth; if any one asserts that he enriches himself thereby, Ptah says: I may take those riches to myself. If any one asserts that he beats others, Ptah will end by reducing him to impotence. Let no one inspire men with fear; this is the will of Ptah. Let one provide sustenance for them in the lap of peace; it will then be that they will freely give what has been torn from them by terror.

If you are among the persons seated at meat in the house of a greater man than yourself, take that which he gives you, bowing to the ground. Regard that which is placed before you, but point not at it; regard it not frequently; he is a blameworthy person who departs from this rule. Speak not to the great man more than he requires, for one knows not what may be displeasing to him. Speak when he invites you and your worth

will be pleasing. As for the great man who has plenty of means of existence, his conduct is as he himself wishes. He does that which pleases him; if he desires to repose, he realizes his intention. The great man stretching forth his hand does that to which other men do not attain. But as the means of existence are under the will of Ptah, one can not rebel against it.

If you are one of those who bring the messages of one great man to another, conform yourself exactly to that wherewith he has charged you; perform for him the commission as he has enjoined you. Beware of altering in speaking the offensive words which one great person addresses to another; he who perverts the trustfulness of his way, in order to repeat only what produces pleasure in the words of every man, great or small, is a detestable person.

If you are a farmer, gather the crops in the field which the great Ptah has given you, do not boast in the house of your neighbors; it is better to make oneself dreaded by one's deeds. As for him who, master of his own way of acting, being all-powerful, seizes the goods of others like a crocodile in the midst even of watchment, his children are an object of malediction, of scorn, and of hatred on account of it, while his father is grievously distressed, and as for the mother who has borne him,

happy is another rather than herself. But a man becomes a god when he is chief of a tribe which has confidence in following him.

Be active during the time of your existence, do no more than is commanded. Do not spoil the time of your activity; he is a blameworthy person who makes a bad use of his moments. Do not lose the daily opportunity of increasing that which your house possesses. Activity produces riches, and riches do not endure when it slackens.

If you are a wise man, bring up a son who shall be pleasing to Ptah. If he conforms his conduct to your way and occupies himself with your affairs as is right, do to him all the good you can; he is your son, a person attached to you whom your own self has begotten. Separate not your heart from him.... But if he conducts himself ill and transgresses your wish, if he rejects all counsel, if his mouth goes according to the evil word, strike him on the mouth in return. Give orders without hesitation to those who do wrong, to him whose temper is turbulent; and he will not deviate from the straight path, and there will be no obstacle to interrupt the way.

If you are a leader, setting forward your plans according to that which you decide, perform perfect actions

which posterity may remember, without letting the words prevail with you which multiply flattery, which excite pride and produce vanity.

If you are a leader of peace, listen to the discourse of the petitioner. Be not abrupt with him; that would trouble him. Say not to him: "You have already recounted this." Indulgence will encourage him to accomplish the object of his coming. As for being abrupt with the complainant because he described what passed when the injury was done, instead of complaining of the injury itself let it not be! The way to obtain a clear explanation is to listen with kindness.

If you desire that your conduct should be good and preserved from all evil, keep yourself from every attack of bad humor. It is a fatal malady which leads to discord, and there is no longer any existence for him who gives way to it. For it introduces discord between fathers and mothers, as well as between brothers and sisters; it causes the wife and the husband to hate each other; it contains all kinds of wickedness, it embodies all kinds of wrong. When a man has established his just equilibrium and walks in this path, there where he makes his dwelling, there is no room for bad humor.

Be not of an irritable temper as regards that which happens at your



side; grumble not over your own affairs. Be not of an irritable temper in regard to your neighbors; better is a compliment to that which displeases than rudeness. It is wrong to get into a passion with one's neighbors, to be no longer master of one's words. When there is only a little irritation, one creates for oneself an affliction for the time when one will again be cool.

Treat your dependents well, in so far as it belongs to you to do so; and it belongs to those whom Ptah has favored.

Do not repeat any extravagance of language; do not listen to it; it is a thing which has escaped from a hasty mouth. If it is repeated, look, without hearing it, toward the earth; say nothing in regard to it. Cause him who speaks to you to know what is just, even him who provokes to injustice; cause that which is just to be done, cause it to triumph. As for that which is hateful according to the law, condemn it by unveiling it.

If you are a wise man, sitting in the council of your lord, direct your thought toward that which is wise. Be silent rather than scatter your words. When you speak, know that which can be brought against you. To speak in the council is an art, and speech is criticized more than any other labor;

it is contradiction which puts it to the proof.

If you are powerful, respect knowledge and calmness of language. Command only to direct; to be absolute is to run into evil. Let not your heart be haughty, neither let it be mean. Do not let your orders remain unsaid and cause your answers to penetrate; but speak without heat, assume a serious countenance. As for the vivacity of an ardent heart, temper it; the gentle man penetrates all obstacles. He who agitates himself all the day long has not a good moment; and he who amuses himself all the day long keeps not his fortune. Aim at fulness like pilots; once one is seated another works, and seeks to obey one's orders.

Teach others to render homage to a great man. If you gather the crop for him among men, cause it to return fully to its owner, at whose hands is your subsistence. But the gift of affection is worth more than the provisions with which your back is covered. For that which the great man receives from you will enable your house to live, without speaking of the maintenance you enjoy, which you desire to preserve; it is thereby that he extends a beneficent hand, and that in your home good things are added to good things. Let your love pass into the heart of those who love you; cause those about you to be

loving and obedient.

If you are a son of the guardians deputed to watch over the public tranquillity, execute your commission without knowing its meaning, and speak with firmness. Substitute not for that which the instructor has said what you believe to be his intention; the great use words as it suits them. Your part is to transmit rather than to comment upon.

If you are annoyed at a thing, if you are tormented by someone who is acting within his right, get out of his sight, and remember him no more when he has ceased to address you.

If you have become great after having been little, if you have become rich after having been poor, when you are at the head of the city, know how not to take advantage of the fact that you have reached the first rank, harden not your heart because of your elevation; you are become only the administrator, the prefect, of the provisions which belong to Ptah. Put not behind you the neighbor who is like you; be unto him as a companion.

Bend your back before your superior. You are attached to the palace of the king; your house is established in its fortune, and your profits are as is fitting. Yet a man is annoyed at having an authority above himself,

and passes the period of life in being vexed thereat. Although that hurts not your . . . Do not plunder the house of your neighbors, seize not by force the goods which are beside you. Exclaim not then against that which you hear, and do not feel humiliated. It is necessary to reflect when one is hindered by it that the pressure of authority is felt also by one's neighbor.

If you aim at polished manners, call not him whom you accost. Converse with him especially in such a way as not to annoy him. Enter on a discussion with him only after having left him time to saturate his mind with the subject of the conversation. If he lets his ignorance display itself, and if he gives you all opportunity to disgrace him, treat him with courtesy rather; proceed not to drive him into a corner; do not . . . the word to him; answer not in a crushing manner; crush him not; worry him not; in order that in his turn he may not return to the subject, but depart to the profit of your conversation.

Let your countenance be cheerful during the time of your existence. When we see one departing from the storehouse who has entered in order to bring his share of provision, with his face contracted, it shows that his stomach is empty and that authority is offensive to him. Let not that happen to you; it is . . .

Know those who are faithful to you when you are in low estate. Your merit then is worth more than those who did you honor. His . . . , behold that which a man possesses completely. That is of more importance than his high rank; for this is a matter which passes from one to another. The merit of one's son is advantageous to the father, and that which he really is, is worth more than the remembrance of his father's rank.

If you take a wife, do not . . . Let her be more contented than any of her fellow-citizens. She will be attached to you doubly, if her chain is pleasant. Do not repel her; grant that which pleases her; it is to her contentment that she appreciates your work.

If you hear those things which I have said to you, your wisdom will be fully advanced. Although they are the means which are suitable for arriving at the maat, and it is that which makes them precious, their memory would recede from the mouth of men. But thanks to the beauty of their arrangement in rhythm all their words will now be carried without alteration over this earth eternally. That will create a canvass to be embellished, whereof the great will speak, in order to instruct men in its sayings. After having listened to them the pupil will become a master, even he who shall

have properly listened to the sayings because he shall have heard them. Let him win success by placing himself in the first rank; that is for him a position perfect and durable, and he has nothing further to desire forever. By knowledge his path is assured, and he is made happy by it on the earth. The wise man is satiated by knowledge; he is a great man through his own merits. His tongue is in accord with his mind; just are his lips when he speaks, his eyes when he gazes, his ears when he hears. The advantage of his son is to do that which is just without deceiving himself.

To attend therefore profits the son of him who has attended. To attend is the result of the fact that one has attended. A teachable auditor is formed, because I have attended. Good when he has attended, good when he speaks, he who has attended has profited, and it is profitable to attend to him who has attended. To attend is worth more than anything else, for it produces love, the good thing that is twice good. The son who accepts the instruction of his father will grow old on that account. What Ptah loves is that one should attend; if one attends not, it is abhorrent to Ptah. The heart makes itself its own master when it attends and when it does not attend; but if it attends, then his heart is a beneficent master to a man. In attending to instruction, a

man loves what he attends to, and to do that which is prescribed is pleasant. When a son attends to his father, it is a twofold joy for both; when wise things are prescribed to him, the son is gentle toward his master. Attending to him who has attended when such things have been prescribed to him, he engraves upon his heart that which is approved by his father; and the recollection of it is preserved in the mouth of the living who exist upon this earth.

When a son receives the instruction of his father there is no error in all his plans. Train your son to be a teachable man whose wisdom is agreeable to the great. Let him direct his mouth according to that which has been said to him; in the docility of a son is discovered his wisdom. His conduct is perfect while error carries away the unteachable. Tomorrow knowledge will support him, while the ignorant will be destroyed.

As for the man without experience who listens not, he effects nothing whatsoever. He sees knowledge in ignorance, profit in loss; he commits all kinds of error, always accordingly choosing the contrary of what is praiseworthy. He lives on that which is mortal, in this fashion. His food is evil words, whereat he is filled with astonishment. That which the great know to be mortal he lives upon ev-

ery day, flying from that which would be profitable to him, because of the multitude of errors which present themselves before him every day.

A son who attends is like a follower of Horus; he is happy after having attended. He becomes great, he arrives at dignity, he gives the same lesson to his children. Let none innovate upon the precepts of his father; let the same precepts form his lessons to his children. "Verily," will his children say to him, "to accomplish what you say works marvels." Cause therefore that to flourish which is just, in order to nourish your children with it. If the teachers allow themselves to be led toward evil principles, verily the people who understand them not will speak accordingly, and that being said to those who are docile they will act accordingly. Then all the world considers them as masters and they inspire confidence in the public; but their glory endures not so long as would please them. Take not away then a word from the ancient teaching, and add not one; put not one thing in place of another; beware of uncovering the rebellious ideas which arise in you; but teach according to the words of the wise. Attend if you wish to dwell in the mouth of those who shall attend to your words, when you have entered upon the office of master, that your words may be upon our lips . . . and that there may be a

chair from which to deliver your arguments.

Let your thoughts be abundant, but let your mouth be under restraint, and you shall argue with the great. Put yourself in unison with the ways of your master; cause him to say: "He is my son," so that those who shall hear it shall say "Praise be to her who has borne him to him!" Apply yourself while you speak; speak only of perfect things; and let the great who shall hear you say: "Twice good is that which issues from his mouth!"

Do that which your master bids you. Twice good is the precept of his father, from whom he has issued, from his flesh. What he tells us, let it be fixed in our heart; to satisfy him greatly let us do for him more than he has prescribed. Verily a good son is one of the gifts of Ptah, a son who does even better than he has been told to do. For his master he does what is satisfactory, putting himself with all his heart on the part of right. So I shall bring it about that your body shall be healthful, that the Pharaoh shall be satisfied with you in all circumstances and that you shall obtain years of life without default. It has caused me on earth to obtain one hundred and ten years of life, along with the gift of the favor of the Pharaoh among the first of those whom their works have ennobled, satisfying the Pharaoh in a

place of dignity.

It is finished, from its beginning to its end, according to that which is found in writing.

## Letter of Pepi II

Letter of Egyptian pharaoh Pepi II (ruled 2161-2067 B.C.) to Harkhuf (an Egyptian official)

The King's own seal: Year 2, third month of the first season, day 15. The King's decree to the Sole companion, Lector-priest, Chief of scouts, Harkhuf. Notice has been taken of this dispatch of yours which you made for the King at the Palace, to let one know that you have come down in safety from Yam with the army that was with you. You have said in this dispatch of yours that you have brought all kinds of great and beautiful gifts, which Hathor mistress of Imaau has given to the ka of King Neferkare, who lives forever. You have said in this dispatch of yours that you have brought a pygmy of the god's dances from the land of the horizon-dwellers, like the pygmy whom the god's seal-bearer Bawered brought from Punt in the time of King Isesi. You have said to my majesty that his like has never been brought by anyone who did Yam previously.

Truly you know how to do what your



lord loves and praises. Truly you spend day and night planning to do what your lord loves, praises, and commands. His majesty will provide your many worthy honours for the benefit of your son's son for all time, so that all people will say, when they hear what my majesty did for you: "Does anything equal what was done for the sole companion Harkhuf when he came down from Yam, on account of the vigilance he showed in doing what his lord loved, praised, and commanded?"

Come north to the residence at once! Hurry and bring with you this pygmy whom you brought from the land of the horizon-dwellers live, hale, and healthy, for the dances of the god, to gladden the heart, to delight the heart of King Neferkare who lives forever! When he goes down with you into the ship, get worthy men to be around him on deck, lest he fall into the water! When he lies down at night, get worthy men to lie around him in his tent. Inspect ten times at night! My majesty desires to see this pygmy more than the gifts of the mine-land and of Punt!

When you arrive at the residence and this pygmy is with you live, hale, and healthy, my majesty will do great things for you, more than was done for the god's seal-bearer Bawered in the time of King Isesi, in accordance with my majesty's wish to see this pygmy.

Orders have been brought to the chief of the new towns and the companion, overseer of priests to command that supplies be furnished from what is under the charge of each from every storage depot and every temple that has not been exempted.

## Moses

Bible: Genesis

12.1-5 Abram is called by God and travels to Canaan (c.1875 B.C.)

1 Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. 4 So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. 5 And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came.

# The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus

Earliest known surgical document;  
written around the 16th century B.C.

Case Two Title: Instructions concerning a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, thou shouldst lay thy hand upon it and thou shouldst palpate his wound. If thou findest his skull uninjured, not having a perforation in it... Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say regarding him: "One having a gaping wound in his head. An ailment which I will treat." Treatment: Thou shouldst bind fresh meat upon it the first day; thou shouldst apply for him two strips of linen, and treat afterward with grease, honey, and lint every day until he recovers. Gloss: As for: "Two strips of linen," it means two bands of linen which one applies upon the two lips of the gaping wound in order to cause that one join to the other.

Case Three Title: Instructions concerning a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone and perforating his skull. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, and perforating his skull; thou shouldst palpate his wound; shouldst thou find him unable to look

at his two shoulders and his breast, and suffering with stiffness in his neck... Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say regarding him: "One having a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, and perforating his skull, while he suffers with stiffness in his neck. An ailment which I will treat." Treatment: Now after thou has stitched it, thou shouldst lay fresh meat upon his wound the first day. Thou shouldst not bind it. Moor him at his mooring stakes until the period of his injury passes by. Thou shouldst treat it afterward with grease, honey, and lint every day, until he recovers...Gloss: As for: "Moor him at his mooring stakes," it means putting him on his customary diet, without administering to him a prescription.

Case Four Title: Instructions concerning a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, and splitting his skull. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, and splitting his skull, thou shouldst palpate his wound. Shouldst thou find something disturbing therein under thy fingers, and he shudders exceedingly, while the swelling which is over it protrudes, he discharges blood from both his nostrils and from both his ears, he suffers with stiffness in his neck, so that he is unable to look at his two shoulders and his breast...Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say

regarding him: “One having a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, and splitting his skull; while he discharges blood from both his nostrils and from both his ears, and he suffers with stiffness in his neck. An ailment with which I will contend.” Treatment: Now when thou findest that the skull of that man is split, thou shouldst not bind him, but moor him at his mooring stakes until the period of his injury passes by. His treatment is sitting. Make for him two supports of brick, until thou knowest he has reached a decisive point. Thou shouldst apply grease to his head, and soften his neck therewith and both his shoulders. Thou shouldst do likewise for every man whom thou findest having a split skull... Gloss: As for “Until thou knowest he has reached a decisive point,” it means until thou knowest whether he will die or he will live; for he is a case of “an ailment with which I will contend.”

Case Five Title: Instructions concerning a gaping wound in his head, smashing his skull. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, and smashing his skull; thou shouldst palpate his wound. Shouldst thou find that smash which is in his skull deep and sunken under thy fingers, while the swelling which is over it protrudes, he discharges blood from both his nostrils and both

his ears, and he suffers with stiffness in his neck, so that he is unable to look at his two shoulders and his breast...Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say regarding him: “One having a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, and smashing his skull, while he suffers with stiffness in his neck. An ailment not to be treated.” Treatment: Thou shalt not bind him but moor him at his mooring stakes, until the period of his injury passes by...

Case Six Title: Instructions concerning a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, smashing his skull, and rending open the brain of his skull. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a gaping wound in his head, penetrating to the bone, smashing his skull, and rending open the brain of his skull, thou shouldst palpate his wound. Shouldst thou find that smash which is in his skull like those corrugations which form in molten copper, and something therein throbbing and fluttering under thy fingers, like the weak place of an infant’s crown before it becomes whole-when it has happened there is no throbbing and fluttering under thy fingers until the brain of his (the patient’s) skull is rent open-and he discharges blood from both his nostrils, and he suffers with stiffness in his neck...Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say concerning him: “An ailment not to be treated.” Treatment: Thou shouldst



anoint that wound with grease. Thou shalt not bind it; thou shalt not apply two strips upon it: until thou knowest that he has reached a decisive point. Gloss: As for: "Smashing his skull, and rending open the brain of his skull," it means the smash is large, opening to the interior of his skull, to the membrane enveloping his brain, so that it breaks open his fluid in the interior of his head....

Case Eight Title: Instructions concerning a smash in his skull under the skin of his head. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a smash of his skull, under the skin of his head, while there is nothing at all upon it, thou shouldst palpate his wound. Shouldst thou find that there is a swelling protruding on the outside of that smash which is in his skull, while his eye is askew because of it, on the side of him having that injury which is in his skull; and he walks shuffling with his sole, on the side of him having that injury which is in his skull... Diagnosis: Thou shouldst account him one whom something entering from outside has smitten, as one who does not release the head of his shoul fork, and one who does not fall with his nails in the middle of his palm; while he discharges blood from both his nostrils and from both his ears, and he suffers with stiffness in his neck. An ailment not to be treated. Treatment: His treatment is sitting,

until he gains color, and until thou knowest he has reached the decisive point....Gloss: As for: "He walks shuffling with his sole," he (the surgeon) is speaking about his walking with his sole dragging, so that it is not easy for him to walk, when it (the sole) is feeble and turned over, while the tips of his toes are contracted to the ball of his sole, and they (the toes) walk fumbling the ground. He (the surgeon) says: "He shuffles," concerning it...

Case Twenty Title: Instructions concerning a wound in his temple, penetrating to the bone, and perforating his temporal bone. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a wound in his temple, penetrating to the bone, and perforating his temporal bone, while his two eyes are blood shot, he discharges blood from both his nostrils, and a little drops; if thou puttest thy fingers on the mouth of that wound and he shudder exceedingly; if thou ask of him concerning his malady and he speak not to thee; while copious tears fall from both his eyes, so that he thrusts his hand often to his face that he may wipe both his eyes with the back of his hand as a child does, and knows not that he does so...Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say concerning him: "One having a wound in his temple, penetrating to the bone, and perforating his temporal bone; while he discharges blood from both

his nostrils, he suffers with stiffness in his neck, and he is speechless. An ailment not to be treated.” Treatment: Now when thou findest that man speechless, his relief shall be sitting; soften his head with grease, and pour milk into both his ears.

Case Twenty-Two Title: Instructions concerning a smash in his temple. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a smash in his temple, thou shouldst place thy thumb upon his chin and thy finger upon the end of his ramus, so that the blood will flow front his two nostrils and from the interior of his ear having that smash. Cleanse it for him with a swab of linen until thou seest its fragments of bone in the interior of his ear. If thou callest to him and he is speechless and cannot speak...Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say concerning him: “One having a smash in his temple; he discharges blood from his two nostrils and from his ear; he is speechless; and he suffers with stiffness in his neck. An ailment not to be treated.”... Gloss: As for: “Thou seest its fragments in the interior of his ear,” it means that some of the fragments of the bone come away to adhere to the swab which was introduced to cleanse the interior of his ear.

Case Twenty-Nine Title: Instructions concerning a gaping wound in a vertebra of his neck. Examination:

If thou examinest a man having a gaping wound in a vertebra of his neck, penetrating to the bone, and perforating a vertebra of his neck; if thou examinest that wound, and he shudders exceedingly, and he is unable to look at his two shoulders and his breast...Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say concerning him: “One having a wound in his neck, penetrating to the bone, perforating a vertebra of his neck, and he suffers with stiffness in his neck. An ailment with which I will contend.” Treatment: Thou shouldst bind it with fresh meat the first day. Now afterward moor him at his mooring stakes until the period of his injury passes by.

Case Thirty Title: Instructions concerning a sprain in a vertebra of his neck. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a sprain in a vertebra of his neck, thou shouldst say to him: “look at thy two shoulders and thy breast.” When he does so, the seeing possible to him is painful. Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say concerning him: “One having a sprain in a vertebra of his neck. An ailment which I will treat.” Treatment: Thou shouldst bind it with fresh meat the first day. Now afterward thou shouldst treat with ywrrw and honey every day until he recovers. Gloss: As for: “A sprain” he is speaking of a rending of two members although it is still in its place.

Case Thirty-Three Title: Instructions concerning a crushed vertebra in his neck. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a crushed vertebra in his neck and thou findest that one vertebra has fallen into the next one, while he is voiceless and cannot speak; his falling head downward has caused that one vertebra crush into the next one; and shouldst thou find that he is unconscious of his two arms and his two legs because of it...Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say concerning him: "One having a crushed vertebra in his neck; he is unconscious of his two arms and his two legs, and he is speechless. An ailment not to be treated..."Gloss: As for: "His falling head downward has caused that one vertebra crush into the next," it means that he has fallen head downward upon his head, driving one vertebra of his neck into the next.

Case Forty-Eight Title: Instructions concerning a sprain of a vertebra in his spinal column. Examination: If thou examinest a man having a sprain in a vertebra of his spinal column, thou shouldst say to him: "Extend now thy two legs and contract them both again." When he extends them both he contracts them both immediately because of the pain he causes in the vertebra of his spinal column in which he suffers. Diagnosis: Thou shouldst say concerning him: "One having a sprain in a vertebra of his

spinal column. An ailment which I will treat." Treatment: Thou shouldst place him prostrate on his back; thou shouldst make for him....

## Epitaph of Beka

Inscription on a funeral pillar; Beka, the person who died, was the great steward of the Public Granary

A royal gift of offerings to the person of the Steward of the public granary, Beka, the justified. He says, I myself was just and true, without malice, having put God in my heart, and having been quick to discern his will. I reach the city of those who are in eternity. I have done good upon earth; I have harbored no prejudice; I have not been wicked; I have not approved of any offense or iniquity. I have taken pleasure in speaking the truth; I have perceived the advantage it is to conform to this practice upon the earth from the first action of my life even to the tomb. My sure defence shall be to speak it (truth) in the day when I reach the divine judges, the skilful interpreters, discoverers of all actions, the chastisers of sins. Pure is my soul. While living, I bear no malice. There are no errors attributable to me, no sins of mine are before their hand. I am come out of this trial with the help of truth, and behold I am in the place of the ancients. Bring ye the food of truth to the Steward of the

public granary, Eeka, the justified.

He says, It was I who filled the heart of the Lord of the Two Regions, who was the beloved of the King of Upper Egypt, the favorite of the King of Lower Egypt, on account of my preeminent merits, which were the cause of my promotion. Great was I in the place of millions of true perfections. Wherever the King proceeded, I always approached his person, and went joyfully around him adoring his goodness each day, and did homage to the double asp on his diadem throughout all time. . . . I have not made myself master over the lowly; I have done no harm to men who honored their gods. I have spent my lifetime in the life of truth, until I have attained the age of veneration, being in favor with the King, and beloved by the great ones about him. The royal dwelling, those who dwelt there, no ill will towards me was in their heart. The men of the future, while they live, will be charmed by my remarkable merits. He who inhabits the place of the fulness of health had given me an important post. My sincerity and my goodness were in the heart of my father and mother; my affection was in them. Never have I outraged it in my mode of action towards them from the beginning of the time of my youth. Though great, yet have I acted as if I had been a little one. I have not disabled anyone worthier than myself. . . .

## The Laboring Classes

compares the different occupations and their hardships with the easy occupation of a scribe

I have not seen a blacksmith on a commission, a founder who goes on an embassy. I have seen the blacksmith at his work at the mouth of his furnace, his fingers like the skin of a crocodile: he smells worse than the roe of a fish. Every carpenter carrying tools — is he more at rest than the common laborers? His fields are of wood, his tools of metal; at night when he is free, he works his hands further in making at night the lighting of his house. The stone-cutter, he searches for employment in all kinds of hard stones. When he has completed his task, his arms are fatigued; when he is at rest, his knees and his back are broken. The barber is shaving till evening; when he places himself to eat, he reclines on his elbows. He betakes himself from street to street to seek after his shaving; he wearies his hands to feed his stomach, as bees feed by their labors. The boatman, he navigates to At'hu that he may have his price. He has done beyond the power of his hands in doing, to kill geese and flamingoes; he has suffered his suffering; he approaches his orchard; he approaches his house at night, for he must go again to his labors on the morrow.

The little laborer with a field, he passes his life among rustics. He is worn down for vines and pigs, to furnish his kitchen with what his fields have. His clothes are heavy with weight; he is tied as a forced laborer; he goes into the air and he suffers though coming forth well from his fireplace. He is bastinadoed with a stick on his legs, but escapes with his life. Shut against him is the wall of every house — drawn are the chambers. I tell you also of the builder of precincts. Disease tastes him, for he is in draughts of air. . . . To go on to his end, his hands are worn with labor. Disordered are his clothes. He eats himself, the bread his fingers; he washes himself at one time only. He lowers himself to examine all directions. His passage is from place to place, which is from ten to six cubits; his passage is from month to month upon the beams of the lotuses of the houses, while he does all its work. Should there be bread for him, he gives it his house. Exhausted are his children. The gardener brings me wreaths; all his yokes are heavy; his hands are chiefly on his neck. When he has done the fertilizing, he passes the morning watering vegetables, the evening vines. He has worked day by day; his stomach is wretched. Ignorant of his mother is his name — more tranquil than any employment. The fanner, his garments are for eternity. He elevates his voice like a bird. His fingers aid me, for his arms are dry in

the wind. He reposes at the middle of the marshes, for he is a forced laborer. He is in good health with the beasts. Illnesses taste him; he resides among them. He arrives at his garden; he comes to his house in the evening; he must go out next morning.

The weaver inside the houses is more wretched than a woman; his knees are at the place of his heart; he has not tasted the air. Should he have done little in a day of his weaving, he is dragged as a lily in a pool. He gives bread to the porter that he may be allowed to behold the light. The maker of weapons suffers extremely, going forth to foreign countries. He gives a great deal for his asses, more than the labors of his hands; he gives a great deal for their pasturing in a field. He gives on the road; he arrives at his garden; he reaches his house at night; he must be off in the morning. The courier, going to foreign countries, bequeaths his goods to his children, because of the fears of beasts and Asiatics. What happens to him when he is at Kam; he arrives at his garden; he goes to his house in the evening; he must be off on the morrow. His heavy bond comes forth; no joys come. The dyer, his fingers smell — the smell of bad fish. His two eyes are weary with very fatigue; his hand does not stop; he watches at the rent of the old garment — abominable are the clothes. The sandal-maker is very miserable, he is always begging; his health is as



the health of a bad fish; he gnaws the leather. The washerman, washing on the quay, traverses the ground approaching the crocodiles. The father of the water brings out the dirt: his hand does not stop. A quiet employment is not before you, no easier than other employment. His draughts are mixed up with his clothes: not a limb of him is clean. There is given to him the bonds of women, for he is in misfortunes. I lament to thee that he passes his time with a bat. . . . The fowler of birds suffers very much. The confines of Num are before thee, when he says, "Let the net refuse." The god will not show his forms; vain are his plans. I tell you the fisherman suffers more than any employment. Consider: is he not toiling on the river? he is mixed up with the crocodiles. Should the clumps of papyrus diminish, then he is crying out for help. If he has not been told a crocodile is there, terrors blind him.

## Moses

Bible: Genesis

47.27-28 Jacob is established in Egypt (c.1660 B.C.)

27 And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly. 28 And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt

seventeen years: so the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.

## Herodotus

The History

2.14 Farm labor in Egypt is easy because of the Nile

They (the Egyptians) gather the fruit of the earth with far less labor than any other people. For they do not toil in breaking furrows with the plow nor in hoeing it, nor in doing any other work in which men are employed in raising a crop; but when the river of its own accord comes up over the field and waters it and then withdraws to its bed, each farmer sows his field with seed and turns the swine into it; and when the swine have trodden the seed down, he awaits the harvest. Then he threshes by means of the swine and gathers in his crop.

## Herodotus

The History

2.35-39, 47, 77, 81, 84-88 The people and customs of Egypt; embalming

35 Of Egypt however I shall make my report at length, because it has wonders more in number than any other

land, and works too it has to show as much as any land, which are beyond expression great: for this reason then more shall be said concerning it.

The Egyptians in agreement with their climate, which is unlike any other, and with the river, which shows a nature different from all other rivers, established for themselves manners and customs in a way opposite to other men in almost all matters: for among them the women frequent the market and carry on trade, while the men remain at home and weave; and whereas others weave pushing the woof upwards, the Egyptians push it downwards: the men carry their burdens upon their heads and the women upon their shoulders: ..... no woman is a minister either of male or female divinity, but men of all, both male and female: to support their parents the sons are in no way compelled, if they do not desire to do so, but the daughters are forced to do so, be they never so unwilling.

36 The priests of the gods in other lands wear long hair, but in Egypt they shave their heads: among other men the custom is that in mourning those whom the matter concerns most nearly have their hair cut short, but the Egyptians, when deaths occur, let their hair grow long, both that on the head and that on the chin, having before been close shaven: other men have their daily living separated from

beasts, but the Egyptians have theirs together with beasts: other men live on wheat and barley, but to any one of the Egyptians who makes his living on these it is a great reproach; they make their bread of maize, which some call spelt; they knead dough with their feet and clay with their hands, with which also they gather up dung: ... as to garments, the men wear two each and the women but one: and whereas others make fast the rings and ropes of the sails outside the ship, the Egyptians do this inside: finally in the writing of characters and reckoning with pebbles, while the Hellenes carry the hand from the left to the right, the Egyptians do this from the right to the left; and doing so they say that they do it themselves rightwise and the Hellenes leftwise: and they use two kinds of characters for writing, of which the one kind is called sacred and the other common.

37 They are religious excessively beyond all other men, and with regard to this they have customs as follows:-they drink from cups of bronze and rinse them out every day, and not some only do this but all: they wear garments of linen always newly washed, and this they make a special point of practice: .... The priests shave themselves all over their body every other day, so that no lice or any other foul thing may come to be upon them when they minister to the gods; and the priests wear garments of linen

only and sandals of papyrus, and any other garment they may not take nor other sandals; these wash themselves in cold water twice in the day and twice again in the night; and other religious services they perform (one may almost say) of infinite number. They enjoy also good things not a few, for they do not consume or spend anything of their own substance, but there is sacred bread baked for them and they have each great quantity of flesh of oxen and geese coming in to them each day, and also wine of grapes is given to them; but it is not permitted to them to taste of fish: beans moreover the Egyptians do not at all sow in their land, and those which grow they neither eat raw nor boil for food; nay the priests do not endure even to look upon them, thinking this to be an unclean kind of pulse: and there is not one priest only for each of the gods but many, and of them one is chief-priest, and whenever a priest dies his son is appointed to his place.

38 The males of the ox kind they consider to belong to Epaphos, and on account of him they test them in the following manner:--If the priest sees one single black hair upon the beast he counts it not clean for sacrifice; and one of the priests who is appointed for the purpose makes investigation of these matters, both when the beast is standing upright and when it is lying on its back, drawing out its tongue moreover, to see if it is clean

in respect of the appointed signs, which I shall tell of in another part of the history: he looks also at the hairs of the tail to see if it has them growing in the natural manner: and if it be clean in respect of all these things, he marks it with a piece of papyrus, rolling this round the horns, and then when he has plastered sealing-earth over it he sets upon it the seal of his signet-ring, and after that they take the animal away. But for one who sacrifices a beast not sealed the penalty appointed is death.

39 In this way then the beast is tested; and their appointed manner of sacrifice is as follows:--they lead the sealed beast to the altar where they happen to be sacrificing and then kindle a fire: after that, having poured libations of wine over the altar so that it runs down upon the victim and having called upon the god, they cut its throat, and having cut its throat they sever the head from the body. The body then of the beast they flay, but upon the head they make many imprecations first, and then they who have a market and Hellenes sojourning among them for trade, these carry it to the market-place and sell it, while they who have no Hellenes among them cast it away into the river: and this is the form of imprecation which they utter upon the heads, praying that if any evil be about to befall either themselves who are offering sacrifice or the land of Egypt in general, it may



come rather upon this head. Now as regards the heads of the beasts which are sacrificed and the pouring over them of the wine, all the Egyptians have the same customs equally for all their sacrifices; and by reason of this custom none of the Egyptians eat of the head either of this or of any other kind of animal:

47 The pig is accounted by the Egyptians an abominable animal; and first, if any of them in passing by touch a pig, he goes into the river and dips himself forthwith in the water together with his garments; and then too swineherds, though they be native Egyptians, unlike all others do not enter any of the temples in Egypt, nor is anyone willing to give his daughter in marriage to one of them or to take a wife from among them; but the swineherds both give in marriage to one another and take from one another....

77 Of the Egyptians themselves, those who dwell in the part of Egypt which is sown for crops practise memory more than any other men and are the most learned in history by far of all those of whom I have had experience: and their manner of life is as follows:--For three successive days in each month they purge, hunting after health with emetics and clysters, and they think that all the diseases which exist are produced in men by the food on which they live; for the Egyptians

are from other causes also the most healthy of all men next after the Libyans (in my opinion on account of the seasons, because the seasons do not change, for by the changes of things generally, and especially of the seasons, diseases are most apt to be produced in men), and as to their diet, it is as follows:--they eat bread, making loaves of maize, which they call kyllestis, and they use habitually a wine made out of barley, for vines they have not in their land. Of their fish some they dry in the sun and then eat them without cooking, others they eat cured in brine. Of birds they eat quails and ducks and small birds without cooking, after first curing them; and everything else which they have belonging to the class of birds or fishes, except such as have been set apart by them as sacred, they eat roasted or boiled.

81 They wear tunics of linen about their legs with fringes, which they call calasiris; above these they have garments of white wool thrown over: woollen garments however are not taken into the temples, nor are they buried with them, for this is not permitted by religion. In these points they are in agreement with the observances called Orphic and Bacchic (which are really Egyptian), and also with those of the Pythagoreans, for one who takes part in these mysteries is also forbidden by religious rule to be buried in woollen garments;

and about this there is a sacred story told.

84 The art of medicine among them is distributed thus:--each physician is a physician of one disease and of no more; and the whole country is full of physicians, for some profess themselves to be physicians of the eyes, others of the head, others of the teeth, others of the affections of the stomach, and others of the more obscure ailments.

85 Their fashions of mourning and of burial are these:--Whenever any household has lost a man who is of any regard amongst them, the whole number of women of that house forthwith plaster over their heads or even their faces with mud. Then leaving the corpse within the house they go themselves to and fro about the city and beat themselves, with their garments bound up by a girdle and their breasts exposed, and with them go all the women who are related to the dead man, and on the other side the men beat themselves, they too having their garments bound up by a girdle; and when they have done this, they then convey the body to the embalming.

86 In this occupation certain persons employ themselves regularly and inherit this as a craft. These, whenever a corpse is conveyed to them, show to those who brought it wooden

models of corpses made like reality by painting, and the best of the ways of embalming they say is that of him whose name I think it impiety to mention when speaking of a matter of such a kind; the second which they show is less good than this and also less expensive; and the third is the least expensive of all. Having told them about this, they inquire of them in which way they desire the corpse of their friend to be prepared. Then they after they have agreed for a certain price depart out of the way, and the others being left behind in the buildings embalm according to the best of these ways thus:-- First with a crooked iron tool they draw out the brain through the nostrils, extracting it partly thus and partly by pouring in drugs; and after this with a sharp stone of Ethiopia they make a cut along the side and take out the whole contents of the belly, and when they have cleared out the cavity and cleansed it with palm-wine they cleanse it again with spices pounded up: then they fill the belly with pure myrrh pounded up and with cassia and other spices except frankincense, and sew it together again. Having so done they keep it for embalming covered up in natron for seventy days, but for a longer time than this it is not permitted to embalm it; and when the seventy days are past, they wash the corpse and roll its whole body up in fine linen cut into bands, smearing

these beneath with gum, which the Egyptians use generally instead of glue. Then the kinsfolk receive it from them and have a wooden figure made in the shape of a man, and when they have had this made they enclose the corpse, and having shut it up within, they store it then in a sepulchral chamber, setting it to stand upright against the wall.

87 Thus they deal with the corpses which are prepared in the most costly way; but for those who desire the middle way and wish to avoid great cost they prepare the corpse as follows:--having filled their syringes with the oil which is got from cedar-wood, with this they forthwith fill the belly of the corpse, and this they do without having either cut it open or taken out the bowels, but they inject the oil by the breech, and having stopped the drench from returning back they keep it then the appointed number of days for embalming, and on the last of the days they let the cedar oil come out from the belly, which they before put in; and it has such power that it brings out with it the bowels and interior organs of the body dissolved; and the natron dissolves the flesh, so that there is left of the corpse only the skin and the bones. When they have done this they give back the corpse at once in that condition without working upon it any more.

88 The third kind of embalming,

by which are prepared the bodies of those who have less means, is as follows:-- they cleanse out the belly with a purge and then keep the body for embalming during the seventy days, and at once after that they give it back to the bringers to carry away.

95 Against the gnats, which are very abundant, they have contrived as follows:--those who dwell above the fen-land are helped by the towers, to which they ascend when they go to rest; for the gnats by reason of the winds are not able to fly up high: but those who dwell in the fen-land have contrived another way instead of the towers, and this is it:--every man of them has got a casting net, with which by day he catches fish, but in the night he uses it for this purpose, that is to say he puts the casting-net round about the bed in which he sleeps, and then creeps in under it and goes to sleep: and the gnats, if he sleeps rolled up in a garment or a linen sheet, bite through these, but through the net they do not even attempt to bite.

## Herodotus

### The History

2.68-76 Egyptian crocodile and other animals

68 Of the crocodile the nature is as follows:--during the four most wintry

months this creature eats nothing: she has four feet and is an animal belonging to the land and the water both; for she produces and hatches eggs on the land, and the most part of the day she remains upon dry land, but the whole of the night in the river, for the water in truth is warmer than the unclouded open air and the dew. Of all the mortal creatures of which we have knowledge this grows to the greatest bulk from the smallest beginning; for the eggs which she produces are not much larger than those of geese and the newly-hatched young one is in proportion to the egg, but as he grows he becomes as much as seventeen cubits long and sometimes yet larger. He has eyes like those of a pig and teeth large and tusky, in proportion to the size of his body; but unlike all other beasts he grows no tongue, neither does he move his lower jaw, but brings the upper jaw towards the lower, being in this too unlike all other beasts. He has moreover strong claws and a scaly hide upon his back which cannot be pierced; and he is blind in the water, but in the air he is of very keen sight. Since he has his living in the water he keeps his mouth all full within of leeches; and whereas all other birds and beasts fly from him, the trochilus is a creature which is at peace with him, seeing that from her he receives benefit; for the crocodile having come out of the water to the land and then having opened his

mouth (this he is wont to do generally towards the West Wind), the trochilus upon that enters into his mouth and swallows down the leeches, and he being benefited is pleased and does no harm to the trochilus.

69 Now for some of the Egyptians the crocodiles are sacred animals, and for others not so, but they treat them on the contrary as enemies: those however who dwell about Thebes and about the lake of Moiris hold them to be most sacred, and each of these two peoples keeps one crocodile selected from the whole number, which has been trained to tameness, and they put hanging ornaments of molten stone and of gold into the ears of these and anklets round the front feet, and they give them food appointed and victims of sacrifices and treat them as well as possible while they live, and after they are dead they bury them in sacred tombs, embalming them: but those who dwell about the city of Elephantine even eat them, not holding them to be sacred. They are called not crocodiles but champsai, and the Ionians gave them the name of crocodile, comparing their form to that of the crocodiles (lizards) which appear in their country in the stone walls.

70 There are many ways in use of catching them and of various kinds: I shall describe that which to me seems the most worthy of being told. A man



puts the back of a pig upon a hook as bait, and lets it go into the middle of the river, while he himself upon the bank of the river has a young live pig, which he beats; and the crocodile hearing its cries makes for the direction of the sound, and when he finds the pig's back he swallows it down: then they pull, and when he is drawn out to land, first of all the hunter forthwith plasters up his eyes with mud, and having so done he very easily gets the mastery of him, but if he does not do so he has much trouble.

71 The river-horse is sacred in the district of Papremis, but for the other Egyptians he is not sacred; and this is the appearance which he presents: he is four-footed, cloven-hoofed like an ox, flat-nosed, with a mane like a horse and showing teeth like tusks, with a tail and voice like a horse, and in size as large as the largest ox; and his hide is so exceedingly thick that when it has been dried shafts of javelins are made of it.

72 There are moreover otters in the river, which they consider to be sacred; and of fish also they esteem that which is called the lepidotos to be sacred, and also the eel; and these they say are sacred to the Nile: and of birds the fox-goose.

73 There is also another sacred bird called the phoenix which I did not myself see except in painting, for in

truth he comes to them very rarely, at intervals, as the people of Heliopolis say, of five hundred years; and these say that he comes regularly when his father dies; and if he be like the painting, he is of this size and nature, that is to say, some of his feathers are of gold colour and others red, and in outline and size he is as nearly as possible like an eagle. This bird they say (but I cannot believe the story) contrives as follows:-- setting forth from Arabia he conveys his father, they say, to the temple of the Sun (Helios) plastered up in myrrh, and buries him in the temple of the Sun; and he conveys him thus:--he forms first an egg of myrrh as large as he is able to carry, and then he makes trial of carrying it, and when he has made trial sufficiently, then he hollows out the egg and places his father within it and plasters over with other myrrh that part of the egg where he hollowed it out to put his father in, and when his father is laid in it, it proves (they say) to be of the same weight as it was; and after he has plastered it up, he conveys the whole to Egypt to the temple of the Sun. Thus they say that this bird does.

74 There are also about Thebes sacred serpents, not at all harmful to men, which are small in size and have two horns growing from the top of the head: these they bury when they die in the temple of Zeus, for to this god they say that they are sacred.

75 There is a region moreover in Arabia, situated nearly over against the city of Buto, to which place I came to inquire about the winged serpents: and when I came thither I saw bones of serpents and spines in quantity so great that it is impossible to make report of the number, and there were heaps of spines, some heaps large and others less large and others smaller still than these, and these heaps were many in number. This region in which the spines are scattered upon the ground is of the nature of an entrance from a narrow mountain pass to a great plain, which plain adjoins the plain of Egypt; and the story goes that at the beginning of spring winged serpents from Arabia fly towards Egypt, and the birds called ibises meet them at the entrance to this country and do not suffer the serpents to go by but kill them. On account of this deed it is (say the Arabians) that the ibis has come to be greatly honoured by the Egyptians, and the Egyptians also agree that it is for this reason that they honour these birds.

76 The outward form of the ibis is this:--it is a deep black all over, and has legs like those of a crane and a very curved beak, and in size it is about equal to a rail: this is the appearance of the black kind which fight with the serpents, but of those which most crowd round men's feet (for there are two several kinds of ibises) the head is bare and also the whole of the throat,

and it is white in feathering except the head and neck and the extremities of the wings and the rump (in all these parts of which I have spoken it is a deep black), while in legs and in the form of the head it resembles the other. As for the serpent its form is like that of the watersnake; and it has wings not feathered but most nearly resembling the wings of the bat. Let so much suffice as has been said now concerning sacred animals.

## The Shipwrecked Sailor

A man tells of his fantastic adventure

The wise servant said, "Let thy heart be satisfied, O my lord, for that we have come back to the country; after we have been long on board, and rowed much, the prow has at last touched land. All the people rejoice and embrace us one after another. Moreover, we have come back in good health, and not a man is lacking; although we have been to the ends of Wawat [Nubia], and gone through the land of Senmut [Kush], we have returned in peace, and our land--- behold, we have come back to it. Hear me, my lord; I have no other refuge. Wash thee, and turn the water over thy fingers; then go and tell the tale to the majesty."

His lord replied, "Thy heart continues still its wandering words! but



although the mouth of a man may save him his words may also cover his face with confusion. Will you do then as your heart moves you? This that you will say, tell quietly.”

The sailor then answered, “Now I shall tell that which has happened to me, to my very self. I was going to the mines of Pharaoh, and I went down on the sea in a ship of one hundred and fifty cubits long and forty cubits wide, with one hundred and fifty sailors of the best of Egypt who had seen heaven and earth, and whose hearts were stronger than lions. They had said that the wind would not be contrary, or that there would be none. But as we approached the land, the wind arose, and threw up waves eight cubits high. As for me, I seized a piece of wood; but those who were in the vessel perished, without one remaining. A wave threw me on an island, after that I had been three days alone, without a companion beside my own heart. I laid me in a thicket, and the shadow covered me. Then stretched I my limbs to try to find something for my mouth. I found there figs and grain, melons of all kinds, fishes, and birds. Nothing was lacking. And I satisfied myself; and left on the ground that which was over, of what my arms had been filled withal. I dug a pit, I lighted a fire, and I made a burnt offering unto the gods.

“Suddenly I heard a noise as of

thunder, which I thought to be that of a wave of the sea. The trees shook, and the earth was moved. I uncovered my face, and I saw that a serpent drew near. He was thirty cubits long, and his beard greater than two cubits; his body was as overlaid with gold, and his color as that of true lazuli. He coiled himself before me. “Then he opened his mouth, while that I lay on my face before him, and he said to me, “What has brought you, what has brought you, little one, what has brought you? If you say not speedily what has brought you to this isle, I will make you know yourself; as a flame you shall vanish, if you tell me not something I have not heard, or which I knew not, before you.’

“Then he took me in his mouth and carried me to his resting-place, and laid me down without any hurt. I was whole and sound, and nothing was gone from me. Then he opened his mouth against me, while that I lay on my face before him, and he said, “What has brought you, what has brought you, little one, what has brought you to this isle which is in the sea, and of which the shores are in the midst of the waves?’

“Then I replied to him, and holding my arms low before him, I said to him, “I was embarked for the mines by the order of the majesty, in a ship, one hundred and fifty cubits was its length, and the width of it

forty cubits. It had one hundred and fifty sailors of the best of Egypt, who had seen heaven and earth, and the hearts of whom were stronger than lions. They said that the wind would not be contrary, or that there would be none. Each of them exceeded his companion in the prudence of his heart and the strength of his arm, and I was not beneath any of them. A storm came upon us while we were on the sea. Hardly could we reach to the shore when the wind waxed yet greater, and the waves rose even eight cubits. As for me, I seized a piece of wood, while those who were in the boat perished without one being left with me for three days. Behold me now before you, for I was brought to this isle by a wave of the sea.'

"Then said he to me, "Fear not, fear not, little one, and make not your face sad. If you have come to me, it is God who has let you live. For it is He who has brought you to this isle of the blest, where nothing is lacking, and which is filled with all good things. See now, you shall pass one month after another, until you shall be four months in this isle. Then a ship shall come from your land with sailors, and you shall leave with them and go to your country, and you shall die in your town.'

"Converse is pleasing, and he who tastes of it passes over his misery. I will therefore tell you of that which is

in this isle. I am here with my brethren and my children around me; we are seventy-five serpents, children, and kindred; without naming a young girl who was brought unto me by chance, and on whom the fire of heaven fell, and burned her to ashes. As for you, if you are strong, and if your heart waits patiently, you shall press your infants to your bosom and embrace your wife. You shall return to your house which is full of all good things, you shall see your land, where you shall dwell in the midst of your kindred.'

"Then I bowed in my obeisance, and I touched the ground before him. "Behold now that which I have told you before. I shall tell of your presence unto Pharaoh, I shall make him to know of your greatness, and I will bring to you of the sacred oils and perfumes, and of incense of the temples with which all gods are honored. I shall tell, moreover, of that which I do now see (thanks to him), and there shall be rendered to you praises before the fullness of all the land. I shall slay asses for you in sacrifice, I shall pluck for you the birds, and I shall bring for you ships full of all kinds of the treasures of Egypt, as is comely to do unto a god, a friend of men in a far country, of which men know not.'

"Then he smiled at my speech, because of that which was in his heart, for he said to me: "You are not rich

in perfumes, for all that you have is but common incense. As for me, I am prince of the land of Punt, and I have perfumes. Only the oil which you say you would bring is not common in this isle. But, when you shall depart from this place, you shall never more see this isle; it shall be changed into waves.'

"And behold, when the ship drew near, according to all that he had told me before, I got up into an high tree, to strive to see those who were within it. Then I came and told to him this matter, but it was already known unto him before. Then he said to me, "Farewell, farewell, go to your house, little one, see again your children, and let your name be good in your town; these are my wishes for you.'

"Then I bowed myself before him, and held my arms low before him, and he, he gave me gifts of precious perfumes, of cassia, of sweet woods, of kohl, of cypress, an abundance of incense, of ivory tusks, of baboons, of apes, and all kinds of precious things. I embarked all in the ship which was come, and bowing myself, I prayed God for him. Then he said to me, "Behold you shall come to your country in two months, you shall press to your bosom your children, and you shall rest in your tomb.' After this I went down to the shore unto the ship, and I called to the sailors who were there. Then on the shore I rendered adora-

tion to the master of this isle and to those who dwelt therein.

"When we shall come, in our return, to the house of Pharaoh, in the second month, according to all that the serpent has said, we shall approach unto the palace. And I shall go in before Pharaoh, I shall bring the gifts which I have brought from this isle into the country. Then he shall thank me before the fullness of the land. Grant then unto me a follower, and lead me to the courtiers of the king. Cast your eye upon me after that I have both seen and proved this. Hear my prayer, for it is good to listen to people. It was said unto me, "Become a wise man, and you shall come to honor,' and behold I have become such."

This is finished from its beginning unto its end, even as it was found in a writing. It is written by the scribe of cunning fingers, Ameni-amenaar; may he live in life, wealth, and health!

## Moses

Bible: Exodus

12.40-42 Moses leads the Israelites out of Egypt (c.1445 B.C.)

40 Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years. 41 And it came to pass at the end of the four

hundred and thirty years, even the selfsame day it came to pass, that all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. 42 It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt: this is that night of the LORD to be observed of all the children of Israel in their generations.

## Justin

### Epitome of the Philippic Histories

#### 36.2 Roman view of the early history of the Jews and of the Exodus

2 The origin of the Jews was from Damascus, a most famous city of Syria, whence also the Assyrian kings and queen Semiramis sprung. The name of the city was given it from King Damascus, in honour of whom the Syrians consecrated the sepulchre of his wife Arathis as a temple, and regard her as a goddess worthy of the most sacred worship. After Damascus, Azelus, and then Adores, Abraham, and Israhel were their kings. But a prosperous family of ten sons made Israhel more famous than any of his ancestors. Having divided, his kingdom, in consequence, into ten governments, he committed them to his sons, and called the whole people Jews from Judas, who died soon after the division, and ordered his memory to be held in veneration by them all,

as his portion was shared among them. The youngest of the brothers was Joseph, whom the others, fearing his extraordinary abilities, secretly made prisoner, and sold to some foreign merchants. Being carried by them into Egypt, and having there, by his great powers of mind, made himself master of the arts of magic, he found in a short time great favour with the king; for he was eminently skilled in prodigies, and was the first to establish the science of interpreting dreams; and nothing, indeed, of divine or human law seems to have been unknown to him; so that he foretold a dearth in the land some years before it happened, and all Egypt would have perished by famine, had not the king, by his advice, ordered the corn to be laid up for several years; such being the proofs of his knowledge, that his admonitions seemed to proceed, not from a mortal, but a god. His son was Moses, whom, besides the inheritance of his father's knowledge, the comeliness of his person also recommended. But the Egyptians, being troubled with scabies and leprosy, and moved by some oracular prediction, expelled him, with those who had the disease, out of Egypt, that the distemper might not spread among a greater number. Becoming leader, accordingly, of the exiles, he carried off by stealth the sacred utensils of the Egyptians, who, endeavouring to recover them by force of arms, were

obliged by tempests to return home; and Moses, having reached Damascus, the birth-place of his forefathers, took possession of mount Sinai, on his arrival at which, after having suffered, together with his followers, from a seven days' fast in the deserts of Arabia, he consecrated every seventh day (according to the present custom of the nation) for a fast-day, and to be perpetually called a sabbath, because that day had ended at once their hunger and their wanderings. And as they remembered that they had been driven from Egypt for fear of spreading infection, they took care, in order that they might not become odious, from the same cause, to the inhabitants of the country, to have no communication with strangers; a rule which, from having been adopted on that particular occasion, gradually became a custom and part of their religion. After the death of Moses, his son Aruas was made priest for celebrating the rites which they brought from Egypt, and soon after created king; and ever afterwards it was a custom among the Jews to have the same chiefs both for kings and priests; and, by uniting religion with the administration of justice, it is almost incredible how powerful they became.

## Pliny the Elder

### Natural History

#### 5.6, 9-11 Description of Egypt

The region that follows is called Libya Mareotis, and borders upon Egypt. It is held by the Marmaridae, the Adyrmachidae, and, after them, the Mareotae. The distance from Catabathmos to Paraetionium is eighty-six miles. In this district is Apis, a place rendered famous by the religious belief of Egypt. From this town Paraetionium is distant sixty-two miles, and from thence to Alexandria the distance is 200 miles, the breadth of the district being 169. Eratosthenes says that it is 525 miles by land from Cyrene to Alexandria; while Agrippa gives the length of the whole of Africa from the Atlantic Sea, and including Lower Egypt, as 3040 miles. Polybius and Eratosthenes, who are generally considered as remarkable for their extreme correctness, state the length to be, from the ocean to Great Carthage 1100 miles, and from Carthage to Canopus, the nearest mouth of the Nile, 1628 miles; while Isidorus speaks of the distance from Tingi to Canopus as being 3599 miles. Artemidorus makes this last distance forty miles less than Isidorus.

Joining on to Africa is Asia, the extent of which, according to Timosthenes, from the Canopic mouth of the Nile



to the mouth of the Euxine, is 2639 miles. From the mouth of the Euxine to that of Lake Maeotis is, according to Eratosthenes, 1545 miles. The whole distance to the Tanais, including Egypt, is, according to Artemidorus and Isidorus, 6375 miles. The seas of Egypt, which are several in number, have received their names from those who dwell upon their shores, for which reason they will be mentioned together.

Egypt is the country which lies next to Africa; in the interior it runs in a southerly direction, as far as the territory of the Aethiopians, who lie extended at the back of it. The river Nile, dividing itself, forms on the right and left the boundary of its lower part, which it embraces on every side. By the Canopic mouth of that river it is separated from Africa, and by the Pelusiatic from Asia, there being a distance between the two of 170 miles. For this reason it is that some persons have reckoned Egypt among the islands, the Nile so dividing itself as to give a triangular form to the land which it encloses: from which circumstance also many persons have named Egypt the Delta, after that of the Greek letter so called. The distance from the spot where the channel of the river first divides into branches, to the Canopic mouth, is 146 miles, and to the Pelusiatic, 166.

The upper part of Egypt, which

borders on Aethiopia, is known as Thebais. This district is divided into prefectures of towns, which are generally designated as "Nomes." These are Ombites, Apollopolites, Hermonthites, Thinites, Phaturites, Coptites, Tentyrites, Diopolites, Antaeopolites, Aphroditopolites, and Lycopolites. The district which lies in the vicinity of Pelusium contains the following Nomes, Pharbaethites, Bubastites, Sethroites, and Tanites. The remaining Nomes are those called the Arabian; the Hammonian, which lies on the road to the oracle of Jupiter Hammon; and those known by the names of Oxyrynchites, Leontopolites, Athribites, Cynopolites, Hermopolites, Xoites, Mendesim, Sebennytes, Cabasites, Latopolites, Heliopolites, Prosopites, Panopolites, Busirites, Onuphites, Saïtes, Ptenethu, Phthemphu, Naukratites, Metelites, Gynaecopolites, Menelaïtes,--all in the region of Alexandria, besides Mareotis in Libya.

Heracleopolites is a Nome on an island of the Nile, fifty miles in length, upon which there is a city, called the 'City of Hercules.' There are two places called Arsinoïtes: these and Memphites extend to the apex of the Delta; adjoining to which, on the side of Africa, are the two Nomes of Oasites. Some writers vary in some of these names and substitute for them other Nomes, such as Heroöpolites and Crocodilopolites. Between Arsinoïtes and Memphites, a lake, 250 miles, or, according to what



Mucianus says, 450 miles in circumference and fifty paces deep, has been formed by artificial means: after the king by whose orders it was made, it is called by the name of Moeris. The distance from thence to Memphis is nearly sixty-two miles, a place which was formerly the citadel of the kings of Egypt; from thence to the oracle of Hammon it is twelve days' journey. Memphis is fifteen miles from the spot where the river Nile divides into the different channels which we have mentioned as forming the Delta.

The sources of the Nile are unascertained, and, travelling as it does for an immense distance through deserts and burning sands, it is only known to us by common report, having neither experienced the vicissitudes of warfare, nor been visited by those arms which have so effectually explored all other regions. It rises, so far indeed as King Juba was enabled to ascertain, in a mountain of Lower Mauritania, not far from the ocean; immediately after which it forms a lake of standing water, which bears the name of Nilides. In this lake are found the several kinds of fish known by the names of alabeta, coracinus, and silurus; a crocodile also was brought thence as a proof that this really is the Nile, and was consecrated by Juba himself in the temple of Isis at Caesarea, where it may be seen at the present day.

In addition to these facts, it has been observed that the waters of the Nile rise in the same proportion in which the snows and rains of Mauritania increase. Pouring forth from this lake, the river disdains to flow through arid and sandy deserts, and for a distance of several days' journey conceals itself; after which it bursts forth at another lake of greater magnitude in the country of the Massaesyli, a people of Mauritania Caesariensis, and thence casts a glance around, as it were, upon the communities of men in its vicinity, giving proofs of its identity in the same peculiarities of the animals which it produces. It then buries itself once again in the sands of the desert, and remains concealed for a distance of twenty days' journey, till it has reached the confines of Aethiopia. Here, when it has once more become sensible of the presence of man, it again emerges, at the same source, in all probability, to which writers have given the name of Niger, or Black. After this, forming the boundary-line between Africa and Aethiopia, its banks, though not immediately peopled by man, are the resort of numbers of wild beasts and animals of various kinds. Giving birth in its course to dense forests of trees, it travels through the middle of Aethiopia, under the name of Astapus, a word which signifies, in the language of the nations who dwell in those regions, "water issuing from

the shades below.”

Proceeding onwards, it divides innumerable islands in its course, and some of them of such vast magnitude, that although its tide runs with the greatest rapidity, it is not less than five days in passing them. When making the circuit of Meroe”, the most famous of these islands, the left branch of the river is called Astobores, or, in other words, “an arm of the water that issues from the shades,” while the right arm has the name of Astosapes, which adds to its original signification the meaning of “side.” It does not obtain the name of “Nile” until its waters have again met and are united in a single stream; and even then, for some miles both above and below the point of confluence, it has the name of Siris. Homer has given to the whole of this river the name of Aegyptus, while other writers again have called it Triton. Every now and then its course is interrupted by islands which intervene, and which only serve as so many incentives to add to the impetuosity of its torrent; and though at last it is hemmed in by mountains on either side, in no part is the tide more rapid and precipitate. Its waters then hastening onwards, it is borne along to the spot in the country of the Aethiopians which is known by the name of “Catadupi;” where, at the last Cataract, the complaint is, not that it flows, but that it rushes, with an immense noise between the

rocks that lie in its way: after which it becomes more smooth, the violence of its waters is broken and subdued, and, wearied out as it were by the length of the distance it has travelled, it discharges itself, though by many mouths, into the Egyptian sea. During certain days of the year, however, the volume of its waters is greatly increased, and as it traverses the whole of Egypt, it inundates the earth, and, by so doing, greatly promotes its fertility.

There have been various reasons suggested for this increase of the river. Of these, however, the most probable are, either that its waters are driven back by the Etesian winds, which are blowing at this season of the year from an opposite direction, and that the sea which lies beyond is driven into the mouths of the river; or else that its waters are swollen by the summer rains of Aethiopia, which fall from the clouds conveyed thither by the Etesian winds from other parts of the earth. Timaeus the mathematician has alleged a reason of an occult nature: he says that the source of the river is known by the name of Phiala, and that the stream buries itself in channels underground, where it sends forth vapours generated by the heat among the steaming rocks amid which it conceals itself; but that, during the days of the inundation, in consequence of the sun approaching nearer to the earth, the waters are

drawn forth by the influence of his heat, and on being thus exposed to the air, overflow; after which, in order that it may not be utterly dried up, the stream hides itself once more. He says that this takes place at the rising of the Dog-Star, when the sun enters the sign of Leo, and stands in a vertical position over the source of the river, at which time at that spot there is no shadow thrown. Most authors, however, are of opinion, on the contrary, that the river flows in greater volume when the sun takes his departure for the north, which he does when he enters the signs of Cancer and Leo, because its waters then are not dried up to so great an extent; while on the other hand, when he returns towards the south pole and re-enters Capricorn, its waters are absorbed by the heat, and consequently flow in less abundance. If there is any one inclined to be of opinion, with Timaeus, that the waters of the river may be drawn out of the earth by the heat, it will be as well for him to bear in mind the fact, that the absence of shadow is a phaenomenon which lasts continuously in these regions.

The Nile begins to increase at the next new moon after the summer solstice, and rises slowly and gradually as the sun passes through the sign of Cancer; it is at its greatest height while the sun is passing through Leo, and it falls as slowly and gradually as it arose while

he is passing through the sign of Virgo. It has totally subsided between its banks, as we learn from Herodotus, on the hundredth day, when the sun has entered Libra. While it is rising it has been pronounced criminal for kings or prefects even to sail upon its waters. The measure of its increase is ascertained by means of wells. Its most desirable height is sixteen cubits; if the waters do not attain that height, the overflow is not universal; but if they exceed that measure, by their slowness in receding they tend to retard the process of cultivation. In the latter case the time for sowing is lost, in consequence of the moisture of the soil; in the former, the ground is so parched that the seed-time comes to no purpose. The country has reason to make careful note of either extreme. When the water rises to only twelve cubits, it experiences the horrors of famine; when it attains thirteen, hunger is still the result; a rise of fourteen cubits is productive of gladness; a rise of fifteen sets all anxieties at rest; while an increase of sixteen is productive of unbounded transports of joy. The greatest increase known, up to the present time, is that of eighteen cubits, which took place in the time of the Emperor Claudius; the smallest rise was that of five, in the year of the battle of Pharsalia, the river by this prodigy testifying its horror, as it were, at the murder of Pompeius Magnus. When

the waters have reached their greatest height, the people open the embankments and admit them to the lands. As each district is left by the waters, the business of sowing commences. This is the only river in existence that emits no vapours.

The Nile first enters the Egyptian territory at Syene, on the frontiers of Aethiopia; that is the name of a peninsula a mile in circumference, upon which Castra is situate, on the side of Arabia. Opposite to it are the four islands of Philae, at a distance of 600 miles from the place where the Nile divides into two channels; at which spot, as we have already stated, the Delta, as it is called, begins. This, at least, is the distance, according to Artemidorus, who also informs us that there were in it 250 towns; Juba says, however, that the distance between these places is 400 miles. Aristocreon says that the distance from Elephantis to the sea is 750 miles; Elephantis being an inhabited island four miles below the last Cataract, sixteen beyond Syene, 585 from Alexandria, and the extreme limit of the navigation of Egypt. To such an extent as this have the above-named authors been mistaken! This island is the place of rendezvous for the vessels of the Aethiopians: they are made to fold up, and the people carry them on their shoulders whenever they come to the Cataracts.

Egypt, besides its boast of extreme antiquity, asserts that it contained, in the reign of King Amasis, 20,000 inhabited cities: in our day they are still very numerous, though no longer of any particular note. Still however we find the following ones mentioned as of great renown--the city of Apollo; next, that of Leucothea; then Great Diospolis, otherwise Thebes, known to fame for its hundred gates; Coptos, which from its proximity to the Nile, forms its nearest emporium for the merchandise of India and Arabia; then the town of Venus, and then another town of Jupiter. After this comes Tentyris, below which is Abydus, the royal abode of Memnon, and famous for a temple of Osiris, which is situate in Libya, at a distance from the river of seven miles and a half. Next to it comes Ptolemais, then Panopolis, and then another town of Venus, and, on the Libyan side, Lycon, where the mountains form the boundary of the province of Thebais. On passing these, we come to the towns of Mercury, Alabastron, the town of Dogs, and that of Hercules already mentioned. We next come to Arsinoë, and Memphis, which has been previously mentioned; between which last and the Nome of Arsinoïtes, upon the Libyan side, are the towers known as the Pyramids, the Labyrinth on Lake Moeris, in the construction of which no wood was employed, and the town of Crialon. Besides these, there is one



place in the interior, on the confines of Arabia, of great celebrity, the City of the Sun.

With the greatest justice, however, we may lavish our praises upon Alexandria, built by Alexander the Great on the shores of the Egyptian Sea, upon the soil of Africa, at twelve miles' distance from the Canopic Mouth and near Lake Mareotis; the spot having previously borne the name of Rhacotes. The plan of this city was designed by the architect Dinocharres, who is memorable for the genius which he displayed in many ways. Building the city upon a wide space of ground fifteen miles in circumference, he formed it in the circular shape of a Macedonian chlamys, uneven at the edge, giving it an angular projection on the right and left; while at the same time he devoted one-fifth part of the site to the royal palace.

Lake Mareotis, which lies on the south side of the city, is connected by a canal which joins it to the Canopic mouth, and serves for the purposes of communication with the interior. It has also a great number of islands, and is thirty miles across, and 150 in circumference, according to Claudius Caesar. Other writers say that it is forty schoeni in length, making the schoenum to be thirty stadia; hence, according to them, it is 150 miles in length and the same in breadth.

There are also, in the latter part of the course of the Nile, many towns of considerable celebrity, and more especially those which have given their names to the mouths of the river--I do not mean, all the mouths, for there are no less than twelve of them, as well as four others, which the people call the False Mouths. I allude to the seven more famous ones, the Canopic Mouth, next to Alexandria, those of Bolbitine, Sebennys, Phatnis, Mendes, Tanis, and, last of all, Pelusium. Besides the above there are the towns of Butos, Pharbaethos, Leontopolis, Athribis, the town of Isis, Busiris, Cynopolis, Aphrodites, Sais, and Naucratis, from which last some writers call that the Naucratic Mouth, which is by others called the Heracleotic, and mention it instead of the Canopic Mouth, which is the next to it.

## Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

### 1.34-37 Description of Egypt

34 The Delta is much like Sicily in shape, and its sides are each seven hundred and fifty stades long and its base, where it is washed by the sea, thirteen hundred stades. 2 This island is intersected by many artificial canals and includes the fairest land in Egypt. For since it is alluvial soil and

well watered, it produces many crops of every kind, inasmuch as the river by its annual rise regularly deposits on it fresh slime, and the inhabitants easily irrigate its whole area by means of a contrivance which was invented by Archimedes of Syracuse and is called, after its shape, a screw.

3 Since the Nile has a gentle current, carries down a great quantity of all kinds of earth, and, furthermore, gathers in stagnant pools in low places, marshes are formed which abound in every kind of plant. 4 For tubers of every flavour grow in them and fruits and vegetables which grow on stalks, of a nature peculiar to the country, supplying an abundance sufficient to render the poor and the sick among the inhabitants self-sustaining. 5 For not only do they afford a varied diet, ready at hand and abundant for all who need it, but they also furnish not a few of the other things which contribute to the necessities of life; 6 the lotus, for instance, grows in great profusion, and from it the Egyptians make a bread which is able to satisfy the physical needs of the body, and the ciborium, which is found in great abundance, bears what is called the "Egyptian" bean. 7 There are also many kinds of trees, of which that called persea, which was introduced from Ethiopia by the Persians when Cambyses conquered those regions, has an unusually sweet fruit, 8 while of the fig-mulberry trees one kind

bears the black mulberry and another a fruit resembling the fig; and since the latter produces throughout almost the whole year, the result is that the poor have a ready source to turn to in their need. 9 The fruit called the blackberry is picked at the time the river is receding and by reason of its natural sweetness is eaten as a dessert. 10 The Egyptians also make a drink out of barley which they call zythos, the bouquet of which is not much inferior to that of wine. 11 Into their lamps they pour for lighting purposes, not the oil of the olive, but a kind which is extracted from a plant and called kiki. Many other plants, capable of supplying men with the necessities of life, grow in Egypt in great abundance, but it would be a long task to tell about them.

35 As for animals, the Nile breeds many of peculiar form, and two which surpass the others, the crocodile and what is called the "horse." 2 Of these animals the crocodile grows to be the largest from the smallest beginning, since this animal lays eggs about the size of those of a goose, but after the young is hatched it grows to be as long as sixteen cubits. It is as long-lived as man, and has no tongue. 3 The body of the animal is wondrously protected by nature; for its skin is covered all over with scales and is remarkably hard, and there are many teeth in both jaws, two being tusks, much larger than the rest. 4 It devours the flesh not only



of men but also of any land animal which approaches the river. The bites which it makes are huge and severe and it lacerates terribly with its claws, and whatever part of the flesh it tears it renders altogether difficult to heal. 5 In early times the Egyptians used to catch these beasts with hooks baited with the flesh of pigs, but since then they have hunted them sometimes with heavy nets, as they catch some kinds of fish, and sometimes from their boats with iron spears which they strike repeatedly into the head. 6 The multitude of them in the river and the adjacent marshes is beyond telling, since they are prolific and are seldom slain by the inhabitants; for it is the custom of most of the natives of Egypt to worship the crocodile as a god, while for foreigners there is no profit whatsoever in the hunting of them since their flesh is not edible. 7 But against this multitude's increasing and menacing the inhabitants nature has devised a great help; for the animal called the ichneumon, which is about the size of a small dog, goes about breaking the eggs of the crocodiles, since the animal lays them on the banks of the river, and — what is most astonishing of all — without eating them or profiting in any way it continually performs a service which, in a sense, has been prescribed by nature and forced upon the animal for the benefit of men.

8 The animal called the “horse” is not

less than five cubits high, and is four-footed and cloven-hoofed like the ox; it has tusks larger than those of the wild boar, three on each side, and ears and tail and a cry somewhat like those of the horse; but the trunk of its body, as a whole, is not unlike that of the elephant, and its skin is the toughest of almost any beast's. 9 Being a river and land animal, it spends the day in the streams exercising in the deep water, while at night it forages about the countryside on the grain and hay, so that, if this animal were prolific and reproduced each year, it would entirely destroy the farms of Egypt. 10 But even it is caught by the united work of many men who strike it with iron spears; for whenever it appears they converge their boats upon it, and gathering about it wound it repeatedly with a kind of chisel fitted with iron barbs, and then, fastening the end of a rope of tow to one of them which has become imbedded in the animal, they let it go until it dies from loss of blood. 11 Its meat is tough and hard to digest and none of its inward parts is edible, neither the viscera nor the intestines.

36 Beside the beasts above mentioned the Nile contains every variety of fish and in numbers beyond belief; for it supplies the natives not only with abundant subsistence from the fish freshly caught, but it also yields an unfailing multitude for salting. 2 Speaking generally, we may say that

the Nile surpasses all the rivers of the inhabited world in its benefactions to mankind. For, beginning to rise at the summer solstice, it increases in volume until the autumnal equinox, and, since it is bringing down fresh mud all the time, it soaks both the fallow land and the seed land as well as the orchard land for so long a time as the farmers may wish. 3 For since the water comes with a gentle flow, they easily divert the river from their fields by small dams of earth, and then, by cutting these, as easily let the river in again upon the land whenever they think this to be advantageous. 4 And in general the Nile contributes so greatly to the lightening of labour as well as to the profit of the inhabitants, that the majority of the farmers, as they begin work upon the areas of the land which are becoming dry, merely scatter their seed, turn their herds and flocks in on the fields, and after they have used these for trampling the seed in return after four or five months to harvest it; while some, applying light ploughs to the land, turn over no more than the surface of the soil after its wetting and then gather great heaps of grain without much expense or exertion. 5 For, generally speaking, every kind of field labour among other peoples entails great expense and toil, but among the Egyptians alone is the harvest gathered in with very slight outlay of money and labour. Also the land planted with the

vine, being irrigated as are the other fields, yields an abundant supply of wine to the natives. 6 And those who allow the land, after it has been inundated, to lie uncultivated and give it over to the flocks to graze upon, are rewarded with flocks which, because of the rich pasturage, lamb twice and are twice shorn every year.

7 The rise of the Nile is a phenomenon which appears wonderful enough to those who have witnessed it, but to those who have only heard of it, quite incredible. For while all other rivers begin to fall at the summer solstice and grow steadily lower and lower during the course of the following summer, this one alone begins to rise at that time and increases so greatly in volume day by day that it finally overflows practically all Egypt. 8 And in like manner it afterwards follows precisely the opposite course and for an equal length of time gradually falls each day, until it has returned to its former level. And since the land is a level plain, while the cities and villages, as well as the farm-houses, lie on artificial mounds, the scene comes to resemble the Cyclades Islands. 9 The wild land animals for the larger part are cut off by the river and perish in its waters, but a few escape by fleeing to higher ground; the herds and flocks, however, are maintained at the time of the flood in the villages and farm-houses, where fodder is stored up for them in advance.

10 The masses of the people, being relieved of their labours during the entire time of the inundation, turn to recreation, feasting all the while and enjoying without hindrance every device of pleasure. 11 And because of the anxiety occasioned by the rise of the river the kings have constructed a Nilometer at Memphis, where those who are charged with the administration of it accurately each the rise and despatch messages to the cities, and inform them exactly how many cubits or fingers the river has risen and when it has commenced to fall. 12 In this manner the entire nation, when it has learned that the river has ceased rising and begun to fall, is relieved of its anxiety, while at the same time all immediately know in advance how large the next harvest will be, since the Egyptians have kept an accurate record of their observations of this kind over a long period of terms.

37 Since there is great difficulty in explaining the swelling of the river, many philosophers and historians have undertaken to set forth the causes of it; regarding this we shall speak summarily, in order that we may neither make our digression too long nor fail to record that which all men are curious to know. 2 For on the general subject of the rise of the Nile and in this sources, as well as on the manner in which it reaches the sea and the other points in which this, the largest river of the inhabited world, differs

from all others, some historians have actually not ventured to say a single word, although went now and then to expatiate at length on some winter torrent or other, while others have undertaken to speak on these points of inquiry, but have strayed far from the truth. 3 Hellanicus and Cadmus, for instance, as well as Hecataeus and all the writers like them, belonging as they do one and all to the early school, turned to the answers offered by the myths; 4 Herodotus, who was a curious inquirer if ever a man was, and widely acquainted with history, undertook, it is true, to give an explanation of the matter, but is now found to have followed contradictory guesses; Xenophon and Thucydides, who are praised for the accuracy of their histories, completely refrained in their writings from any mention of the regions about Egypt; and Ephorus and Theopompus, who of all writers paid most attention to these matters, hit upon the truth the least. The error on the part of all these writers was due, not to their negligence, but to the peculiar character of the country. 5 For from earliest times until Ptolemy who was called Philadelphus, not only did no Greeks ever cross over into Ethiopia, but none ascended even as far as the boundaries of Egypt — to such an extent were all these regions inhospitable to foreigners and altogether dangerous; but after this king had made an expedition into Ethiopia

with an army of Greeks, being the first to do so, the facts about that country from that time forth have been more accurately learned.

6 Such, then, were the reasons for the ignorance of the earlier historians; and as for the sources of the Nile and the region where the stream arises, not a man, down to the time of the writing of this history, has ever affirmed that he has seen them, or reported from hearsay an account received from any who have maintained that they have seen them. 7 The question, therefore, resolves itself into a matter of guesswork and plausible conjecture; and when, for instance, the priests of Egypt assert that the Nile has its origin in the ocean which surrounds the inhabited world, there is nothing sound in what they say, and they are merely solving one perplexity by substituting another, and advancing as proof an explanation which itself stands much in need of proof. 8 On the other hand, those Trogydites, known as the Bolgii, who migrated from the interior because of the heat, say that there are certain phenomena connected with those regions, from which a man might reason that the body of the Nile is gathered from many sources which converge upon a single place, and that this is the reason for its being the most fertile of all known rivers. 9 But the inhabitants of the country about the island called Meroë, with whom

a man would be most likely to agree, since they are far removed from the art of finding reasons in accordance with what is plausible and dwell nearest the regions under discussion, are so far from saying anything accurate about these problems that they even call the river Astapus, which means, when translated into Greek, "Water from Darkness."

10 This people, then, have given the Nile a name which accords with the want of any first-hand information about those regions and with their own ignorance of them; but in our opinion the explanation nearest the truth is the one which is farthest from pure assumption. 11 I am not unaware that Herodotus, when distinguishing between the Libya which lies to the east and that which lies to the west of this river, attributes to the Libyans known as the Nasamonies the exact observation of the stream, and says that the Nile rises in a certain lake and then flows through the land of Ethiopia for a distance beyond telling; and yet assuredly no hasty assent should be

## Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

1.70-71 How the pharaohs lived

As far as the way of living of the kings



of Egypt is concerned: they were not like other monarchs who have the absolute power to act everywhere according to their whim, but everything was ordained by laws, not only their official business, but also their daily domestic life. They were not served by slaves, whether bought or born in the House, but only by sons of the noblest priests, who were older than twenty years and the best educated among their fellow countrymen. By being constantly surrounded, day and night, by the noblest looking after his bodily needs, any base act of the king would be prevented. No prince can sink too deep into depravity if he does not have willing servants to his passions.

The hours of day and night were dedicated to certain tasks the king had to perform, laid down by laws and not at his own discretion. After rising in the morning he had to receive the letters which had arrived from all parts, so that he could make correct decisions based on precise knowledge of all happenings in the affairs of the state. Then he had to take a bath, and, decked out with the insignia of royal power and a white robe, sacrifice to the gods. It was the custom that the High Priest stood by the side of the king when the sacrificial animal was led to the altar, and prayed in a loud voice before the people of Egypt that health and every other boon may be given to the king if he fulfilled his obligations

towards his subjects. All his virtues were enumerated and it was claimed that he was pious and very humane, just and noble spirited, moreover he abhorred lies and loved to share, in short he was above all passions, when prosecuting transgressions the punishment was less severe than the guilt and when he returned favours the rewards surpassed the merits.

Much more of this kind was mentioned by the priest saying the prayers and lastly he pronounced the curse against the sins of ignorance, voiding any accusation against the king and making those who had counselled evil and assisted him, responsible for the damage they had instigated. This act had the purpose to encourage the king to make pious and god pleasing changes and to make him become accustomed to orderly behaviour, not by exasperating reprimands but by courteous praise which extolled his virtues. After the king had viewed the sacrifice and detected auspicious omens in it, the lector-priest read out useful advice and chronicles of the deeds of the most outstanding men from the holy scriptures, in order to direct the thoughts of the prince, who wielded all power, towards the noblest endeavours, while he was busy fulfilling the ordained tasks.

Not just public business and court hearings had their prescribed hour, but also the stroll, the bath, the mari-

tal cohabitation, in sum all of life's functions.

The diet of the kings had to be quite simple; veal and goose were served at their table, and they drank wine not exceeding a certain quantity, so that overeating and drunkenness were impossible. Generally speaking, their whole way of life was ordered so uniformly that one might have thought it had not been ordained by a law-giver, but ordered by a most competent physician calculated from rules of healthy living.

One may think it strange that the kings could not decide freely over their daily diet, it is even stranger that they did not administer justice and make decisions according to whim and that they were not allowed to punish somebody moved by fancy or anger or some other base cause, but had to keep to the letter of the law every single case. They obeyed these customs not with displeasure or reluctance, they were rather convinced that they were leading the happiest life. They think that other people are led astray by an unreasonable forbearance for sensual urges and commit many acts which lead them into misfortune or danger, and that a few are probably aware that their intentions are improper and yet they commit evil, driven by love or hatred or another passion. Fewer cases of hastiness happen to them because

they follow rules of conduct approved of by the most reasonable men.

Because the kings treated their subjects so justly, the affection the people had for their princes was stronger than the love between the closest relatives ever was. Not just the community of the priests, but all Egyptians did not care as much for their wives and children and their other goods as they cared for the welfare of their sovereigns. Therefore, the wisest of the known kings have preserved the native order, for as long as the legal institution we have just described, existed.

Moreover they subjugated many peoples and possessed great fortunes. Throughout the whole land they commissioned unsurpassable works and institutions and in the cities they built all kinds of marvellous monuments at great expense.

## Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

1.73-74, 81 Customs of the early Egyptians

73 And since Egypt as a whole is divided into several parts which in Greek are called nomes, over each of these a nomarch is appointed who is charged with both the oversight and



care of all its affairs. 2 Furthermore, the entire country is divided into three parts, the first of which is held by the order of the priests, which is accorded the greatest veneration by the inhabitants both because these men have charge of the worship of the gods and because by virtue of their education they bring to bear a higher intelligence than others. 3 With the income from these holdings<sup>3</sup> of land they perform all the sacrifices throughout Egypt, maintain their assistants, and minister to their own needs; for it has always been held that the honours paid to the gods should never be changed, but should ever be performed by the same men and in the same manner, and that those who deliberate on behalf of all should not lack the necessities of life. 4 For, speaking generally, the priests are the first to deliberate upon the most important matters and are always at the king's side, sometimes as his assistants, sometimes to propose measures and give instructions, and they also, by their knowledge of astrology and of divination, forecast future events, and read to the king, out of the record of acts preserved in their sacred books, those which can be of assistance. 5 For it is not the case with the Egyptians as it is with the Greeks, that a single man or a single woman takes over the priesthood, but many are engaged in the sacrifices and honours paid the gods and pass

on to their descendants the same rule of life. They also pay no taxes of any kind, and in repute and in power are second after the king.

6 The second part of the country has been taken over by the kings for their revenues, out of which they pay the cost of their wars, support the splendour of their court, and reward with fitting gifts any who have distinguished themselves; and they do not swamp the private citizens by taxation, since their income from these revenues gives them a great plenty.

7 The last part is held by the warriors, as they are called, who are subject to call for all military duties, the purpose being that those who hazard their lives may be most loyal to the country because of such allotment of land and thus may eagerly face the perils of war.

8 For it would be absurd to entrust the safety of the entire nation to these men and yet have them possess in the country no property to fight for valuable enough to arouse their ardour. But the most important consideration is the fact that, if they are well-to-do, they will readily beget children and thus so increase the population that the country will not need to call in any mercenary troops. 9 And since their calling, like that of the priests, is hereditary, the warriors are incited to bravery by the distinguished records of their fathers and, inasmuch as they become zealous students of warfare

from their boyhood up, they turn out to be invincible by reason of their daring and skill.

74 There are three other classes of free citizens, namely, the herdsmen, the husbandmen, and the artisans. Now the husbandmen rent on moderate terms the arable land held by the king and the priests and the warriors, and spend their entire time in tilling the soil; and since from very infancy they are brought up in connection with the various tasks of farming, they are far more experienced in such matters than the husbandmen of any other nation; 2 for of all mankind they acquire the most exact knowledge of the nature of the soil, the use of water in irrigation, the times of sowing and reaping, and the harvesting of crops in general, some details of which they have learned from the observations of their ancestors and others in the school of their own experience. 3 And what has been said applies equally well to the herdsmen, who receive the care of animals from their fathers as if by a law of inheritance, and follow a pastoral life all the days of their existence. 4 They have received, it is true, much from their ancestors relative to the best care and feeding of grazing animals, but to this they add not a little by reason of their own interest in such matters; and the most astonishing fact is that, by reason of their unusual application to such matters, the men who have charge

of poultry and geese, in addition to producing them in the natural way known to all mankind, raise them by their own hands, by virtue of a skill peculiar to them, in numbers beyond telling; 5 for they do not use the birds for hatching the eggs, but, in effecting this themselves artificially by their own wit and skill in an astounding manner, they are not surpassed by the operations of nature.<sup>5</sup>

6 Furthermore, one may see that the crafts also among the Egyptians are very diligently cultivated and brought to their proper development; for they are the only people where all the craftsmen are forbidden to follow any other occupation or belong to any other class of citizens than those stipulated by the laws and handed down to them from their parents, the result being that neither ill-will towards a teacher nor political distractions nor any other thing interferes with their interest in their work. 7 For whereas among all other peoples it can be observed that the artisans are distracted in mind by many things, and through the desire to advance themselves do not stick exclusively to their own occupation; for some try their hands at agriculture, some dabble in trade, and some cling to two or three crafts, and in states having a democratic form of government vast numbers of them, trooping to the meetings of the Assembly, ruin the work of the government, while they make a profit for

themselves at the expense of others who pay them their wage, yet among the Egyptians if any artisan should take part in public affairs or pursue several crafts he is severely punished.

8 Such, then, were the divisions of the citizens, maintained by the early inhabitants of Egypt, and their devotion to their own class which they inherited from their ancestors.

81 In the education of their sons the priests teach them two kinds of writing, that which is called “sacred” and that which is used in the more general instruction. Geometry and arithmetic are given special attention. 2 For the river, by changing the face of the country each year in manifold ways, gives rise to many and varied disputes between neighbours over their boundary lines, and these disputes cannot be easily tested out with any exactness unless a geometer works out the truth scientifically by the application of his experience. 3 And arithmetic is serviceable with reference to the business affairs connected with making a living and also in applying the principles of geometry, and likewise is of no small assistance to students of astrology as well. 4 For the positions and arrangements of the stars as well as their motions have always been the subject of careful observation among the Egyptians, if anywhere in the world; they have preserved to this day the records

concerning each of these stars over an incredible number of years, this subject of study having been zealously preserved among them from ancient times, and they have also observed with the utmost avidity the motions and orbits and stoppings of the planets, as well as the influences of each one on the generation of all living things — the good or the evil effects, namely, of which they are the cause. 5 And while they are often successful in predicting to men the events which are going to befall them in the course of their lives, not infrequently they foretell destructions of the crops or, on the other hand, abundant yields, and pestilences that are to attack men or beasts, and as a result of their long observations they have prior knowledge of earthquakes and floods, of the risings of the comets, and of all things which the ordinary man looks upon as beyond all finding out. 6 And according to them the Chaldaeans of Babylon, being colonists from Egypt, enjoy the fame which they have for their astrology because they learned that science from the priests of Egypt.

7 As to the general mass of the Egyptians, they are instructed from their childhood by their fathers or kinsmen in the practices proper to each manner of life as previously described by us; but as for reading and writing, the Egyptians at large give their children only a superficial instruction in them, and not all do this, but for the most

part only those who are engaged in the crafts. In wrestling and music, however, it is not customary among them to receive any instruction at all; for they hold that from the daily exercises in wrestling their young men will gain, not health, but a vigour that is only temporary and in fact quite dangerous, while they consider music to be not only useless but even harmful...

## Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

### 1.82 Egyptian medicine

Their remedies by which they prevent diseases are enemas, fasting and vomiting. These are at times applied daily, at others they are suspended for three or four days. They claim that of every food the main part is superfluous after digestion and that the diseases are born from this; therefore they served the preservation of health best.

On a military campaign or a journey inside the country everybody must be healed without special remuneration, as the physicians receive their wages from the state.

They have to follow a written law when healing which was composed by many of the most famous physicians.

When following the laws which are read out from the holy book they are beyond guilt and safe from any accusation, even when they cannot save the patient. But if they act counter to the regulations they are liable to mortal accusation, as the law giver was of the opinion that few would know more appropriate remedies than the procedures based on observations during many years and prescribed by the first masters of the art.

## Products of Arabia

Inscriptions on the inner walls of an Egyptian temple giving an account of the conquest of Arabia during the time of Thutmose III (ruled c. 1138-1085 B.C.)

The loading of the ships of transport with a great quantity of the magnificent products of Arabia, with all kinds of precious woods of the Holy Land, with heaps of incense resin, with verdant incense trees, with ebony, with pure ivory, with gold and silver from the land of Amu, with the tesep-wood, and the cassia-bark, aham-incense and mestemkohl, and hounds, with skins of leopards of the South, apes and monkeys, with women and children. Never has a convoy been made like this one by any king since the creation of the world.

# Jeremiah

Bible: I Kings

2.11 David reigns over Israel (c. 1010-970 B.C.)

11 And the days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years reigned he in Jerusalem.

## El-Amarna Letters

Tablets of Tel El-Amarna; Palestine is under Egyptian rule and the governor of Jerusalem (plus other Egyptian rulers in Palestine) tells pharaoh Akhenaten (ruled c. 1022-1006 B.C.) of a general revolt of the natives

Letter 1 To the king, my Lord, thus speaks Abdu-Heba, your servant. At the feet of the king, my Lord, seven times and seven times I prostrate myself. What have I done to the king, my Lord? They blame me before the king, my Lord, saying: "Abdu-Heba has rebelled against the king, my Lord."

I am here, as far as I am concerned, it was not my father, nor my mother, who put me in this position; the arm of the powerful king lead me to the house of my father! Why would I commit a transgression against the

king, my Lord?

While the king, my Lord, lives, I will say to the commissioner of the king, my Lord: "Why do you favour the Hapiru and are opposed to the rulers?"

And thus I am accused before the king, my Lord. Because it is said: "Lost are the territories of the king, my Lord."

Thus am I calumniated before the king, my Lord! But may the king, my Lord know, that, when the king sent a garrison, Yanhamu seized everything, and the land of Egypt.

Oh king, my Lord, there are no garrison troops here! Therefore, the king takes care of his land! May the king take care of his land! All the territories of the king have rebelled; Ilmilku caused the loss of all the territories of the king. May the king take care of his land!

I repeat: Allow me to enter the presence of the king, my Lord, and let me look into both eyes of the king, my Lord. But the hostility against me is strong, and I cannot enter the presence of the king, my Lord. May the king send garrison troops, in order that I may enter and look into the eyes of the king, my Lord. So certain as the king, my Lord, lives, when the commissioners come, I will say: "Lost are the territories of the king. Do you not hear to me? All the rulers are lost;



the king, my Lord, does not have a single ruler left.”

May the king direct his attention to the archers, and may the king, my Lord, send troops of archers, the king has no more lands. The Hapiru sack the territories of the king. If there are archers (here) this year, all the territories of the king will remain (intact); but if there are no archers, the territories of the king, my Lord, will be lost!

To the king, my Lord thus writes Abdu-Heba, your servant. He conveys eloquent words to the king, my Lord. All the territories of the king, my Lord, are lost.

Letter 2 To the king, my Lord, thus speaks Abdu-Heba, your servant. I have prostrated myself seven times seven times at the feet of my Lord, the king

The city of ... I have entered. May the king know that all the countries are at peace, but there is war against me. Thus, then, takes the king care of his country. See, the country of Gazru, the country of Ashqaluna, and the city of La-ki-si, have given them food, oil and all that is necessary. May the king take care of the troops of archers. May he send troops of archers against the people who commit evil deeds against the king, my Lord.

If this year there are troops of archers, there will be countries and governors

for the king, my Lord; if there are no troops of archers, there will be no countries nor governors for the king. See, the country of U-ru-sa-lim, has not been given to me by my father nor by my mother; the strong arm of the king has given it to me. See, this is the work of Milkili and the deed of the sons of Labayu, who have given the country to the has-pi-ri. See, oh king, my Lord, the right is with me...

Letter 3 To the king my lord, my sun: message from Lab'aya, your servant, the ground on which you walk. At the feet of the king my lord and my sun, seven and seven times I throw myself. I have heard the words that the king has sent me on a tablet. Look, I am servant of the king, like my father and my grandfather, I was servant of the king already before. I have not sinned, I am not guilty. This is my sin, this is my guilt: that I have entered Gezer. But I say, “The king be favourable! I have no other intention than to serve the king!” All that the king says, I listen to. The king trust me in my commission, to protect the city of the king!

Letter 4 To the king my lord, say: message from Abdi-Heba, your servant. At the feet of the king my lord I throw myself, seven and seven times. Look, Milki-Ilu does not separate himself from the sons of Lab'aya and the sons of Arzaya, in the desire of the king's land for themselves. A regent

who commits a similar act, why does the king not interrogate him? Look, Milki-Ilu and Tagi, the action which they have committed is this, that they took Rubuta. And now Jerusalem: if this land belongs to the king, then why ever -- while Gaza remained the king's -- look: the land of Ginti-kirmil to Tagi and the men of Ginti are the garrison at Beth-Shean!? Should we do as Lab'aya, who gave Shechem to the enemy {habiru}? Milki-Ilu wrote to Tagi and to the sons: "Be men! Give to the men of Qiltu that which they desire! Let us abandon Jerusalem!" The garrison troops that you sent, by the hand of Haya son of Miyare, were taken by Addaya, and he put them in his house at Gaza, and sent twenty men to Egypt. Let the king know that there are no garrison troops with me. So live the king, his nobleman. Pawuru has left me and is at Gaza. May the king remember, with him (Pawuru) before him. May the king send fifty garrison men to protect the land. All the king's land deserted! Send Yanhamu, who knows the land of the king. To the scribe of the king [my lord], message of Abdi-Heba your esrvant. Present good words before the king. I would really die for you, I am your servant!

Letter 5 [...] have taken Lab'aya and they have set themselves against the cities of the king my lord that the king my lord had entrusted to me to pro-

tect. Let the king my lord know that they have taken the cities of the king my lord; but the city in which I reside, I protect, until I see the eyes of the regent of the king my lord. From the day which I sent these tablets to the palace, they have been against me [...]

## Jeremiah

Bible: I Kings

6.1 The foundation of Solomon's temple is laid (c. 966 B.C.)

1 And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

## Ramesses at Kadesh

Poem recording the battle between Pharaoh Ramesses II (ruled c. 940-873 B.C.) and the Hittite King Muwatallis II; called the Battle of Kadesh (c. 936 B.C.).

THEN the king of Khita-land,  
With his warriors made a stand,  
But he durst not risk his hand  
In battle with our Pharaoh;

So his chariots drew away,  
Unnumbered as the sand,  
And they stood, three men of war  
On each car;  
And gathered all in force  
Was the flower of his army,  
for the fight in full array,  
But advance, he did not dare,  
Foot or horse.  
So in ambush there they lay,  
Northwest of Kadesh town;  
And while these were in their lair,  
Others went forth south of Kadesh,  
on our midst, their charge was  
thrown  
With such weight, our men went  
down,  
For they took us unaware,  
And the legion of Pra-Hormakhu  
gave way.  
But at the western side  
Of Arunatha's tide,  
Near the city's northern wall,  
our Pharaoh had his place.  
And they came unto the king,  
And they told him our disgrace;  
Then Rameses uprose,  
like his father, Montu in might,  
All his weapons took in hand,  
And his armor did he don,  
Just like Baal, fit for fight;  
And the noble pair of horses that  
carried Pharaoh on,  
Lo! "Victory of Thebes" was their  
name,  
And from out the royal stables of  
great Miamun they came.  
Then the king he lashed each horse,

And they quickened up their course,  
And he dashed into the middle of the  
hostile, Hittite host,  
All alone, none other with him, for  
he counted not the cost.  
Then he looked behind, and found  
That the foe were all around,  
Two thousand and five hundred of  
their chariots of war;  
And the flower of the Hittites, and  
their helpers, in a ring---  
Men of Masu, Keshkesh, Pidasu,  
Malunna, Arathu,  
Qazauadana, Kadesh, Akerith, Leka  
and Khilibu---  
Cut off the way behind,  
Retreat he could not find;  
There were three men on each car,  
And they gathered all together, and  
closed upon the king.  
"Yea, and not one of my princes, of  
my chief men and my great,  
Was with me, not a captain, not a  
knight;  
For my warriors and chariots had  
left me to my fate,  
Not one was there to take his part in  
fight."  
Then spake Pharaoh, and he cried:  
"Father Ammon, where are you?  
Shall a sire forget his son?  
Is there anything without your  
knowledge I have done?  
From the judgments of your mouth  
when have I gone?  
Have I e'er transgressed your word?  
Disobeyed, or broke a vow?  
Is it right, who rules in Egypt,

Egypt's lord,  
 Should e'er before the foreign peoples  
 bow,  
 Or own their rod?  
 Whate'er may be the mind of this  
 Hittite herdsman horde,  
 Sure Ammon at should stand higher  
 than the wretch who knows no God?  
 Father Ammon, is it nought  
 That to you I dedicated noble monu-  
 ments, and filled  
 Your temples with the prisoners of  
 war?  
 That for you a thousand years shall  
 stand the shrines  
 I dared to build?  
 The king, probably, is here identify-  
 ing himself with Ammon.  
 That to you my palace-substance I  
 have brought,  
 That tribute unto you from afar  
 A whole land comes to pay,  
 That to you ten thousand oxen for  
 sacrifice I fell,  
 And burn upon your altars the  
 sweetest woods that smell;  
 That all your heart required, my  
 hand did ne'er gainsay?  
 I have built for you tall gates and  
 wondrous works beside the Nile,  
 I have raised you mast on mast,  
 For eternity to last,  
 From Elephantin's isle  
 The obelisks for you I have conveyed,  
 It is I who brought alone  
 The everlasting stone,  
 It is I who sent for you,  
 The ships upon the sea,

To pour into your coffers the wealth  
 of foreign trade;  
 Is it told that such a thing  
 By any other king,  
 At any other time, was done at all?  
 Let the wretch be put to shame  
 Who refuses your commands,  
 But honor to his name  
 Who to Ammon lifts his hands.  
 To the full of my endeavor,  
 With a willing heart forever,  
 I have acted unto you,  
 And to you, great God, I call;  
 For behold! now, Ammon, I,  
 In the midst of many peoples, all  
 unknown,  
 Unnumbered as the sand,  
 Here I stand,  
 All alone;  
 There is no one at my side,  
 My warriors and chariots afeared,  
 Have deserted me, none heard  
 My voice, when to the cravens I, their  
 king, for succor, cried.  
 But I find that Ammon's grace  
 Is better far to me  
 Than a million fighting men and ten  
 thousand chariots be.  
 Yea, better than ten thousand, be  
 they brother, be they son,  
 When with hearts that beat like one,  
 Together for to help me they are  
 gathered in one place.  
 The might of men is nothing, it is  
 Ammon who is lord,  
 What has happened here to me is  
 according to your word,  
 And I will not now transgress your

command;  
But alone, as here I stand,  
To you my cry I send,  
Unto earth's extremest end,  
Saying, 'Help me, father Ammon,  
against the Hittite horde.'"  
Then my voice it found an echo in  
Hermonthis' temple-hall,  
Ammon heard it, and he came unto  
my call;  
And for joy I gave a shout,  
From behind, his voice cried out,  
"I have hastened to you, Ramses  
Miamun,  
Behold! I stand with you,  
Behold! 'tis I am he,  
Own father thine, the great god Ra,  
the sun.  
Lo! mine hand with thine shall fight,  
And mine arm is strong above  
The hundreds of ten thousands, who  
against you do unite,  
Of victory am I lord, and the brave  
heart do I love,  
I have found in you a spirit that is  
right,  
And my soul it does rejoice in your  
valor and your might."  
Then all this came to pass, I was  
changed in my heart  
Like Monthu, god of war, was I  
made,  
With my left hand hurled the dart,  
With my right I swung the blade,  
Fierce as Baal in his time, before  
their fight.  
Two thousand and five hundred  
pairs of horses were around,

And I flew into the middle of their  
ring,  
By my horse-hoofs they were dashed  
all in pieces to the ground,  
None raised his hand in fight,  
For the courage in their breasts had  
sunken quite;  
And their limbs were loosed for fear,  
And they could not hurl the dart,  
And they had not any heart  
To use the spear;  
And I cast them to the water,  
Just as crocodiles fall in from the  
bank,  
So they sank.  
And they tumbled on their faces, one  
by one.  
At my pleasure I made slaughter,  
So that none  
E'er had time to look behind, or  
backward fled;  
Where he fell, did each one lay  
On that day,  
From the dust none ever lifted up his  
head.  
Then the wretched king of Khita, he  
stood still,  
With his warriors and his chariots  
all about him in a ring,  
Just to gaze upon the valor of our  
king  
In the fray.  
And the king was all alone,  
Of his men and chariots none  
To help him; but the Hittite of his  
gazing soon had fill,  
For he turned his face in flight, and  
sped away.



Then his princes forth he sent,  
 To battle with our lord,  
 Well equipped with bow and sword  
 And all goodly armament,  
 Chiefs of Leka, Masa, Kings of  
 Malunna, Arathu,  
 Qar-qa-mash, of the Dardani, of  
 Keshkesh, Khilibu.  
 And the brothers of the king were all  
 gathered in on place,  
 Two thousand and five hundred  
 pairs of horse---  
 And they came right on in force,  
 The fury of their faces to the flaming  
 of my face.  
 Then, like Monthu in his might,  
 I rushed on them apace,  
 And I let them taste my hand  
 In a twinkling moment's space.  
 Then cried one unto his mate,  
 "This is no man, this is he,  
 This is Sutek, god of hate,  
 With Baal in his blood;  
 Let us hasten, let us flee,  
 Let us save our souls from death,  
 Let us take to heel and try our lungs  
 and breath."  
 And before the king's attack,  
 Lands fell, and limbs were slack,  
 They could neither aim the bow, nor  
 thrust the spear,  
 But just looked at him who came  
 Charging on them, like a flame,  
 And the King was as a griffin in the  
 rear.  
 Behold thus speaks the Pharaoh, let  
 all know,  
 I struck them down, and there es-

caped me none  
 Then I lifted up my voice, and I  
 spake,  
 Ho! my warriors, charioteers,  
 Away with craven fears,  
 Halt, stand, and courage take,  
 Behold I am alone,  
 Yet Ammon is my helper, and his  
 hand is with me now."  
 When my Menna, charioteer, beheld  
 in his dismay,  
 How the horses swarmed around us,  
 lo! his courage fled away,  
 And terror and affright  
 Took possession of him quite;  
 And straightway he cried out to me,  
 and said,  
 "Gracious lord and bravest king,  
 savior-guard  
 Of Egypt in the battle, be our ward;  
 Behold we stand alone, in the hostile  
 Hittite ring,  
 Save for us the breath of life,  
 Give deliverance from the strife,  
 Oh! protect us, Ramses Miamun!  
 Oh! save us, mighty King!"  
 Then the King spake to his squire,  
 "Halt! take courage, charioteer,  
 As a sparrow-hawk swoops down  
 upon his prey,  
 So I swoop upon the foe, and I will  
 slay,  
 I will hew them into pieces, I will  
 dash them into dust;  
 Have no fear,  
 Cast such evil thought away,  
 These godless men are wretches that  
 in Ammon put no trust."

Then the king, he hurried forward,  
on the Hittite host he flew,  
“For the sixth time that I charged  
them,” says the king---and listen  
well,  
“Like Baal in his strength, on their  
rearward, lo! I fell,  
And I killed them, none escaped me,  
and I slew, and slew, and slew.”

## Treaty Between Ra- messes II and the Hit- tites

A treaty of peace was signed between  
Ramesses II (ruled c. 940-873 B.C.)  
and the Hittite king after the battle  
called Kadesh (c. 936 B.C.).

It is concluded that Reamasesa-mai-  
amana , the Great King, the king (of  
the land of Egypt) with Hattusili,  
the Great King, the king of the land  
of Hatti, his brother, for the land of  
Egypt and the land of Hatti, in order  
to establish a good peace and a good  
fraternity forever among them.

Thus speaks Reamasesa, the Great  
King, the king of the land of Egypt,  
the hero of the whole country, son of  
Minmuaria, the great king, the king  
of the land of Egypt, the hero, son of  
the son of Minpahiritaria, the Great  
King, the king of the land of Egypt,  
the hero, to Hattusili, son of Mursili ,

the Great King, the king of the land of  
Hatti, the hero, son of the son of Sup-  
piluliuma, the Great King, the king of  
the land of Hatti, the hero.

Look, I have established a good fra-  
ternity and a good peace now forever  
among us, in order to establish this  
way forever a good peace and a good  
fraternity between the land of Egypt  
and the land of Hatti.

Look, in what refers to the great king's  
relationship, the king of the country of  
Egypt, and of the great king, the king  
of the Hittite country, since eternity  
the gods don't allow, by reason of an  
eternal treaty, that the enmity exist  
among them.

Look, Reamasesa-mai-Amana, the  
great king, the king of the country of  
Egypt, will establish the bond that  
the Sun God [Ra] has wanted and  
that the god of the Tempest [the great  
Hittite god] has wanted for the coun-  
try of Egypt and the country of Hatti  
according to the eternal bond, for not  
letting enmity settle between them.

But now Reamasesa-mai-Amana, the  
great king, the king of the country of  
Egypt, has established this bond by  
treaty on a silver tablet with Hattusili,  
the great king, the king of the country  
of Hatti, his brother, starting from  
this day, to settle forever among them  
a good peace and a good fraternity.

He is a brother to me and he is at

peace with me; and I am a brother to him and I am forever at peace with him.

Look, we are united and a bond of fraternity already exists among us and of peace, and it is better than the bond of fraternity and of peace that existed between the country of Egypt and the country of Hatti.

Look, Reamasesa-mai-Amana, the great king, the king of the country of Egypt, is at peace and fraternity with Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country of Hatti.

Look, the children of Reamasesa, the great king, the king of the country of Egypt, they will be forever in state of peace and of fraternity with the children of Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country of Hatti. They will remain in the line of our bond of fraternity and of peace; the country of Egypt and the country of Hatti will be forever be in a state of peace and of fraternity as it is with us.

Reamasesa-mai-Amana, the great king, the king of the country of Egypt, shall never attack the country of Hatti to take possession of a part (of this country). And Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country of Hatti, shall never attack the country of Egypt to take possession of a part (of that country).

Look, the order fixed for eternity

which the Sun God and the God of the Tempest have created for the country of Egypt and the country of Hatti, (that is) peace and fraternity without leaving place among them to any enmity. Look, Reamasesa-mai-Amana, the great king, the king of the country of Egypt, has established peace starting from this day.

Look, the country of Egypt and the country of Hatti live forever in peace and fraternity.

If a foreign enemy marches against the country of Hatti and if Hattusili, the king of the country of Hatti, sends me this message: "Come to my help against him", Reamasesa-mai\_Amana, the great king, the king of the Egyptian country, has to send his troops and his chariots to kill this enemy and to give satisfaction to the country of Hatti.

If Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country of Hatti, rises in anger against his citizens after they have committed a crime against him and if, for this reason, you send to Reamasesa the great king, the king of the country of Egypt, then Reamasesa-mai-Amana has to send his troops and his chariots and these should exterminate all those that he has risen in anger against.

If a foreigner marches against the country of Egypt and if Reamasesa-mai-Amana, the great king, the king

of the country of Egypt, your brother, sends to Hattusili, the king of the country of Hatti, his brother, the following message: "Come to my help against him", then Hattusili, king of the country of Hatti, shall send his troops and his chariots and kill my enemy.

If Reamasesa, king of the country of Egypt, rises in anger against his citizens after they have committed a wrong against him and by reason of this he sends (a message) to Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country of Hatti, my brother, has to send his troops and his chariots and they have to exterminate all those against, and I shall ....

Look, the son of Hattusili, king of the country of Hatti, has to assure his sovereignty of the country of Hatti instead of Hattusili, his father, after the numerous years of Hattusili, king of the country of Hatti. If the children of the country of Hatti transgress against him, then Reamasesa has to send to his help troops and chariots and to give him support.

If a great person flees from the country of Hatti and if he comes to Reamasesa, the great king, king of the country of Egypt, then Reamasesa, the great king, the king of the country of Egypt, has to take hold of him and deliver him into hands of Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country

of Hatti.

If a man or two men who are unknown flee, and if they come to Reamasesa, to serve him, then Reamasesa has to take hold of them and deliver them into the hands of Hattusili, king of the country of Hatti.

If a great person flees from the country of Egypt and he escapes to the country of Amurru or a city and he comes to the king of Amurru, then Benteshina, king of the country of Amurru, has to take hold of him and take him to the king of the country of Hatti ; and Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country of Hatti, shall have him to be taken to Reamasesa, the great king, the king of the country of Egypt.

If a man or two men who are unknown flee, and if they escape from the country of Egypt and if they don't want to serve him, then Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country of Hatti, has to deliver them into his brother's hands and he shall not allow them to inhabit the country of Hatti.

If a nobleman flees from the country of Hatti, or two men, and if they don't want to serve the king of Hatti, and if they flee from the Great King's country, the king of the land of Hatti, in order not to serve him, then Reamasesa has to take hold of them and order them be taken to Hattusili, the Great King, king of the land of Hatti, his

brother, and he shall not allow them to reside in the country of Egypt.

If a nobleman or two flee from the country of Egypt and if they leave for the Land of Hatti, then Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country of Hatti, has to take hold of them and make them be taken to Reamasesa, the Great King, the king of the country of Egypt, his brother.

If a man flees from the country of Hatti, or two men, or three men, and if they come to Reamasesa, the Great King, the king of the country of Egypt, his brother, then Reamasesa, the Great King, the king of the country of Egypt, has to take hold of them and to order them to be taken to Hattusili, his brother, since they are brothers. As for their crime, it should not be imputed; their language and their eyes are not to be pulled out; their ears and their feet are not to be cut off; their houses with their wives and their children are not to be destroyed.

If a (man flees from the country of Reamasesa, the Great King, king of the country of Egypt), or two men, or three men, and if they come (to Hattusili, the Great King), the king of the country of Hatti, my brother, then Hattusili, the Great King, king of the country of Hatti, my brother, has to take hold of them and to order them to be taken to Reamasesa, the Great King, the king of the country of

Egypt, because Reamasesa, the Great King, king of the country of Egypt, and Hattusili are brothers. As for their crime, it should not be imputed; their language and their eyes are not to be pulled out; their ears and their feet are not to be cut off; their houses with their wives and their children are not to be destroyed.

If a man flees from the country of Hatti, or two people, and if they flee from the country of Hatti, and if they come to the country of Egypt, and if a nobleman flees from the country of Hatti or of a city and they flee from the country of Hatti to go to the country of Egypt, then Reamasesa has to order them to be taken to his brother. Look, the sons of the country of Hatti and the children of the country of Egypt are at peace.

If some people flee from the country of Egypt to go to the country of Hatti, then Hattusili, the great king, the king of the country of Hatti, has to order them to be taken to his brother. Look, Hattusili the great king, the king of the country of Hatti, and Reamasesa, the great king, the king of the country of Egypt, your brother, are at peace.

If Reamasesa and the children of the country of Egypt don't observe this treaty, then the gods and the goddesses of the country of Egypt and the gods and goddesses of the country of Hatti shall exterminate the descen-



dants of Reamasesa, the Great King, the king of the country of Egypt.

If Reamasesa and the children of the country of Egypt observe this treaty, then the gods of the oath shall protect them and their [...]

They who observe the words that are in the silver tablet the great gods of the country of Egypt and the great gods of the country of Hatti shall allow them to live and prosper in their houses, their country and with their servants.

They who do not observe the words that are in this silver tablet, the great gods of the country of Egypt as well as the great gods of the country of Hatti will exterminate their houses, their country and their servants.

## The Mouse as Vizier

Ancient Egyptian Tale; unknown date

In the kingdom of the animals there was a wise vizier. He was always at the pharaoh's side, gave him advice, and dealt with the affairs of state in his name. He judged the subjects justly, but with clemency. At the beautiful age of 110 years he lay down and died. His majesty the king began to look among his courtiers whom he could choose as his new vizier. But no one

pleased him, and there was nobody whom he could ask for advice.

Then he had the idea to pose a riddle. Whoever could solve it, would be appointed vizier. He sent his messengers all over the country to proclaim the riddle. Its words were: "What is sweeter than honey and more bitter than bile?"

The animals pondered the puzzle, but it was too difficult for them. Already the moon had wandered around the earth once, and no vizier had been found. Just as the moon set for the last time and Pharaoh was almost despairing, a tiny mouse came running and whispered into the king's ear: "The office of vizier."

This was the puzzle's solution. Pharaoh raised his head, praised the little mouse and appointed him to be his vizier. The mouse was solemnly inducted into its new office. Pharaoh presented him with the gold of honour and received his oath of allegiance as vizier. He read out the virtues of a just vizier. Henceforth the mouse was to sit at the Pharaoh's right.

Meanwhile, all the animals were preparing great festivities in order to celebrate the mouse's new position of honour. The hares made the plans. The hippo brewed beer, a goat carried water with a yoke and the pot-bellied one himself strained the mash with a sieve. The pig put the beer-dough

on a platter, while a hyaena looked after the sow's piglet carrying it in a breast cloth. Cats mixed wine in the kitchen and baked cakes. A big band practised music and rehearsed dances. The billy-goat beat the drum, a fox plucked the lute, another one played the double oboe. In the corner nearby a donkey was teaching two goats. He flourished the conductor's baton keeping time with the leaps of the two horned ones. The crocodile and the lion too roared out songs and accompanied them with music.

In the meantime the mouse was prepared for the festivities. His feet were washed, he was given the eye-liner and the mirror. A cat served him the morning drink. The mouse slurped the wine through a pipe from the jug. A feline maid servant tied a beautiful bow around his neck, and another cat chamberlain brought the fan in order to fan the high lord with cool air.

Soon, everything was ready. The mouse's family rode in the first carriage, followed by a vehicle with well-wishers. Beautifully dressed up with a lotus flower on his head, the mouse sat on a little dais, behind him was a follower. All of the pavilion was covered in garlands. A cat carrying a fan stepped forward, and handed the new vizier a bowl with fragrant food expressing her best wishes. She was followed by a fox carrying a huge bouquet of flowers, who was so

excited that he stammered when he wanted to wish him well. But the fox at the great harp continued playing the song of praise to its end unperturbedly, and the mouse took pleasure in all the beauty.

This well-wisher was succeeded by a very long train of animals doing homage to the mouse. They brought flowers, wine and cakes, jewellery, weapons and clothes in chests. All the while they made music incessantly. The mouse vizier was sitting on his throne full of dignity and accepted the honours in a dignified manner.

All the animals enjoyed themselves. They ate the food with relish, made merry, fooled around and competed at board games.

An accident almost occurred during the celebrations. A crocodile had brought along a little fish which he loved very much. When a hyaena perceived the appetizing little creature she desired to eat the animal child. But the crocodile defended it with its scaly tail and no harm befell it. The crocodile let the incident pass, but a little dog had observed it and told its mother. The bitch would have liked to accuse the hyaena before the vizier, but the husband of the hyaena and the puppy's father begged her to remain silent for harmony's sake. This is how the festivities had a happy ending.

The following day the mouse began

performing his official functions, among them sitting in judgment. Immediately, some malefactors were led into the prison. A cat and a dog were dragged off, their front paws in stocks. A bailiff urged them forward with a cudgel. The cat carried her possessions on her head when she was led into gaol. The mouse vizier was severe, but just.

But the mouse was given to violent fits of anger. He got excited and there was the danger that in his ire he would exceed the measure of punishment. He was especially touchy when the charge was theft. Thus, one day he had a Nubian child violently beaten by the cat bailiff for having pinched a few dates. The guilty child raised his arms and begged for mercy. But the mouse remained pitiless. The child's wails did not move him.

This came to the knowledge of the pharaoh. He called his vizier, reprimanded him severely and bade him to correct the injustice. What did the mouse do? He ordered the Nubian child to beat the cat just as the cat had beaten the child. As the cat was completely innocent, the child hesitated to punish her. But the mouse demanded obedience, therefore the child beat the poor cat until she cried pitiably.

When the pharaoh heard this tale he was angered like a panther from

Upper Egypt. He would not suffer a hothead in his realm, who at first punished without giving much thought and then tried to make amends for one injustice by committing another. He immediately dismissed his vizier ignominiously from office. And this did not satisfy him: He felt such revulsion towards the mouse that he did not want to see him nor any of his kind ever more.

Therefore he proclaimed loudly: "From this hour onward, all mice shall disappear from the fields and shall live underground only!"

Thus the king spoke and thus it happened. This is the reason why mice live in subterranean holes to this day.

## Jeremiah

Bible: I Kings

12.17-20 The kingdom of Israel is divided; Rehoboam rules Judah (c. 930-913 B.C.) and Jeroboam rules Israel (c. 930-909 B.C.)

17 But as for the children of Israel which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over them. 18 Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over the tribute; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died. Therefore king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his chariot, to

flee to Jerusalem. 19 So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day. 20 And it came to pass, when all Israel heard that Jeroboam was come again, that they sent and called him unto the congregation, and made him king over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only.

## Jeremiah

Bible: I Kings

14.25-26 Ramesses II (the Great)  
-- called Shishak in the Bible -- sacks  
Jerusalem (c. 925 B.C.)

25 And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: 26 And he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

## Spoliation of Tombs

Extract from a longer document  
from the time of Ramesses IX (ruled  
c. 835-816 B.C.) showing that tomb

robbery was common even during ancient times.

“The thieves have violated it.” Examined on that day, it was found intact by the Examiners. The monument of King SA-RA AN-AA, which is at the North of the temple of AMEN-HOTEP of the terrace. This tomb is injured on the surface opposite the spot where the tablet is placed; on the tablet is the image of the King, in a standing position, having between his feet his greyhound named BEHHUKA. Examined on that day, it was found in good condition. The monument of King NUB-KHEPER-RA, son of the Sun, ANTUF, was found to have been pierced by the hands of the thieves, who had made a hole of two cubits and a half in its surrounding wall, and a hole of one cubit in the great outside-chamber of the sepulchre of the Chief of the transportation of the offerings, AURI, of Pa-Amen, which tomb is in ruins. It was in good condition, the thieves not having been able to penetrate into it. The monument of King RA-SEKHEM-EM-APU-MA, son of Sun, ANTUF-AA. It was found to have been pierced by the hands of the thieves at the spot where the tablet of the monument is fixed. Examined on that day, it was found entire, the thieves not having been able to penetrate into it. The monument of King RA-SEKHEM-SESHET-TAUI, son of the Sun, SEBAK-EM-SAU-EF. It was found that the thieves had violated

it by undermining the chamber of the perfections of the monument, from the great exterior chamber of the sepulchre of the Overseer of the granaries, NEB-AMEN, of the King MEN-KHEPER-RA (TIIOTMES III.). The place of sepulture of the King was found to be void of its occupant ; so was the place of sepulture of the principal royal spouse, NUB-KHA-S, his royal wife ; the thieves had laid hands on them. The Nomarch, the Magistrates and Controllers investigated (the matter) and found the thieves having laid hands on them, a fact, as far as the King and his royal spouse were concerned. Total of the monuments of the royal ancestors examined on that day by the Examiners found intact, 9 monuments ; found violated, 1 ; total 10. Sepulchres and chapels in which repose the chanters and mourners, the women and men of the country, in the West-quarter of the city. It was found that the thieves had violated them all, that they had torn their occupants away from their coffins and cases, had thrown them into the dust and had stolen all the funeral objects which had been given to them, as well as the gold and silver and the ornaments which were in their coffins.

## Strabo

### Ancient Geography

#### 17.1.4 Description of ancient Egypt

The Nile flows from the Aethiopian boundaries towards the north in a straight line to the district called "Delta," and then, being "split at the head," as Plato says, the Nile makes this place as it were the vertex of a triangle, the sides of the triangle being formed by the streams that split in either direction and extend to the sea — the one on the right to the sea at Pelusium and the other on the left to the sea at Canobus and the neighbouring Heracleium, as it is called,— and the base by the coast-line between Pelusium and the Heracleium. An island, therefore, has been formed by the sea and the two streams of the river; and it is called Delta on account of the similarity of its shape; and the district at the vertex has been given the same name because it is the beginning of the above-mentioned figure; and the village there is also called Delta. Now these are two mouths of the Nile, of which one is called Pelusiac and the other Canobic or Heracleiote; but between these there are five other outlets, those at least that are worth mentioning, and several that are smaller; for, beginning with the first parts of the Delta, many branches of the river have been split off throughout the whole island



and have formed many streams and islands, so that the whole Delta has become navigable — canals on canals having been cut, which are navigated with such ease that some people even use earthenware ferry-boats. Now the island as a whole is as much as three thousand stadia in perimeter; and they also call it, together with the opposite river-lands of the Delta, Lower Egypt; but at the rising of the Nile the whole country is under water and becomes a lake, except the settlements; and these are situated on natural hills or on artificial mounds, and contain cities of considerable size and villages, which, when viewed from afar, resemble islands. The water stays more than forty days in summer and then goes down gradually just as it rose; and in sixty days the plain is completely bared and begins to dry out; and the sooner the drying takes place, the sooner the ploughing and the sowing; and the drying takes place sooner in those parts where the heat is greater. The parts above the Delta are also watered in the same way, except that the river flows in a straight course about four thousand stadia through only one channel, except where some island intervenes, of which the most noteworthy is that which comprises the Heracleiote Nome, or except where the river is diverted to a greater extent than usual by a canal into a large lake or a territory which it can water, as, for in-

stance, in the case of the canal which waters the Arsinoïte Nome and Lake Moeris and of those which spread over Lake Mareotis. In short, Aegypt consists of only the river-land, I mean the last stretch of river-land on either side of the Nile, which, beginning at the boundaries of Aethiopia and extending to the vertex of the Delta, scarcely anywhere occupies a continuous habitable space as broad as three hundred stadia. Accordingly, when it is dried, it resembles lengthwise a girdle-band, the greater diversions of the river being excepted. This shape of the river-land of which I am speaking, as also of the country, is caused by the mountains on either side, which extend from the region of Syenê down to the Aegyptian Sea; for in proportion as these mountains lie together or at a distance from one another, in that proportion the river is contracted or widened, and gives to the lands that are habitable their different shapes. But the country beyond the mountains is for a great distance uninhabited.

## Sulpicius Severus

### Sacred History

1.49 Hoshea makes an alliance with the Ethiopians, who at that time held Egypt (c. 726 B.C.)

But in Samaria, Zacharia the king,

who was very wicked, and whom we have spoken of above as occupying the throne, was slain by a certain Sella, who seized the kingdom. He, in turn, perished by the treachery of Mane, who simply repeated the conduct of his predecessor. Mane held the government which he had taken from Sella, and left it to his son Pache. But a certain person of the same name slew Pache, and seized the kingdom. Ere long being cut off by Osee, he lost the sovereignty by the same crime by which he had received it. This man, being ungodly beyond all the kings who had preceded him, brought punishment upon himself from God, and a perpetual captivity on his nation. For Salmanasar, king of the Assyrians, made war with him, and when conquered rendered him tributary. But when, with secret plans, he was preparing for rebellion, and had asked the king of the Ethiopians, who then had possession of Egypt for his assistance, Salmanasar, on discovering that, cast him into prison with fetters never taken off, while he destroyed the city, and carried off the whole people into his own kingdom, Assyrians being placed in the enemy's country to guard it. Hence that district was called Samaria, because in the language of the Assyrians guards are called Samaritæ. Vorstius remarks that this is a totally erroneous statement. Very many of their settlers accepted the divine rites of the Jew-

ish religion, while others remained in the errors of heathenism. In this war, Tobias was carried into captivity. But on the side of the two tribes, Achaz, who was displeasing to God on account of his impiety, finding he had frequently the worst of it in wars with his neighbors, resolved to worship the gods of the heathen, undoubtedly because by their help his enemies had proved victorious in frequent battles. He ended his days with this crime "Piaculo": a very old meaning is here attached to the word. in his wicked mind, after a reign of sixteen years.

## Jeremiah

Bible: II Kings

17.4-6 Hoshea, the king of Israel, conspires with the king of Egypt/Ethiopia and stops paying tribute to the king of Assyria; Sargon of Assyria carries away the people of Israel (c. 722 B.C.); New Chronolgy says this king of Egypt/Ethiopia was Hedjkheperre Shoshenq Si-Bast (Shoshenq IV)

4 And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.  
5 Then the king of Assyria came up

throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years. 6 In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

## Isaiah

Bible: Isaiah

20.1-6 The prophet Isaiah predicts the war of Assyria against Egypt (c. 713 B.C.)

1 In the year that Tartan came unto Ashdod, (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him,) and fought against Ashdod, and took it; 2 At the same time spake the LORD by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and put off thy shoe from thy foot. And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. 3 And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia; 4 So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, even with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt. 5 And they shall be afraid and ashamed of Ethiopia their expectation, and of Egypt their glory.

6 And the inhabitant of this isle shall say in that day, Behold, such is our expectation, whither we flee for help to be delivered from the king of Assyria: and how shall we escape?

## Josephus

Antiquities of the Jews

10.1 How Sennacherib made an expedition against Hezekiah (King of Judah); what threatenings Rabshakeh made to Hezekiah when Sennacherib was gone against the Egyptians; how Isaiah the prophet encouraged him; how Sennacherib having failed to success in Egypt, returned to Jerusalem; and how upon his finding his army destroyed, he returned home (c. 704-701 B.C.)

1 It was now the fourteenth year of the government of Hezekiah, king of the two tribes, when the king of Assyria, whose name was Sennacherib, made an expedition against him with a great army, and took all the cities of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin by force; and when he was ready to bring his army against Jerusalem, Hezekiah sent ambassadors to him beforehand, and promised to submit, and pay what tribute he should appoint. Hereupon Sennacherib, when he heard of what offers the ambassadors made, resolved not to proceed in the war, but to accept of the pro-

posals that were made him; and if he might receive three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold, he promised that he would depart in a friendly manner; and he gave security upon oath to the ambassadors that he would then do him no harm, but go away as he came. So Hezekiah submitted, and emptied his treasures, and sent the money, as supposing he should be freed from his enemy, and from any further distress about his kingdom. Accordingly, the Assyrian king took it, and yet had no regard to what he had promised; but while he himself went to the war against the Egyptians and Ethiopians, he left his general Rabshakeh, and two other of his principal commanders, with great forces, to destroy Jerusalem. The names of the two other commanders were Tartan and Rabsaris.

2 Now as soon as they were come before the walls, they pitched their camp, and sent messengers to Hezekiah, and desired that they might speak with him; but he did not himself come out to them for fear, but he sent three of his most intimate friends; the name of one was Eliakim, who was over the kingdom, and Shebna, and Joah the recorder. So these men came out, and stood over against the commanders of the Assyrian army; and when Rabshakeh saw them, he bid them go and speak to Hezekiah in the manner following: That Sennacherib, the great king, desires to know of him, on

whom it is that he relies and depends, in flying from his lord, and will not hear him, nor admit his army into the city? Is it on account of the Egyptians, and in hopes that his army would be beaten by them? Whereupon he lets him know, that if this be what he expects, he is a foolish man, and like one who leans on a broken reed; while such a one will not only fall down, but will have his hand pierced and hurt by it. That he ought to know he makes this expedition against him by the will of God, who hath granted this favor to him, that he shall overthrow the kingdom of Israel, and that in the very same manner he shall destroy those that are his subjects also. When Rabshakeh had made this speech in the Hebrew tongue, for he was skillful in that language, Eliakim was afraid lest the multitude that heard him should be disturbed; so he desired him to speak in the Syrian tongue. But the general, understanding what he meant, and perceiving the fear that he was in, he made his answer with a greater and a louder voice, but in the Hebrew tongue; and said, that “since they all heard what were the king’s commands, they would consult their own advantage in delivering up themselves to us; for it is plain the both you and your king dissuade the people from submitting by vain hopes, and so induce them to resist; but if you be courageous, and think to drive our forces away, I am ready to

deliver to you two thousand of these horses that are with me for your use, if you can set as many horsemen on their backs, and show your strength; but what you have not you cannot produce. Why therefore do you delay to deliver up yourselves to a superior force, who can take you without your consent? although it will be safer for you to deliver yourselves up voluntarily, while a forcible capture, when you are beaten, must appear more dangerous, and will bring further calamities upon you.”

3 When the people, as well as the ambassadors, heard what the Assyrian commander said, they related it to Hezekiah, who thereupon put off his royal apparel, and clothed himself with sackcloth, and took the habit of a mourner, and, after the manner of his country, he fell upon his face, and besought God, and entreated him to assist them, now they had no other hope of relief. He also sent some of his friends, and some of the priests, to the prophet Isaiah, and desired that he would pray to God, and offer sacrifices for their common deliverance, and so put up supplications to him, that he would have indignation at the expectations of their enemies, and have mercy upon his people. And when the prophet had done accordingly, an oracle came from God to him, and encouraged the king and his friends that were about him; and foretold that their enemies should

be beaten without fighting, and should go away in an ignominious manner, and not with that insolence which they now show, for that God would take care that they should be destroyed. He also foretold that Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, should fail of his purpose against Egypt, and that when he came home he should perish by the sword.

4 About the same time also the king of Assyria wrote an epistle to Hezekiah, in which he said he was a foolish man, in supposing that he should escape from being his servant, since he had already brought under many and great nations; and he threatened, that when he took him, he would utterly destroy him, unless he now opened the gates, and willingly received his army into Jerusalem. When he read this epistle, he despised it, on account of the trust that he had in God; but he rolled up the epistle, and laid it up within the temple. And as he made his further prayers to God for the city, and for the preservation of all the people, the prophet Isaiah said that God had heard his prayer, and that he should not be besieged at this time by the king of Assyria that for the future he might be secure of not being at all disturbed by him; and that the people might go on peaceably, and without fear, with their husbandry and other affairs. But after a little while the king of Assyria, when he had failed of his treacherous designs against the



Egyptians, returned home without success, on the following occasion: He spent a long time in the siege of Pelusium; and when the banks that he had raised over against the walls were of a great height, and when he was ready to make an immediate assault upon them, but heard that Tirhaka, king of the Ethiopians, was coming and bringing great forces to aid the Egyptians, and was resolved to march through the desert, and so to fall directly upon the Assyrians, this king Sennacherib was disturbed at the news, and, as I said before, left Pelusium, and returned back without success. Now concerning this Sennacherib, Herodotus also says, in the second book of his histories, how “this king came against the Egyptian king, who was the priest of Vulcan; and that as he was besieging Pelusium, he broke up the siege on the following occasion: This Egyptian priest prayed to God, and God heard his prayer, and sent a judgment upon the Arabian king.” But in this Herodotus was mistaken, when he called this king not king of the Assyrians, but of the Arabians; for he saith that “a multitude of mice gnawed to pieces in one night both the bows and the rest of the armor of the Assyrians, and that it was on that account that the king, when he had no bows left, drew off his army from Pelusium.” And Herodotus does indeed give us this history; nay, and Berosus, who wrote

of the affairs of Chaldea, makes mention of this king Sennacherib, and that he ruled over the Assyrians, and that he made an expedition against all Asia and Egypt; and says thus:

5 “Now when Sennacherib was returning from his Egyptian war to Jerusalem, he found his army under Rabshakeh his general in danger by a plague, for God had sent a pestilential distemper upon his army; and on the very first night of the siege, a hundred fourscore and five thousand, with their captains and generals, were destroyed. So the king was in a great dread and in a terrible agony at this calamity; and being in great fear for his whole army, he fled with the rest of his forces to his own kingdom, and to his city Nineveh; and when he had abode there a little while, he was treacherously assaulted, and died by the hands of his elder sons, Adrammelech and Seraser, and was slain in his own temple, which was called Araske. Now these sons of his were driven away on account of the murder of their father by the citizens, and went into Armenia, while Assarachoddas took the kingdom of Sennacherib.” And this proved to be the conclusion of this Assyrian expedition against the people of Jerusalem.

# Ezra

Bible: II Chronicles

32.1-22 The Battle for Jerusalem (c. 704-701 B.C.)

1 After these things, and the establishment thereof, Sennacherib king of Assyria came, and entered into Judah, and encamped against the fenced cities, and thought to win them for himself. 2 And when Hezekiah saw that Sennacherib was come, and that he was purposed to fight against Jerusalem, 3 He took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains which were without the city: and they did help him. 4 So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains, and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come, and find much water? 5 Also he strengthened himself, and built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance. 6 And he set captains of war over the people, and gathered them together to him in the street of the gate of the city, and spake comfortably to them, saying, 7 Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be

more with us than with him: 8 With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the LORD our God to help us, and to fight our battles. And the people rested themselves upon the words of Hezekiah king of Judah. 9 After this did Sennacherib king of Assyria send his servants to Jerusalem, (but he himself laid siege against Lachish, and all his power with him,) unto Hezekiah king of Judah, and unto all Judah that were at Jerusalem, saying, 10 Thus saith Sennacherib king of Assyria, Whereon do ye trust, that ye abide in the siege in Jerusalem? 11 Doth not Hezekiah persuade you to give over yourselves to die by famine and by thirst, saying, The LORD our God shall deliver us out of the hand of the king of Assyria? 12 Hath not the same Hezekiah taken away his high places and his altars, and commanded Judah and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall worship before one altar, and burn incense upon it? 13 Know ye not what I and my fathers have done unto all the people of other lands? were the gods of the nations of those lands any ways able to deliver their lands out of mine hand? 14 Who was there among all the gods of those nations that my fathers utterly destroyed, that could deliver his people out of mine hand, that your God should be able to deliver you out of mine hand? 15 Now therefore let not Hezekiah deceive you, nor persuade you on this manner, neither yet believe him: for no god

of any nation or kingdom was able to deliver his people out of mine hand, and out of the hand of my fathers: how much less shall your God deliver you out of mine hand? 16 And his servants spake yet more against the LORD God, and against his servant Hezekiah. 17 He wrote also letters to rail on the LORD God of Israel, and to speak against him, saying, As the gods of the nations of other lands have not delivered their people out of mine hand, so shall not the God of Hezekiah deliver his people out of mine hand. 18 Then they cried with a loud voice in the Jews' speech unto the people of Jerusalem that were on the wall, to affright them, and to trouble them; that they might take the city. 19 And they spake against the God of Jerusalem, as against the gods of the people of the earth, which were the work of the hands of man. 20 And for this cause Hezekiah the king, and the prophet Isaiah the son of Amoz, prayed and cried to heaven. 21 And the LORD sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned with shame of face to his own land. And when he was come into the house of his god, they that came forth of his own bowels slew him there with the sword. 22 Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the hand of Sennacherib the king of Assyria, and from the hand of

all other, and guided them on every side.

## Herodotus

### The History

2.141 Herodotus' report of the invasion of Egypt by Sennacherib

141 ... After this, Sanacharib king of the Arabians and of the Assyrians marched a great host against Egypt. Then the warriors of the Egyptians refused to come to the rescue, and the priest, being driven into a strait, entered into the sanctuary of the temple and bewailed to the image of the god the danger which was impending over him; and as he was thus lamenting, sleep came upon him, and it seemed to him in his vision that the god came and stood by him and encouraged him, saying that he should suffer no evil if he went forth to meet the army of the Arabians; for he himself would send him helpers. Trusting in these things seen in sleep, he took with him, they said, those of the Egyptians who were willing to follow him, and encamped in Pelusion, for by this way the invasion came: and not one of the warrior class followed him, but shopkeepers and artisans and men of the market. Then after they came, there swarmed by night upon their enemies mice of the fields, and ate up their quivers and their bows, and moreover

the handles of their shields, so that on the next day they fled, and being without defence of arms great numbers fell. And at the present time this king stands in the temple of Hephaistos in stone, holding upon his hand a mouse, and by letters inscribed he says these words: "Let him who looks upon me learn to fear the gods."

## Diodorus Siculus

### Historical Library

1.66 Civil disorder in Egypt for two years followed by a twelve-man aristocracy (c. 687-670 B.C.)

66 There being no head of the government in Egypt for two years, and the masses betaking themselves to tumults and the killing of one another, the twelve most important leaders formed a solemn league among themselves, and after they had met together for counsel in Memphis and had drawn up agreements setting forth their mutual goodwill and loyalty they proclaimed themselves kings. 2 After they had reigned in accordance with their oaths and promises and had maintained their mutual concord for a period of fifteen years, they set about to construct a common tomb for themselves, their thought being that, just as in their lifetime they had cherished a cordial regard for one another and enjoyed equal honours,

so also after their death their bodies would all rest in one place and the memorial which they had erected would hold in one embrace the glory of those buried within. 3 Being full of zeal for this undertaking they eagerly strove to surpass all preceding rulers in the magnitude of their structure. For selecting a site at the entrance to Lake Moeris in Libya they constructed their tomb of the finest stone, and they made it in form a square but in magnitude a stade in length on each side; and in the carvings and, indeed, in all the workmanship they left nothing wherein succeeding rulers could excel them. 4 For as a man passed through the enclosing wall he found himself in a court surrounded by columns, forty on each side, and the roof of the court consisted of a single stone, which was worked into coffers and adorned with excellent paintings. 5 This court also contained memorials of the native district of each king and of the temples and sacrificial rites therein, artistically portrayed in most beautiful paintings. 6 And in general, the kings are said to have made the plan of their tomb on such an expensive and enormous scale that, had they not died before the execution of their purpose, they would have left no possibility for others to surpass them, so far as the construction of monuments is concerned. 7 After these kings had reigned over Egypt for fifteen years it came to pass that



the sovereignty devolved upon one man for the following reasons....

## Herodotus

### The History

#### 2.147-149 The twelve-man aristocracy diverts the flow of the Nile

Being set free after the reign of the priest of Hephaistos, the Egyptians, since they could not live any time without a king, set up over them twelve kings, having divided all Egypt into twelve parts. These made intermarriages with one another and reigned, making agreement that they would not put down one another by force, nor seek to get an advantage over one another, but would live in perfect friendship: and the reason why they made these agreements, guarding them very strongly from violation, was this, namely that an oracle had been given to them at first when they began to exercise their rule, that he of them who should pour a libation with a bronze cup in the temple of Hephaistos, should be king of all Egypt (for they used to assemble together in all the temples).

148 Moreover they resolved to join all together and leave a memorial of themselves; and having so resolved they caused to be made a labyrinth, situated a little above the lake of

Moiris and nearly opposite to that which is called the City of Crocodiles. This I saw myself, and I found it greater than words can say. For if one should put together and reckon up all the buildings and all the great works produced by the Hellenes, they would prove to be inferior in labour and expense to this labyrinth, though it is true that both the temple at Ephesos and that at Samos are works worthy of note. The pyramids also were greater than words can say, and each one of them is equal to many works of the Hellenes, great as they may be; but the labyrinth surpasses even the pyramids. It has twelve courts covered in, with gates facing one another, six upon the North side and six upon the South, joining on one to another, and the same wall surrounds them all outside; and there are in it two kinds of chambers, the one kind below the ground and the other above upon these, three thousand in number, of each kind fifteen hundred. The upper set of chambers we ourselves saw, going through them, and we tell of them having looked upon them with our own eyes; but the chambers under ground we heard about only; for the Egyptians who had charge of them were not willing on any account to show them, saying that here were the sepulchres of the kings who had first built this labyrinth and of the sacred crocodiles. Accordingly we speak of the chambers below by



what we received from hearsay, while those above we saw ourselves and found them to be works of more than human greatness. For the passages through the chambers, and the goings this way and that way through the courts, which were admirably adorned, afforded endless matter for marvel, as we went through from a court to the chambers beyond it, and from the chambers to colonnades, and from the colonnades to other rooms, and then from the chambers again to other courts. Over the whole of these is a roof made of stone like the walls; and the walls are covered with figures carved upon them, each court being surrounded with pillars of white stone fitted together most perfectly; and at the end of the labyrinth, by the corner of it, there is a pyramid of forty fathoms, upon which large figures are carved, and to this there is a way made under ground.

149 Such is this labyrinth; but a cause for marvel even greater than this is afforded by the lake, which is called the lake of Moiris, along the side of which this labyrinth is built. The measure of its circuit is three thousand six hundred furlongs (being sixty schoines), and this is the same number of furlongs as the extent of Egypt itself along the sea. The lake lies extended lengthwise from North to South, and in depth where it is deepest it is fifty fathoms. That this lake is artificial and formed by digging is self-evident, for

about in the middle of the lake stand two pyramids, each rising above the water to a height of fifty fathoms, the part which is built below the water being of just the same height; and upon each is placed a colossal statue of stone sitting upon a chair. Thus the pyramids are a hundred fathoms high; and these hundred fathoms are equal to a furlong of six hundred feet, the fathom being measured as six feet or four cubits, the feet being four palms each, and the cubits six. The water in the lake does not come from the place where it is, for the country there is very deficient in water, but it has been brought thither from the Nile by a canal: and for six months the water flows into the lake, and for six months out into the Nile again; and whenever it flows out, then for the six months it brings into the royal treasury a talent of silver a day from the fish which are caught, and twenty pounds when the water comes in.

## Herodotus

### The Histories

2.151-154, 157 Psammetichus Sais took over Egypt and reigned there 54 years (c. 670 B.C.)

151 Now the twelve kings continued to rule justly, but in course of time it happened thus:--After sacrifice in the temple of Hephaistos they were about

to make libation on the last day of the feast, and the chief-priest, in bringing out for them the golden cups with which they had been wont to pour libations, missed his reckoning and brought eleven only for the twelve kings. Then that one of them who was standing last in order, namely Psammetichos, since he had no cup took off from his head his helmet, which was of bronze, and having held it out to receive the wine he proceeded to make libation: likewise all the other kings were wont to wear helmets and they happened to have them then. Now Psammetichos held out his helmet with no treacherous meaning; but they taking note of that which had been done by Psammetichos and of the oracle, namely how it had been declared to them that whosoever of them should make libation with a bronze cup should be sole king of Egypt, recollecting, I say, the saying of the Oracle, they did not indeed deem it right to slay Psammetichos, since they found by examination that he had not done it with any forethought, but they determined to strip him of almost all his power and to drive him away into the fen-country, and that from the fen-country he should not hold any dealings with the rest of Egypt.

152 This Psammetichos had formerly been a fugitive from the Ethiopian Sabacos who had killed his father Necos, from him, I say, he had then

been a fugitive in Syria; and when the Ethiopian had departed in consequence of the vision of the dream, the Egyptians who were of the district of Saïs brought him back to his own country. Then afterwards, when he was king, it was his fate to be a fugitive a second time on account of the helmet, being driven by the eleven kings into the fen-country. So then holding that he had been grievously wronged by them, he thought how he might take vengeance on those who had driven him out: and when he had sent to the Oracle of Leto in the city of Buto, where the Egyptians have their most truthful Oracle, there was given to him the reply that vengeance would come when men of bronze appeared from the sea. And he was strongly disposed not to believe that bronze men would come to help him; but after no long time had passed, certain Ionians and Carians who had sailed forth for plunder were compelled to come to shore in Egypt, and they having landed and being clad in bronze armour, one of the Egyptians, not having before seen men clad in bronze armour, came to the fen-land and brought a report to Psammetichos that bronze men had come from the sea and were plundering the plain. So he, perceiving that the saying of the Oracle was coming to pass, dealt in a friendly manner with the Ionians and Carians, and with large promises he persuaded them to take his part.

Then when he had persuaded them, with the help of those Egyptians who favoured his cause and of these foreign mercenaries he overthrew the kings.

153 Having thus got power over all Egypt, Psammetichos made for Hephaistos that gateway of the temple at Memphis which is turned towards the South Wind; and he built a court for Apis, in which Apis is kept when he appears, opposite to the gateway of the temple, surrounded all with pillars and covered with figures; and instead of columns there stand to support the roof of the court colossal statues twelve cubits high. Now Apis is in the tongue of the Hellenes Epaphos.

154 To the Ionians and to the Carians who had helped him Psammetichos granted portions of land to dwell in, opposite to one another with the river Nile between, and these were called "Encampments": these portions of land he gave them, and he paid them besides all that he had promised: moreover he placed with them Egyptian boys to have them taught the Hellenic tongue; and from these, who learnt the language thoroughly, are descended the present class of interpreters in Egypt. Now the Ionians and Carians occupied these portions of land for a long time, and they are towards the sea a little below the city of Bubastis, on that which is

called the Pelusian mouth of the Nile. These men king Amasis afterwards removed from thence and established them at Memphis, making them into a guard for himself against the Egyptians: and they being settled in Egypt, we who are Hellenes know by intercourse with them the certainty of all that which happened in Egypt beginning from king Psammetichos and afterwards; for these were the first men of foreign tongue who settled in Egypt: and in the land from which they were removed there still remained down to my time the sheds where their ships were drawn up and the ruins of their houses. Thus then Psammetichos obtained Egypt.

157 ...but as for Psammetichos, he was king over Egypt for four-and-fifty years, of which for thirty years save one he was sitting before Azotos, a great city of Syria, besieging it, until at last he took it: and this Azotos of all cities about which we have knowledge held out for the longest time under a siege.

## Herodotus

### The Histories

2.158-159;4.42 The son of Psammetichus Sais -- Necho or Pharaohnecho

-- rules Egypt for 16 years (c. 616 B.C.)

158 The son of Psammetichos was Necos, and he became king of Egypt. This man was the first who attempted the channel leading to the Erythraian Sea, which Dareios the Persian afterwards completed: the length of this is a voyage of four days, and in breadth it was so dug that two triremes could go side by side driven by oars; and the water is brought into it from the Nile. The channel is conducted a little above the city of Bubastis by Patumos the Arabian city, and runs into the Erythraian Sea: and it is dug first along those parts of the plain of Egypt which lie towards Arabia, just above which run the mountains which extend opposite Memphis, where are the stone-quarries,--along the base of these mountains the channel is conducted from West to East for a great way; and after that it is directed towards a break in the hills and tends from these mountains towards the noon-day and the South Wind to the Arabian gulf. Now in the place where the journey is least and shortest from the Northern to the Southern Sea (which is also called Erythraian), that is from Mount Casion, which is the boundary between Egypt and Syria, the distance is exactly a thousand furlongs to the Arabian gulf; but the channel is much longer, since it is more winding; and in the reign of Necos there perished while digging

it twelve myriads of the Egyptians. Now Necos ceased in the midst of his digging, because the utterance of an Oracle impeded him, which was to the effect that he was working for the Barbarian: and the Egyptians call all men Barbarians who do not agree with them in speech.

159 Thus having ceased from the work of the channel, Necos betook himself to waging wars, and triremes were built by him, some for the Northern Sea and others in the Arabian gulf for the Erythraian Sea; and of these the sheds are still to be seen. These ships he used when he needed them; and also on land Necos engaged battle at Magdolos with the Syrians, and conquered them; and after this he took Cadytis, which is a great city of Syria: and the dress which he wore when he made these conquests he dedicated to Apollo, sending it to Branchidai of the Milesians. After this, having reigned in all sixteen years, he brought his life to an end, and handed on the kingdom to Psammis his son....

...42 I wonder then at those who have parted off and divided the world into Libya, Asia, and Europe, since the difference between these is not small; for in length Europe extends along by both, while in breadth it is clear to me that it is beyond comparison larger; for Libya furnishes proofs about itself that it is surrounded by sea, except so much of it as borders upon Asia; and

this fact was shown by Necos king of the Egyptians first of all those about whom we have knowledge. He when he had ceased digging the channel which goes through from the Nile to the Arabian gulf, sent Phenicians with ships, bidding them sail and come back through the Pillars of Heracles to the Northern Sea and so to Egypt. The Phenicians therefore set forth from the Erythraian Sea and sailed through the Southern Sea; and when autumn came, they would put to shore and sow the land, wherever in Libya they might happen to be as they sailed, and then they waited for the harvest: and having reaped the corn they would sail on, so that after two years had elapsed, in the third year they turned through the Pillars of Heracles and arrived again in Egypt. And they reported a thing which I cannot believe, but another man may, namely that in sailing round Libya they had the sun on their right hand.

## Ezra

Bible II Chronicles

35.20-24 Pharaohnecho, king of Egypt, set out to fight against the king of Assyria/Babylon by besieging Carchemish on the Euphrates River; Josiah, King of Judah, interferes and is killed (c. 610 B.C.)

20 After all this, when Josiah had pre-

pared the temple, Necho king of Egypt came up to fight against Charchemish by Euphrates: and Josiah went out against him. 21 But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, What have I to do with thee, thou king of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war: for God commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God, who is with me, that he destroy thee not. 22 Nevertheless Josiah would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and hearkened not unto the words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo. 23 And the archers shot at king Josiah; and the king said to his servants, Have me away; for I am sore wounded. 24 His servants therefore took him out of that chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had; and they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died, and was buried in one of the sepulchres of his fathers. And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah.

## Jeremiah

Bible: II Kings

23.29-30 Another version of Josiah's death (c. 610 B.C.)

29 In his days Pharaohnechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of As-



syria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. 30 And his servants carried him in a chariot dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

## Josephus

### Antiquities of the Jews

10.5 How Josiah fought with Neco and was wounded and died; Josiah's son Jehoahaz (Shallum) becomes king of Judah (c. 610 B.C.)

1 Now Neco, king of Egypt, raised an army, and marched to the river Euphrates, in order to fight with the Medes and Babylonians, who had overthrown the dominion of the Assyrians, for he had a desire to reign over Asia. Now when he was come to the city Mendes, which belonged to the kingdom of Josiah, he brought an army to hinder him from passing through his own country, in his expedition against the Medes. Now Neco sent a herald to Josiah, and told him that he did not make this expedition against him, but was making haste to Euphrates; and desired that he would not provoke him to fight against him, because he obstructed his march to

the place whither he had resolved to go. But Josiah did not admit of this advice of Neco, but put himself into a posture to hinder him from his intended march. I suppose it was fate that pushed him on this conduct, that it might take an occasion against him; for as he was setting his army in array, and rode about in his chariot, from one wing of his army to another, one of the Egyptians shot an arrow at him, and put an end to his eagerness of fighting; for being sorely wounded, he command a retreat to be sounded for his army, and returned to Jerusalem, and died of that wound; and was magnificently buried in the sepulcher of his fathers, when he had lived thirty-nine years, and of them had reigned thirty-one. But all the people mourned greatly for him, lamenting and grieving on his account many days; and Jeremiah the prophet composed an elegy to lament him, which is extant till tills time also. Moreover, this prophet denounced beforehand the sad calamities that were coming upon the city. He also left behind him in writing a description of that destruction of our nation which has lately happened in our days, and the taking of Babylon; nor was he the only prophet who delivered such predictions beforehand to the multitude, but so did Ezekiel also, who was the first person that wrote, and left behind him in writing two books concerning these events. Now these two

prophets were priests by birth, but of them Jeremiah dwelt in Jerusalem, from the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah, until the city and temple were utterly destroyed. However, as to what befell this prophet, we will relate it in its proper place. 2 Upon the death of Josiah, which we have already mentioned, his son, Jehoahaz by name, took the kingdom, being about twenty-three years old.

## Josephus

### Antiquities of the Jews

10.5.2 When Necho returned from Assyria, he deposed Shallum and made Eliakim (Jehoiakim), his older brother, king of Judah (c. 610 B.C.)

.... as the king of Egypt returned from the battle, he sent for Jehoahaz to come to him, to the city called Hamath which belongs to Syria; and when he was come, he put him in bands, and delivered the kingdom to a brother of his, by the father's side, whose name was Eliakim, and changed his name to Jehoiakim and laid a tribute upon the land of a hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold; and this sum of money Jehoiakim paid by way of tribute; but Neco carried away Jehoahaz into Egypt, where he died when he had reigned three months and ten days. Now Jehoiakim's mother was called Zebudah, of the city Rumah.

He was of a wicked disposition, and ready to do mischief; nor was he either religious towards God, or good-natured towards men.

## Jeremiah

Bible: II Kings

23.33-37 When Necho returned from Assyria, he deposed Shallum and made Eliakim (Jehoiakim), his older brother, king of Judah (c. 610 B.C.)

33 And Pharaohnechoh put him in bands at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and put the land to a tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold. 34nd Pharaohnechoh made Eliakim the son of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and turned his name to Jehoiakim, and took Jehoahaz away: and he came to Egypt, and died there. 35 And Jehoiakim gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh: he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land, of every one according to his taxation, to give it unto Pharaohnechoh. 36 Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Zebudah, the daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah. 37 And he did that which was evil in the

sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

## Jeremiah

Bible: Jeremiah

46.1-28 Jeremiah makes a prophecy that Nebuchadnezzar would conquer Egypt (c. 607 B.C.)

1The word of the LORD which came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Gentiles; 2 Against Egypt, against the army of Pharaohnecho king of Egypt, which was by the river Euphrates in Carchemish, which Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon smote in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah. 3 Order ye the buckler and shield, and draw near to battle. 4 Harness the horses; and get up, ye horsemen, and stand forth with your helmets; furbish the spears, and put on the brigandines. 5 Wherefore have I seen them dismayed and turned away back? and their mighty ones are beaten down, and are fled apace, and look not back: for fear was round about, saith the LORD. 6 Let not the swift flee away, nor the mighty man escape; they shall stumble, and fall toward the north by the river Euphrates. 7 Who is this that cometh up as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers? 8 Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, and will

cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof. 9 Come up, ye horses; and rage, ye chariots; and let the mighty men come forth; the Ethiopians and the Libyans, that handle the shield; and the Lydians, that handle and bend the bow. 10 For this is the day of the Lord GOD of hosts, a day of vengeance, that he may avenge him of his adversaries: and the sword shall devour, and it shall be satiate and made drunk with their blood: for the Lord GOD of hosts hath a sacrifice in the north country by the river Euphrates. 11 Go up into Gilead, and take balm, O virgin, the daughter of Egypt: in vain shalt thou use many medicines; for thou shalt not be cured. 12 The nations have heard of thy shame, and thy cry hath filled the land: for the mighty man hath stumbled against the mighty, and they are fallen both together. 13 The word that the LORD spake to Jeremiah the prophet, how Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon should come and smite the land of Egypt. 14 Declare ye in Egypt, and publish in Migdol, and publish in Noph and in Tahpanhes: say ye, Stand fast, and prepare thee; for the sword shall devour round about thee. 15 Why are thy valiant men swept away? they stood not, because the LORD did drive them. 16 He made many to fall, yea, one fell upon another: and they said, Arise, and let us go again to our own people, and to the land of our nativity, from the oppressing sword.

17 They did cry there, Pharaoh king of Egypt is but a noise; he hath passed the time appointed. 18 As I live, saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts, Surely as Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea, so shall he come. 19 O thou daughter dwelling in Egypt, furnish thyself to go into captivity: for Noph shall be waste and desolate without an inhabitant. 20 Egypt is like a very fair heifer, but destruction cometh; it cometh out of the north. 21 Also her hired men are in the midst of her like fatted bullocks; for they also are turned back, and are fled away together: they did not stand, because the day of their calamity was come upon them, and the time of their visitation. 22 The voice thereof shall go like a serpent; for they shall march with an army, and come against her with axes, as hewers of wood. 23 They shall cut down her forest, saith the LORD, though it cannot be searched; because they are more than the grasshoppers, and are innumerable. 24 The daughter of Egypt shall be confounded; she shall be delivered into the hand of the people of the north. 25 The LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, saith; Behold, I will punish the multitude of No, and Pharaoh, and Egypt, with their gods, and their kings; even Pharaoh, and all them that trust in him: 26 And I will deliver them into the hand of those that seek their lives, and into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king

of Babylon, and into the hand of his servants: and afterward it shall be inhabited, as in the days of old, saith the LORD. 27 But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob, and be not dismayed, O Israel: for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and be in rest and at ease, and none shall make him afraid. 28 Fear thou not, O Jacob my servant, saith the LORD: for I am with thee; for I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee: but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished.

## Jeremiah

### Bible II Kings

24.7 Nebuchadnezzar took all the land between Egypt and the Euphrates River (c. 605 B.C.)

7 And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

# Herodotus

## The Histories

2.161-163; 169 Psammis rules Egypt for 6 years (c. 600-594 B.C.) and his son Apries (Pharaohhophra) rules for 25 years (c. 594-570 B.C.)

161 When Psammis had been king of Egypt for only six years and had made an expedition to Ethiopia and immediately afterwards had ended his life, Apries the son of Psammis received the kingdom in succession. This man came to be the most prosperous of all the kings up to that time except only his forefather Psammetichos; and he reigned five-and-twenty years, during which he led an army against Sidon and fought a sea-fight with the king of Tyre. Since however it was fated that evil should come upon him, it came by occasion of a matter which I shall relate at greater length in the Libyan history, and at present but shortly. Apries having sent a great expedition against the Kyrenians, met with correspondingly great disaster; and the Egyptians considering him to blame for this revolted from him, supposing that Apries had with forethought sent them out to evident calamity, in order (as they said) that there might be a slaughter of them, and he might the more securely rule over the other Egyptians. Being indignant at this, both these men who had returned from the expedition and also the

friends of those who had perished made revolt openly.

162 Hearing this Apries sent to them Amasis, to cause them to cease by persuasion; and when he had come and was seeking to restrain the Egyptians, as he was speaking and telling them not to do so, one of the Egyptians stood up behind him and put a helmet upon his head, saying as he did so that he put it on to crown him king. And to him this that was done was in some degree not unwelcome, as he proved by his behaviour; for as soon as the revolted Egyptians had set him up as king, he prepared to march against Apries: and Apries hearing this sent to Amasis one of the Egyptians who were about his own person, a man of reputation, whose name was Patarbemis, enjoining him to bring Amasis alive into his presence. When this Patarbemis came and summoned Amasis, the latter, who happened to be sitting on horseback, lifted up his leg and behaved in an unseemly manner, bidding him take that back to Apries. Nevertheless, they say, Patarbemis made demand of him that he should go to the king, seeing that the king had sent to summon him; and he answered him that he had for some time past been preparing to do so, and that Apries would have no occasion to find fault with him. Then Patarbemis both perceiving his intention from that which he said, and also seeing his preparations, departed in haste,



desiring to make known as quickly as possible to the king the things which were being done: and when he came back to Apries not bringing Amasis, the king paying no regard to that which he said, but being moved by violent anger, ordered his ears and his nose to be cut off. And the rest of the Egyptians who still remained on his side, when they saw the man of most repute among them thus suffering shameful outrage, waited no longer but joined the others in revolt, and delivered themselves over to Amasis.

163 Then Apries having heard this also, armed his foreign mercenaries and marched against the Egyptians: now he had about him Carian and Ionian mercenaries to the number of thirty thousand; and his royal palace was in the city of Saïs, of great size and worthy to be seen. So Apries and his army were going against the Egyptians, and Amasis and those with him were going against the mercenaries; and both sides came to the city of Momemphis and were about to make trial of one another in fight

169 So when Apries leading his foreign mercenaries, and Amasis at the head of the whole body of the Egyptians, in their approach to one another had come to the city of Momemphis, they engaged battle: and although the foreign troops fought well, yet being much inferior in number they were worsted by reason of this. But Apries

is said to have supposed that not even a god would be able to cause him to cease from his rule, so firmly did he think that it was established. In that battle then, I say, he was worsted, and being taken alive was brought away to the city of Saïs, to that which had formerly been his own dwelling but from thenceforth was the palace of Amasis. There for some time he was kept in the palace, and Amasis dealt well with him; but at last, since the Egyptians blamed him, saying that he acted not rightly in keeping alive him who was the greatest foe both to themselves and to him, therefore he delivered Apries over to the Egyptians; and they strangled him, and after that buried him in the burial-place of his fathers: this is in the temple of Athene, close to the sanctuary, on the left hand as you enter. Now the men of Saïs buried all those of this district who had been kings, within the temple; for the tomb of Amasis also, though it is further from the sanctuary than that of Apries and his forefathers, yet this too is within the court of the temple, and it consists of a colonnade of stone of great size, with pillars carved to imitate date-palms, and otherwise sumptuously adorned; and within the colonnade are double-doors, and inside the doors a sepulchral chamber.

# Ezekiel

Bible: Ezekiel

29.1-16 Ezekiel makes a prophecy about Apries (Pharaohhophra) (c. 588 B.C.)

1 In the tenth year, in the tenth month, in the twelfth day of the month, the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, set thy face against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him, and against all Egypt: 3 Speak, and say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is mine own, and I have made it for myself. 4 But I will put hooks in thy jaws, and I will cause the fish of thy rivers to stick unto thy scales, and I will bring thee up out of the midst of thy rivers, and all the fish of thy rivers shall stick unto thy scales. 5 And I will leave thee thrown into the wilderness, thee and all the fish of thy rivers: thou shalt fall upon the open fields; thou shalt not be brought together, nor gathered: I have given thee for meat to the beasts of the field and to the fowls of the heaven. 6 And all the inhabitants of Egypt shall know that I am the LORD, because they have been a staff of reed to the house of Israel. 7 When they took hold of thee by thy hand, thou didst break, and rend all their shoulder: and when they leaned

upon thee, thou brakest, and madest all their loins to be at a stand. 8 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will bring a sword upon thee, and cut off man and beast out of thee. 9 And the land of Egypt shall be desolate and waste; and they shall know that I am the LORD: because he hath said, The river is mine, and I have made it. 10 Behold, therefore I am against thee, and against thy rivers, and I will make the land of Egypt utterly waste and desolate, from the tower of Syene even unto the border of Ethiopia. 11 No foot of man shall pass through it, nor foot of beast shall pass through it, neither shall it be inhabited forty years. 12 And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries. 13 Yet thus saith the Lord GOD; At the end of forty years will I gather the Egyptians from the people whither they were scattered: 14 And I will bring again the captivity of Egypt, and will cause them to return into the land of Pathros, into the land of their habitation; and they shall be there a base kingdom. 15 It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations. 16 And

it shall be no more the confidence of the house of Israel, which bringeth their iniquity to remembrance, when they shall look after them: but they shall know that I am the Lord GOD.

## Ezekiel

Bible: Ezekiel

30.20-26 Ezekiel makes another prophecy concerning Egypt (c. 587 B.C.)

20 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the first month, in the seventh day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 21 Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and, lo, it shall not be bound up to be healed, to put a roller to bind it, to make it strong to hold the sword. 22 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and will break his arms, the strong, and that which was broken; and I will cause the sword to fall out of his hand. 23 And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries. 24 And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand: but I will break Pharaoh's arms, and he shall groan before him with the groanings of a deadly wounded man. 25 But I will strengthen the arms of the king

of Babylon, and the arms of Pharaoh shall fall down; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I shall put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall stretch it out upon the land of Egypt. 26 And I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among the countries; and they shall know that I am the LORD.

## Ezekiel

Bible: Ezekiel

31.1-18 More prophecy concerning Egypt (c. 587 B.C.)

1 And it came to pass in the eleventh year, in the third month, in the first day of the month, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 2 Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude; Whom art thou like in thy greatness? 3 Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs. 4 The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent her little rivers unto all the trees of the field. 5 Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long because of the multi-

tude of waters, when he shot forth.  
6 All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations. 7 Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches: for his root was by great waters. 8 The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the chestnut trees were not like his branches; nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty. 9 I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him. 10 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast lifted up thyself in height, and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs, and his heart is lifted up in his height; 11 I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen; he shall surely deal with him: I have driven him out for his wickedness. 12 And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land; and all the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him. 13 Upon his ruin shall all the fowls of the heaven remain, and all the beasts of the field shall be upon his branches:

14 To the end that none of all the trees by the waters exalt themselves for their height, neither shoot up their top among the thick boughs, neither their trees stand up in their height, all that drink water: for they are all delivered unto death, to the nether parts of the earth, in the midst of the children of men, with them that go down to the pit. 15 Thus saith the Lord GOD; In the day when he went down to the grave I caused a mourning: I covered the deep for him, and I restrained the floods thereof, and the great waters were stayed: and I caused Lebanon to mourn for him, and all the trees of the field fainted for him. 16 I made the nations to shake at the sound of his fall, when I cast him down to hell with them that descend into the pit: and all the trees of Eden, the choice and best of Lebanon, all that drink water, shall be comforted in the nether parts of the earth. 17 They also went down into hell with him unto them that be slain with the sword; and they that were his arm, that dwelt under his shadow in the midst of the heathen. 18 To whom art thou thus like in glory and in greatness among the trees of Eden? yet shalt thou be brought down with the trees of Eden unto the nether parts of the earth: thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord GOD.

# Jeremiah

Bible: Jeremiah

37.3-10 Pharaohhophra came with his army from Egypt to help Zedekiah, king of Judah, while the Chaldeans were raising a siege of Jerusalem (c. 587 B.C.)

3 And Zedekiah the king sent Jehucal the son of Shelemiah and Zephaniah the son of Maaseiah the priest to the prophet Jeremiah, saying, Pray now unto the LORD our God for us. 4 Now Jeremiah came in and went out among the people: for they had not put him into prison. 5 Then Pharaoh's army was come forth out of Egypt: and when the Chaldeans that besieged Jerusalem heard tidings of them, they departed from Jerusalem. 6 Then came the word of the LORD unto the prophet Jeremiah saying, 7 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel; Thus shall ye say to the king of Judah, that sent you unto me to enquire of me; Behold, Pharaoh's army, which is come forth to help you, shall return to Egypt into their own land. 8 And the Chaldeans shall come again, and fight against this city, and take it, and burn it with fire. 9 Thus saith the LORD; Deceive not yourselves, saying, The Chaldeans shall surely depart from us: for they shall not depart. 10 For though ye had smitten the whole army of the Chaldeans that fight against you, and there remained

but wounded men among them, yet should they rise up every man in his tent, and burn this city with fire.

# Jeremiah

Bible: Jeremiah

39.2-3 Jerusalem is taken by the Chaldeans/Babylonians (c. 586 B.C.)

2 And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up. 3 And all the princes of the king of Babylon came in, and sat in the middle gate, even Nergalsharezer, Samgarnebo, Sarsechim, Rabsaris, Nergalsharezer, Rabmag, with all the residue of the princes of the king of Babylon.

# Jeremiah

Bible: Jeremiah

41.16-18; 42.1-44.30; 46.13-28 The remnant of the Israelites force Jeremiah to go with them to Egypt; Jeremiah predicts the destruction of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar (which occurred c. 571 B.C.) and makes a prophecy about Apries (Pharaohhophra) (c. 586 B.C.)

See text in Bible.



## Ezekiel

Bible: Ezekiel

32.1-30 Ezekiel's prophesy against Egypt (c. 586 B.C.)

See text in Bible.

## Sulpicius Severus

Sacred History

2.4 The remnant Jews flee to Egypt (c. 586 B.C.)

But in Judæa, over which, as we have related above, Godolia was set after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jews taking it very ill that a ruler not of the royal race had been assigned them by the mere will of the conqueror, with a certain Ismael as their leader and instigator of the execrable conspiracy, cut off Godolia by means of treachery while he was at a banquet. Those, however, who had no part in the plot, wishing to take steps for avenging the deed, hastily take up arms against Ismael. But when he learned that destruction threatened him, leaving the army which he had collected, and with not more than eight companions he fled to the Ammonites. Fear, therefore, fell upon the whole people, lest the king of Babylon should avenge the guilt of a few by the destruction of all; for, in addition to

Godolia, they had slain many of the Chaldæans along with him. They, therefore, form a plan of fleeing into Egypt, but they first go in a body to Jeremia, requesting of him divine counsel. He then exhorted them all in the words of God to remain in their native country, telling them that if they did so, they would be protected by the power of God, and that no danger would accrue from the Babylonians, but that, if they went into Egypt, they would all perish there by sword, and famine, and different kinds of death. The rabble, however, with the usual evil tendency they show, being unaccustomed to yield to useful advice and the divine power, did go into Egypt. The sacred Scriptures are silent as to their future fate; and I have not been able to discover anything regarding it.

## Diodorus Siculus

Historical Library

1.68 Apries (Pharaohhophra) rules Egypt (c. 594-570 B.C.) and after him, Amasis, his son, rules while paying tribute to the Babylonians (c. 570-525 B.C.)

68 Four generations after Psammetichus, Apries was king for twenty-two years. He made a campaign with strong land and sea forces against Cyprus and Phoenicia, took Sidon

by storm, and so terrified the other cities of Phoenicia that he secured their submission; he also defeated the Phoenicians and Cyprians in a great sea-battle and returned to Egypt with much booty. 2 After this he sent a strong native force against Cyrenê and Barcê and, when the larger part of it was lost, the survivors became estranged from him; for they felt that he had organized the expedition with a view to its destruction in order that his rule over the rest of the Egyptians might be more secure, and so they revolted. 3 The man sent by the king to treat with them, one Amasis [son of Apries], a prominent Egyptian, paid no attention to the orders given him to effect a reconciliation, but, on the contrary, increased their estrangement, joined their revolt, and was himself chosen king. 4 When a little later all the rest of the native Egyptians also went over to Amasis, the king was in such straits that he was forced to flee for safety to the mercenaries, who numbered some thirty thousand men. 5 A pitched battle accordingly took place near the village of Maria and the Egyptians prevailed in the struggle; Apries fell alive into the hands of the enemy and was strangled of the death, and Amasis, arranging the affairs of the kingdom in whatever manner seemed to him best, ruled over the Egyptians in accordance with the laws and was held in great favour. 6 He also reduced the

cities of Cyprus and adorned many temples with noteworthy votive offerings. After a reign of fifty-five years he ended his days at the time when Cambyses, the king of the Persians, attacked Egypt, in the third year of the Sixty-third Olympiad, that in which Parmenides of Camarina won the "stadion."

## Herodotus

### The Histories

3.1, 4-7, 9-15 Cambyses, son of Cyrus, conquers Egypt (c. 525 B.C.)

1 Against this Amasis then Cambyses the son of Cyrus was making his march, taking with him not only other nations of which he was ruler, but also Hellenes, both Ionians and Aiolians... 4....There was among the foreign mercenaries of Amasis a man who was by race of Halicarnassos, and his name was Phanes, one who was both capable in judgment and valiant in that which pertained to war. This Phanes, having (as we may suppose) some quarrel with Amasis, fled away from Egypt in a ship, desiring to come to speech with Cambyses: and as he was of no small repute among the mercenaries and was very closely acquainted with all the affairs of Egypt, Amasis pursued him and considered it a matter of some moment to capture him: and he pursued by sending after

him the most trusted of his eunuchs with a trireme, who captured him in Lykia; but having captured him he did not bring him back to Egypt, since Phanes got the better of him by cunning; for he made his guards drunk and escaped to Persia. So when Cambyses had made his resolve to march upon Egypt, and was in difficulty about the march, as to how he should get safely through the waterless region, this man came to him and besides informing of the other matters of Amasis, he instructed him also as to the march, advising him to send to the king of the Arabians and ask that he would give him safety of passage through this region. 5 Now by this way only is there a known entrance to Egypt: for from Phenicia to the borders of the city of Cadytis belongs to the Syrians who are called of Palestine, and from Cadytis, which is a city I suppose not much less than Sardis, from this city the trading stations on the sea-coast as far as the city of Ienysos belong to the king of Arabia, and then from Ienysos again the country belongs to the Syrians as far as the Serbonian lake, along the side of which Mount Casion extends towards the Sea. After that, from the Serbonian lake, in which the story goes that Typhon is concealed, from this point onwards the land is Egypt. Now the region which lies between the city of Ienysos on the one hand and Mount Casion and the Serbonian lake on the

other, which is of no small extent but as much as a three days' journey, is grievously destitute of water. 6 And one thing I shall tell of, which few of those who go in ships to Egypt have observed, and it is this:-- into Egypt from all parts of Hellas and also from Phenicia are brought twice every year earthenware jars full of wine, and yet it may almost be said that you cannot see there one single empty wine-jar. In what manner, then, it will be asked, are they used up? This also I will tell. The head-man of each place must collect all the earthenware jars from his own town and convey them to Memphis, and those at Memphis must fill them with water and convey them to these same waterless regions of Syria: this the jars which come regularly to Egypt and are emptied there, are carried to Syria to be added to that which has come before. 7. It was the Persians who thus prepared this approach to Egypt, furnishing it with water in the manner which has been said, from the time when they first took possession of Egypt: but at the time of which I speak, seeing that water was not yet provided, Cambyses, in accordance with what he was told by his Halicarnassian guest, sent envoys to the Arabian king and from him asked and obtained the safe passage, having given him pledges of friendship and received them from him in return. 9. So then when the Arabian king had given the pledge of

friendship to the men who had come to him from Cambyses, he contrived as follows:-- he took skins of camels and filled them with water and loaded them upon the backs of all the living camels that he had; and having so done he drove them to the waterless region and there awaited the army of Cambyses. This which has been related is the more credible of the accounts given, but the less credible must also be related, since it is a current account. There is a great river in Arabia called Corys, and this runs out into the Sea which is called Erythraian. From this river then it is said that the king of the Arabians, having got a conduit pipe made by sewing together raw ox-hides and other skins, of such a length as to reach to the waterless region, conducted the water through these forsooth, and had great cisterns dug in the waterless region, that they might receive the water and preserve it. Now it is a journey of twelve days from the river to this waterless region; and moreover the story says that he conducted the water by three conduit-pipes to three different parts of it.

10 Meanwhile Psammenitos the son of Amasis was encamped at the Pelusian mouth of the Nile waiting for the coming of Cambyses: for Cambyses did not find Amasis yet living when he marched upon Egypt, but Amasis had died after having reigned forty and four years during which no great mis-

fortune had befallen him: and when he had died and had been embalmed he was buried in the burial-place in the temple, which he had built for himself. Now when Psammenitos son of Amasis was reigning as king, there happened to the Egyptians a prodigy, the greatest that had ever happened: for rain fell at Thebes in Egypt, where never before had rain fallen nor afterwards down to my time, as the Thebans themselves say; for in the upper parts of Egypt no rain falls at all: but at the time of which I speak rain fell at Thebes in a drizzling shower. 11 Now when the Persians had marched quite through the waterless region and were encamped near the Egyptians with design to engage battle, then the foreign mercenaries of the Egyptian king, who were Hellenes and Carians, having a quarrel with Phanes because he had brought against Egypt an army of foreign speech, contrived against him as follows:--Phanes had children whom he had left behind in Egypt: these they brought to their camp and into the sight of their father, and they set up a mixing-bowl between the two camps, and after that they brought up the children one by one and cut their throats so that the blood ran into the bowl. Then when they had gone through the whole number of the children, they brought and poured into the bowl both wine and water, and not until the mercenaries had all drunk of the blood, did they engage battle.



Then after a battle had been fought with great stubbornness, and very many had fallen of both the armies, the Egyptians at length turned to flight. 12 I was witness moreover of a great marvel, being informed of it by the natives of the place; for of the bones scattered about of those who fell in this fight, each side separately, since the bones of the Persians were lying apart on one side according as they were divided at first, and those of the Egyptians on the other, the skulls of the Persians are so weak that if you shall hit them only with a pebble you will make a hole in them, while those of the Egyptians are so exceedingly strong that you would hardly break them if you struck them with a large stone. The cause of it, they say, was this, and I for my part readily believe them, namely that the Egyptians beginning from their early childhood shave their heads, and the bone is thickened by exposure to the sun: and this is also the cause of their not becoming bald-headed; for among the Egyptians you see fewer bald-headed men than among any other race. This then is the reason why these have their skulls strong; and the reason why the Persians have theirs weak is that they keep them delicately in the shade from the first by wearing tiaras, that is felt caps. So far of this: and I saw also a similar thing to this at Papremis, in the case of those who were slain together with

Achaimenes the son of Dareios, by Inaros the Libyan.

13 The Egyptians when they turned to flight from the battle fled in disorder: and they being shut up in Memphis, Cambyses sent a ship of Mytilene up the river bearing a Persian herald, to summon the Egyptians to make terms of surrender; but they, when they saw the ship had entered into Memphis, pouring forth in a body from the fortress both destroyed the ship and also tore the men in it limb from limb, and so bore them into the fortress. After this the Egyptians being besieged, in course of time surrendered themselves; and the Libyans who dwell on the borders of Egypt, being struck with terror by that which had happened to Egypt, delivered themselves up without resistance, and they both laid on themselves a tribute and sent presents: likewise also those of Kyrene and Barca, being struck with terror equally with the Libyans, acted in a similar manner: and Cambyses accepted graciously the gifts which came from the Libyans, but as for those which came from the men of Kyrene, finding fault with them, as I suppose, because they were too small in amount (for the Kyrenians sent in fact five hundred pounds' weight of silver), he took the silver by handfuls and scattered it with his own hand among his soldiers.

14. On the tenth day after that on



which he received the surrender of the fortress of Memphis, Cambyses set the king of the Egyptians Psammenitos, who had been king for six months, to sit in the suburb of the city, to do him dishonour,--him I say with other Egyptians he set there, and he proceeded to make trial of his spirit as follows:-- having arrayed his daughter in the clothing of a slave, he sent her forth with a pitcher to fetch water, and with her he sent also other maidens chosen from the daughters of the chief men, arrayed as was the daughter of the king: and as the maidens were passing by their fathers with cries and lamentation, the other men all began to cry out and lament aloud, seeing that their children had been evilly entreated, but Psammenitos when he saw it before his eyes and perceived it bent himself down to the earth. Then when the water-bearers had passed by, next Cambyses sent his son with two thousand Egyptians besides who were of the same age, with ropes bound round their necks and bits placed in their mouths; and these were being led away to execution to avenge the death of the Mytilenians who had been destroyed at Memphis with their ship: for the Royal Judges had decided that for each man ten of the noblest Egyptians should lose their lives in retaliation. He then, when he saw them passing out by him and perceived that his son was leading the way to die, did the same

as he had done with respect to his daughter, while the other Egyptians who sat round him were lamenting and showing signs of grief. When these also had passed by, it chanced that a man of his table companions, advanced in years, who had been deprived of all his possessions and had nothing except such things as a beggar possesses, and was asking alms from the soldiers, passed by Psammenitos the son of Amasis and the Egyptians who were sitting in the suburb of the city: and when Psammenitos saw him he uttered a great cry of lamentation, and he called his companion by name and beat himself upon the head. Now there was, it seems, men set to watch him, who made known to Cambyses all that he did on the occasion of each going forth: and Cambyses marvelled at that which he did, and he sent a messenger and asked him thus: "Psammenitos, thy master Cambyses asks thee for what reason, when thou sawest thy daughter evilly entreated and thy son going to death, thou didst not cry aloud nor lament for them, whereas thou didst honour with these signs of grief the beggar who, as he hears from others, is not in any way related to thee?" Thus he asked, and the other answered as follows: "O son of Cyrus, my own troubles were too great for me to lament them aloud, but the trouble of my companion was such as called for tears, seeing that he has been deprived of great wealth,

and has come to beggary upon the threshold of old age.” When this saying was reported by the messenger, it seemed to them that it was well spoken; and, as is reported by the Egyptians, Croesus shed tears (for he also, as fortune would have it, had accompanied Cambyses to Egypt) and the Persians who were present shed tears also; and there entered some pity into Cambyses himself, and forthwith he bade them save the life of the son of Psammenitos from among those who were being put to death, and also he bade them raise Psammenitos himself from his place in the suburb of the city and bring him into his own presence. 15. As for the son, those who went for him found that he was no longer alive, but had been cut down first of all, but Psammenitos himself they raised from his place and brought him into the presence of Cambyses, with whom he continued to live for the rest of his time without suffering any violence; and if he had known how to keep himself from meddling with mischief, he would have received Egypt so as to be ruler of it, since the Persians are wont to honour the sons of kings, and even if the kings have revolted from them, they give back the power into the hands of their sons. Of this, namely that it is their established rule to act so, one may judge by many instances besides and especially by the case of Thannyras the son of Inaros, who

received back the power which his father had, and by that of Pausiris the son of Amyrtaios, for he too received back the power of his father: yet it is certain that no men ever up to this time did more evil to the Persians than Inaros and Amyrtaios. As it was, however, Psammenitos devised evil and received the due reward: for he was found to be inciting the Egyptians to revolt; and when this became known to Cambyses, Psammenitos drank bull’s blood and died forthwith. Thus he came to his end.

## Arrian

### Anabasis of Alexander

#### 3.1 Alexander the Great conquers Egypt (332 B.C.)

1 Alexander now led his army into Egypt, whither he had set out at first (from Tyre); and marching from Gaza, on the seventh day he arrived at Pelusium in Egypt. His fleet coasted along also from Phoenicia to Egypt; and he found the ships already moored at Pelusium. When Mazaces the Persian, whom Darius had appointed viceroy of Egypt, ascertained how the battle at Issus had resulted, that Darius had fled in disgraceful flight, and that Phoenicia, Syria, and most of Arabia were already in Alexander’s possession, as he had no Persian force with which he could offer resistance,

he admitted Alexander into the cities and the country in a friendly way. Alexander introduced a garrison into Pelusium, and ordering the men in the ships to sail up the river as far as the city of Memphis, he went in person towards Heliopolis, having the river Nile on his right. He reached that city through the desert, after getting possession of all the places on the march through the voluntary surrender of the inhabitants. Thence he crossed the stream and came to Memphis where he offered sacrifice to Apis and the other gods, and celebrated a gymnastic and musical contest, the most distinguished artists in these matters coming to him from Greece. From Memphis he sailed down the river towards the sea, embarking the shield-bearing guards, the archers, the Agrianians, and of the cavalry the royal squadron of the Companions. Coming to Canopus, he sailed round the Marian lake, and disembarked where now is situated the city of Alexandria, which takes its name from him. The position seemed to him a very fine one in which to found a city, and he thought that it would become a prosperous one. Therefore he was seized by an ardent desire to undertake the enterprise, and he marked out the boundaries for the city himself, pointing out the place where the market place was to be constructed, where the temples were to be built, stating how many there were to be,

and to what Grecian gods they were to be dedicated, and specially marking a spot for a temple to the Egyptian Isis. He also pointed out where the wall was to be carried round it. In regard to these matters he offered sacrifice, and the victims appeared favourable.

## Diodorus Siculus

### Historical Library

17.49, 52 Alexander the Great conquers Egypt and founds Alexandria (332 B.C.)

49 ...In this year King Alexander set in order the affairs of Gaza and sent off Amyntas with ten ships to Macedonia, with orders to enlist the young men who were fit for military service. He himself with all his army marched on to Egypt and secured the adhesion of all its cities without striking a blow. For since the Persians had committed impieties against the temples and had governed harshly, the Egyptians welcomed the Macedonians. 52 He decided to found a great city in Egypt, and gave orders to the men left behind with this mission to build the city between the marsh and the sea. He laid out the site and traced the streets skilfully and ordered that the city should be called after him Alexandria. It was conveniently situated near the harbour of Pharos, and by selecting the right angle of the streets,

Alexander made the city breathe with the etesian winds so that as these blow across a great expanse of sea, they cool the air of the town, and so he provided its inhabitants with a moderate climate and good health. Alexander also laid out the walls so that they were at once exceedingly large and marvellously strong. Lying between a great marsh and the sea, it affords by land only two approaches, both narrow and very easily blocked. In shape, it is similar to a chlamys, and it is approximately bisected by an avenue remarkable for its size and beauty. From gate to gate it runs a distance of forty furlongs; it is a plethron in width, and is bordered throughout its length with rich façades of houses and temples. Alexander gave orders to build a palace notable for its size and massiveness. And not only Alexander, but those who after him ruled Egypt down to our own time, with few exceptions have enlarged this with lavish additions. The city in general has grown so much in later times that many reckon it to be the first city of the civilized world, and it is certainly far ahead of all the rest in elegance and extent and riches and luxury. The number of its inhabitants surpasses that of those in other cities. At the time when we were in Egypt, those who kept the census returns of the population said that its free residents were more than three hundred thousand, and that the king received from the

revenues of the country more than six thousand talents. However that may be, King Alexander charged certain of his Friends with the construction of Alexandria, settled all the affairs of Egypt, and returned with his army to Syria.

## Vitruvius

### On Architecture

2.0 How Alexander chose the man who designed Alexandria (332. B.C.)

1 Dinocrates the architect, relying on the powers of his skill and ingenuity, whilst Alexander was in the midst of his conquests, set out from Macedonia to the army, desirous of gaining the commendation of his sovereign. That his introduction to the royal presence might be facilitated, he obtained letters from his countrymen and relations to men of the first rank and nobility about the king's person; by whom being kindly received, he besought them to take the earliest opportunity of accomplishing his wish. They promised fairly, but were slow in performing; waiting, as they alleged, for a proper occasion. Thinking, however, they deferred this without just grounds, he took his own course for the object he had in view. He was, I should state, a man of tall stature, pleasing countenance, and altogether of dignified appearance. Trusting to

the gifts with which nature had thus endowed him, he put off his ordinary clothing, and having anointed himself with oil, crowned his head with a wreath of poplar, slung a lion's skin across his left shoulder, and carrying a large club in his right hand, he sallied forth to the royal tribunal, at a period when the king was dispensing justice.

2 The novelty of his appearance excited the attention of the people; and Alexander soon discovering, with astonishment, the object of their curiosity, ordered the crowd to make way for him, and demanded to know who he was. "A Macedonian architect," replied Dinocrates, "who suggests schemes and designs worthy your royal renown. I propose to form Mount Athos into the statue of a man holding a spacious city in his left hand, and in his right a huge cup, into which shall be collected all the streams of the mountain, which shall then be poured into the sea."a

3 Alexander, delighted at the proposition, made immediate inquiry if the soil of the neighbourhood were of a quality capable of yielding sufficient produce for such a state. When, however, he found that all its supplies must be furnished by sea, he thus addressed Dinocrates: "I admire the grand outline of your scheme, and am well pleased with it: but I am of opinion he would be much to blame who

planted a colony on such a spot. For as an infant is nourished by the milk of its mother, depending thereon for its progress to maturity, so a city depends on the fertility of the country surrounding it for its riches, its strength in population, and not less for its defence against an enemy. Though your plan might be carried into execution, yet I think it impolitic. I nevertheless request your attendance on me, that I may otherwise avail myself of your ingenuity."

4 From that time Dinocrates was in constant attendance on the king, and followed him into Egypt; where Alexander having perceived a spot, at the same time naturally strong, the centre of the commerce of the country, a land abounding with corn, and having those facilities of transport which the Nile afforded, ordered Dinocrates to build a city whose name should be Alexandria. Dinocrates obtained this honour through his comely person and dignified deportment....

## Josephus

### The War of the Jews

2.18.7 Alexander the Great moved a colony of the Jews (along with other groups of people) to Alexandria in order to populate it (331 B.C.)

7 But for Alexandria, the sedition of



the people of the place against the Jews was perpetual, and this from that very time when Alexander [the Great], upon finding the readiness of the Jews in assisting him against the Egyptians, and as a reward for such their assistance, gave them equal privileges in this city with the Grecians themselves; which honorary reward Continued among them under his successors, who also set apart for them a particular place, that they might live without being polluted by the Gentiles, and were thereby not so much intermixed with foreigners as before; they also gave them this further privilege, that they should be called Macedonians. Nay, when the Romans got possession of Egypt, neither the first Caesar, nor any one that came after him, thought of diminishing the honors which Alexander had bestowed on the Jews. But still conflicts perpetually arose with the Grecians; and although the governors did every day punish many of them, yet did the sedition grow worse

## Arrian

Anabasis of Alexandr

3.5 Alexander settles affairs in Egypt before leaving (331 B.C.)

...He then settled the affairs of Egypt, by appointing two Egyptians, Doloaspis and Petisis, governors of the

country, dividing between them the whole land; but as Petisis declined his province, Doloaspis received the whole. He appointed two of the Companions to be commandants of garrisons: Pantaleon the Pydnaean in Memphis, and Polemo, son of Megacles, a Pellaeon, in Pelusium. He also gave the command of the Grecian auxiliaries to Lycidas, an Aetolian, and appointed Eugnostus, son of Xenophantes, one of the Companions, to be secretary over the same troops. As their overseers he placed Aeschylus and Ephippus the Chalcidean. The government of the neighbouring country of Libya he granted to Apollonius, son of Charinus; and the part of Arabia near Heroöpolis he put under Cleornenes, a man of Naucratis. This last was ordered to allow the governors to rule their respective districts according to the ancient custom; but to collect from them the tribute due to him. The native governors were also ordered to pay it to Cleomenes. He appointed Peucestas, son of Macartatus, and Balacrus, son of Amyntas, generals of the army which he left behind in Egypt; and he placed Polerno, son of Theramenes, over the fleet as admiral. He made Leonnatus, son of Antreas, one of his body-guards instead of Arrhybas, who had died of disease. Antiochus, the commander of the archers, also died; and in his stead Ombrion the Cretan was appointed. When Balacrus was

left behind in Egypt, the allied Grecian infantry, which had been under his command, was put under that of Calanus. Alexander was said to have divided the government of Egypt among so many men, because he was surprised at the natural strength of the country, and he thought it unsafe to intrust the rule of the whole to a single person. The Romans also seem to me to have learned a lesson from him, and therefore keep Egypt under strong guard; for they do not send any of the senators thither as proconsul for the same reason, but only men who have the rank among them of Equites (Knights).'

## Lucian

### Octogenarians

1.12 After the death of Alexander the Great, all of Egypt, among other lands, was given to Ptolemy (323 B.C.)

Ptolemy, son of Lagus, the most fortunate of the kings of his day, ruled over Egypt, and at the age of eighty-four, two years before his death, abdicated in favour of his son Ptolemy, called Philadelphus, who succeeded to his father's throne in lieu of his elder brothers.

## Daniel

### Bible: Daniel

11.3-4 Daniel tells (200 years earlier) of Alexander the Great and what happens at his death

3 And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. 4 And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven; and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his kingdom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those.

## Justin

### Epitome of the Philippic Histories

13.6 Ptolemy takes over Egypt and wins over the people

But Ptolemy, by his wise exertions in Egypt, was acquiring great power; he had secured the favour of the Egyptians by his extraordinary prudence; he had attached the neighbouring princes by acts of kindness and courtesy; he had extended the boundaries of his kingdom by getting possession of the city Cyrene, and was grown so great that he did not fear his enemies so much as he was feared by them.

# Diodorus Siculus

## Historical Library

18.26-28 Ptolemy brings the body of Alexander the Great to Egypt to bury (321 B.C.)

26 When Philocles was archon in Athens, Gaius Sulpicius and Gaius Aelius were elected consuls in Rome. In this year Arrhidaeus, who had been placed in charge of bringing home the body of Alexander, having completed the vehicle on which the royal body was to be carried, was making preparations for the journey. Since the structure that had been made ready, being worthy of the glory of Alexander, not only surpassed all others in cost — it had been constructed at the expense of many talents — but was also famous for the excellence of its workmanship, I believe that it is well to describe it. First they prepared a coffin of the proper size for the body, made of hammered gold, and the space about the body they filled with spices such as could make the body sweet smelling and incorruptible. Upon this chest there had been placed a cover of gold, matching it to a nicety, and fitting about its upper rim. Over this was laid a magnificent purple robe embroidered with gold, beside which they placed the arms of the deceased, wishing the design of the whole to be in harmony with his accomplishments. Then they set up

next to it the covered carriage that was to carry it. At the top of the carriage was built a vault of gold, eight cubits wide and twelve long, covered with overlapping scales set with precious stones. Beneath the roof all along the work was a rectangular cornice of gold, from which projected heads of goat-stags in high relief. Gold rings two palms broad were suspended from these, and through the rings there ran a festive garland beautifully decorated in bright colours of all kinds. At the ends there were tassels of network suspending large bells, so that any who were approaching heard the sound from a great distance. On each corner of the vault on each side was a golden figure of Victory holding a trophy. The colonnade that supported the vault was of gold with Ionic capitals. Within the colonnade was a golden net, made of cords the thickness of a finger, which carried four long painted tablets, their ends adjoining, each equal in length to a side of the colonnade.

27 On the first of these tablets was a chariot ornamented with work in relief, and sitting in it was Alexander holding a very splendid sceptre in his hands. About the king were groups of armed attendants, one of Macedonians, a second of Persians of the bodyguard, and armed soldiers in front of them. The second tablet showed the elephants arrayed for war who followed the bodyguard. They

carried Indian mahouts in front with Macedonians fully armed in their regular equipment behind them. The third tablet showed troops of cavalry as if in formation for battle; and the fourth, ships made ready for naval combat. Beside the entrance to the chamber there were golden lions with eyes turned toward those who would enter. There was a golden acanthus stretching little by little up the centre of each column from below to the capital. Above the chamber in the middle of the top under the open sky there was a purple banner blazoned with a golden olive wreath of great size, and when the sun cast upon it its rays, it sent forth such a bright and vibrant gleam that from a great distance it appeared like a flash of lightning. The body of the chariot beneath the covered chamber had two axles upon which turned four Persian wheels, the naves and spokes of which were gilded, but the part that bore upon the ground was of iron. The projecting parts of the axle were made of gold in the form of lion heads, each holding a spear in its teeth. Along the middle of their length the axles had a bearing ingeniously fitted to the middle of the chamber in such a way that, thanks to it, the chamber could remain undisturbed by shocks from rough places. There were four poles, and to each of them were fastened four teams with four mules harnessed in each team, so that in all there were sixty-four

mules, selected for their strength and size. Each of them was crowned with a gilded crown, each had a golden bell hanging by either cheek, and about their necks were collars set with precious stones.

28 In this way the carriage was constructed and ornamented, and it appeared more magnificent when seen than when described. Because of its widespread fame it drew together many spectators; for from every city into which it came the whole people went forth to meet it and again escorted it on its way out, not becoming sated with the pleasure of beholding it. To correspond to this magnificence, it was accompanied by a crowd of roadmenders and mechanics, and also by soldiers sent to escort it. When Arrhidaeus had spent nearly two years in making ready this work, he brought the body of the king from Babylon to Egypt. Ptolemy, moreover, doing honour to Alexander, went to meet it with an army as far as Syria, and, receiving the body, deemed it worthy of the greatest consideration. He decided for the present not to send it to Ammon, but to entomb it in the city that had been founded by Alexander himself, which lacked little of being the most renowned of the cities of the inhabited earth. There he prepared a precinct worthy the glory of Alexander in size and construction. Entombing him in this and honouring him with sacrifices such as are paid



to demigods and with magnificent games, he won fair requital not only from men but also from the gods. For men, because of his graciousness and nobility of heart, came together eagerly from all sides to Alexandria and gladly enrolled for the campaign, although the army of the kings was about to fight against that of Ptolemy; and, even though the risks were manifest and great, yet all of them willingly took upon themselves at their personal risk the preservation of Ptolemy's safety. The gods also saved him unexpectedly from the greatest dangers on account of his courage and his honest treatment of all his friends.

## Josephus

### Antiquities of the Jews

#### 12.1 How Ptolemy took Jerusalem and transported many Jews to Alexandria (320 B.C.)

1 Now when Alexander, king of Macedon, had put an end to the dominion of the Persians, and had settled the affairs in Judea after the forementioned manner, he ended his life. And as his government fell among many, Antigonos obtained Asia, Seleucus Babylon; and of the other nations which were there, Lysimachus governed the Hellespont, and Cassander possessed Macedonia; as did Ptolemy

the son of Lagus seize upon Egypt. And while these princes ambitiously strove one against another, every one for his own principality, it came to pass that there were continual wars, and those lasting wars too; and the cities were sufferers, and lost a great many of their inhabitants in these times of distress, insomuch that all Syria, by the means of Ptolemy the son of Lagus, underwent the reverse of that denomination of Savior, which he then had. He also seized upon Jerusalem, and for that end made use of deceit and treachery; for as he came into the city on a sabbath day, as if he would offer sacrifices he, without any trouble, gained the city, while the Jews did not oppose him, for they did not suspect him to be their enemy; and he gained it thus, because they were free from suspicion of him, and because on that day they were at rest and quietness; and when he had gained it, he ruled over it in a cruel manner. Nay, Agatharchides of Cnidus, who wrote the acts of Alexander's successors, reproaches us with superstition, as if we, by it, had lost our liberty; where he says thus: "There is a nation called the nation of the Jews, who inhabit a city strong and great, named Jerusalem. These men took no care, but let it come into the hands of Ptolemy, as not willing to take arms, and thereby they submitted to be under a hard master, by reason of their unseasonable superstition." This



is what Agatharchides relates of our nation. But when Ptolemy had taken a great many captives, both from the mountainous parts of Judea, and from the places about Jerusalem and Samaria, and the places near Mount Gerizzim, he led them all into Egypt, and settled them there. And as he knew that the people of Jerusalem were most faithful in the observation of oaths and covenants; and this from the answer they made to Alexander, when he sent an embassy to them, after he had beaten Darius in battle; so he distributed many of them into garrisons, and at Alexandria gave them equal privileges of citizens with the Macedonians themselves; and required of them to take their oaths, that they would keep their fidelity to the posterity of those who committed these places to their care. Nay, there were not a few other Jews who, of their own accord, went into Egypt, as invited by the goodness of the soil, and by the liberality of Ptolemy. However, there were disorders among their posterity, with relation to the Samaritans, on account of their resolution to preserve that conduct of life which was delivered to them by their forefathers, and they thereupon contended one with another, while those of Jerusalem said that their temple was holy, and resolved to send their sacrifices thither; but the Samaritans were resolved that they should be sent to Mount Gerizzim.

## Vitruvius

### On Architecture

7.0.4-7 Ptolemy Philadelphus establishes a library at Alexandria (277 B.C.)

The Attalic kings, stimulated by their great love for philology, having established an excellent public library at Pergamum, Ptolemy, actuated by zeal and great desire for the furtherance of learning, collected with no less care, a similar one for the same purpose at Alexandria, about the same period. When by dint of great labour he had completed it, he was not satisfied, unless, like the seed of the earth, it was to go on increasing. He therefore instituted games to the Muses and Apollo, and in imitation of those in which wrestlers contended, he decreed rewards and honors to the victorious in literature.

These being established, when the time of the games arrived, learned judges were to be selected for the decisions. The king having chosen six, and not readily finding a seventh, applied to those persons who had the care of the library, to ascertain whether they knew any one fit for the purpose. They told him that there was a certain man named Aristophanes, who with great labour and application was day after day reading through the books in the library. At the celebration of the

games, Aristophanes was summoned and took his seat among those allotted for the judges.

The first that contended were the poets, who recited their compositions, and the people unanimously signified to the judges the piece which they preferred. When the judges were required to decide, six of them agreed to award the first prize to him who had most pleased the multitude, and the second prize to some other candidate. The opinion of Aristophanes being required, he observed that the best poet had pleased the people the least.

The king and the whole multitude expressed their great indignation at this opinion, but he rose and besought that they would allow him to speak. Silence being obtained, he told them that one only of the competitors was a poet, that the others had recited other men's compositions, and that the judges ought not to decide upon thefts but upon compositions. The people were astonished, and the king in doubt; but Aristophanes relying on his memory, quoted a vast number of books on certain shelves in the library, and comparing them with what had been recited, made the writers confess that they had stolen from them. The king then ordered them to be proceeded against for the theft, and after their condemnation dismissed them with ignominy. Aristophanes,

however, was honoured with great rewards, and appointed librarian.

## Tertullian

### Apology

18.5-9 Ptolemy Philadelphus calls for a Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures (277 B.C.)

Ptolemy, surnamed Philadelphus, the most learned of his race, a man of vast acquaintance with all literature, emulating, I imagine, the book enthusiasm of Pisistratus, among other remains of the past which either their antiquity or something of peculiar interest made famous, at the suggestion of Demetrius Phalereus, who was renowned above all grammarians of his time, and to whom he had committed the management of these things, applied to the Jews for their writings-I mean the writings peculiar to them and in their tongue, which they alone possessed, for from themselves, as a people dear to God for their fathers' sake, their prophets had ever sprung, and to them they had ever spoken. Now in ancient times the people we call Jews bare the name of Hebrews, and so both their writings and their speech were Hebrew. But that the understanding of their books might not be wanting, this also the Jews supplied to Ptolemy; for they gave him seventy-two interpreters-men whom

the philosopher Menedemus, the well-known assertor of a Providence, regarded with respect as sharing in his views. The same account is given by Aristaeus. So the king left these works unlocked to all, in the Greek language. To this day, at the temple of Serapis, the libraries of Ptolemy are to be seen, with the identical Hebrew originals in them. The Jews, too, read them publicly. Under a tribute-liberty, they are in the habit of going to hear them every Sabbath. Whoever gives ear will find God in them; whoever takes pains to understand, will be compelled to believe.

## Josephus

### Antiquities of the Jews

12.2.1-15 Ptolemy Philadelphus calls for a Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures (277 B.C.)

1 When Alexander had reigned twelve years, and after him Ptolemy Soter forty years, Philadelphus then took the kingdom of Egypt, and held it forty years within one. He procured the law to be interpreted, and set free those that were come from Jerusalem into Egypt, and were in slavery there, who were a hundred and twenty thousand. The occasion was this: Demetrius Phalerius, who was library keeper to the king, was now endeavoring, if it were possible, to gather together all

the books that were in the habitable earth, and buying whatsoever was any where valuable, or agreeable to the king's inclination, (who was very earnestly set upon collecting of books,) to which inclination of his Demetrius was zealously subservient. And when once Ptolemy asked him how many ten thousands of books he had collected, he replied, that he had already about twenty times ten thousand; but that, in a little time, he should have fifty times ten thousand. But he said he had been informed that there were many books of laws among the Jews worthy of inquiring after, and worthy of the king's library, but which, being written in characters and in a dialect of their own, will cause no small pains in getting them translated into the Greek tongue; that the character in which they are written seems to be like to that which is the proper character of the Syrians, and that its sound, when pronounced, is like theirs also; and that this sound appears to be peculiar to themselves. Wherefore he said that nothing hindered why they might not get those books to be translated also; for while nothing is wanting that is necessary for that purpose, we may have their books also in this library. So the king thought that Demetrius was very zealous to procure him abundance of books, and that he suggested what was exceeding proper for him to do; and therefore he wrote to the Jewish

high priest, that he should act accordingly.

2 Now there was one Aristeus, who was among the king's most intimate friends, and on account of his modesty very acceptable to him. This Aristeus resolved frequently, and that before now, to petition the king that he would set all the captive Jews in his kingdom free; and he thought this to be a convenient opportunity for the making that petition. So he discoursed, in the first place, with the captains of the king's guards, Sosibius of Tarentum, and Andreas, and persuaded them to assist him in what he was going to intercede with the king for. Accordingly Aristeus embraced the same opinion with those that have been before mentioned, and went to the king, and made the following speech to him: "It is not fit for us, O king, to overlook things hastily, or to deceive ourselves, but to lay the truth open. For since we have determined not only to get the laws of the Jews transcribed, but interpreted also, for thy satisfaction, by what means can we do this, while so many of the Jews are now slaves in thy kingdom? Do thou then what will be agreeable to thy magnanimity, and to thy good nature: free them from the miserable condition they are in, because that God, who supporteth thy kingdom, was the author of their laws as I have learned by particular inquiry; for both these people, and we also, worship the same God the

framer of all things. We call him, and that truly, by the name of GREEK, or life, or Jupiter, because he breathes life into all men. Wherefore do thou restore these men to their own country, and this do to the honor of God, because these men pay a peculiarly excellent worship to him. And know this further, that though I be not of kin to them by birth, nor one of the same country with them, yet do I desire these favors to be done them, since all men are the workmanship of God; and I am sensible that he is well-pleased with those that do good. I do therefore put up this petition to thee, to do good to them."

3 When Aristeus was saying thus, the king looked upon him with a cheerful and joyful countenance, and said, "How many ten thousands dost thou suppose there are of such as want to be made free?" To which Andreas replied, as he stood by, and said, "A few more than ten times ten thousand." The king made answer, "And is this a small gift that thou askest, Aristeus?" But Sosibius, and the rest that stood by, said that he ought to offer such a thank-offering as was worthy of his greatness of soul, to that God who had given him his kingdom. With this answer he was much pleased; and gave order, that when they paid the soldiers their wages, they should lay down a hundred and twenty drachmas for every one of the slaves? And he promised to publish a magnificent



decree, about what they requested, which should confirm what Aristeus had proposed, and especially what God willed should be done; whereby he said he would not only set those free who had been led away captive by his father and his army, but those who were in this kingdom before, and those also, if any such there were, who had been brought away since. And when they said that their redemption money would amount to above four hundred talents, he granted it. A copy of which decree I have determined to preserve, that the magnanimity of this king may be made known. Its contents were as follows: "Let ail those who were soldiers under our father, and who, when they overran Syria and Phoenicia, and laid waste Judea, took the Jews captives, and made them slaves, and brought them into our cities, and into this country, and then sold them; as also all those that were in my kingdom before them, and if there be any that have been lately brought thither, be made free by those that possess them; and let them accept of a hundred and twenty drachmas for every slave. And let the soldiers receive this redemption money with their pay, but the rest out of the king's treasury: for I suppose that they were made captives without our father's consent, and against equity; and that their country was harassed by the insolence of the soldiers, and that, by removing them

into Egypt, the soldiers have made a great profit by them. Out of regard therefore to justice, and out of pity to those that have been tyrannized over, contrary to equity, I enjoin those that have such Jews in their service to set them at liberty, upon the receipt of the before-mentioned sum; and that no one use any deceit about them, but obey what is here commanded. And I will that they give in their names within three days after the publication of this edict, to such as are appointed to execute the same, and to produce the slaves before them also, for I think it will be for the advantage of my affairs. And let every one that will inform against those that do not obey this decree, and I will that their estates be confiscated into the king's treasury." When this decree was read to the king, it at first contained the rest that is here inserted, and omitted only those Jews that had formerly been brought, and those brought afterwards, which had not been distinctly mentioned; so he added these clauses out of his humanity, and with great generosity. He also gave order that the payment, which was likely to be done in a hurry, should be divided among the king's ministers, and among the officers of his treasury. When this was over, what the king had decreed was quickly brought to a conclusion; and this in no more than seven days' time, the number of the talents paid for the captives being



above four hundred and sixty, and this, because their masters required the [hundred and] twenty drachmas for the children also, the king having, in effect, commanded that these should be paid for, when he said in his decree, that they should receive the forementioned sum for every slave.

4 Now when this had been done after so magnificent a manner, according to the king's inclinations, he gave order to Demetrius to give him in writing his sentiments concerning the transcribing of the Jewish books; for no part of the administration is done rashly by these kings, but all things are managed with great circumspection. On which account I have subjoined a copy of these epistles, and set down the multitude of the vessels sent as gifts to Jerusalem, and the construction of every one, that the exactness of the artificers' workmanship, as it appeared to those that saw them, and which workman made every vessel, may be made manifest, and, this on account of the excellency of the vessels themselves. Now the copy of the epistle was to this purpose: "Demetrius to the great king. When thou, O king, gavest me a charge concerning the collection of books that were wanting to fill your library, and concerning the care that ought to be taken about such as are imperfect, I have used the utmost diligence about those matters. And I let you know, that we want the books of the Jewish

legislation, with some others; for they are written in the Hebrew characters, and being in the language of that nation, are to us unknown. It hath also happened to them, that they have been transcribed more carelessly than they ought to have been, because they have not had hitherto royal care taken about them. Now it is necessary that thou shouldst have accurate copies of them. And indeed this legislation is full of hidden wisdom, and entirely blameless, as being the legislation of God; for which cause it is, as Hecateus of Abdera says, that the poets and historians make no mention of it, nor of those men who lead their lives according to it, since it is a holy law, and ought not to be published by profane mouths. If then it please thee, O king, thou mayst write to the high priest of the Jews, to send six of the elders out of every tribe, and those such as are most skillful of the laws, that by their means we may learn the clear and agreeing sense of these books, and may obtain an accurate interpretation of their contents, and so may have such a collection of these as may be suitable to thy desire."

5 When this epistle was sent to the king, he commanded that an epistle should be drawn up for Eleazar, the Jewish high priest, concerning these matters; and that they should inform him of the release of the Jews that had been in slavery among them. He also sent fifty talents of gold for the

making of large basons, and vials, and cups, and an immense quantity of precious stones. He also gave order to those who had the custody of the chest that contained those stones, to give the artificers leave to choose out what sorts of them they pleased. He withal appointed, that a hundred talents in money should be sent to the temple for sacrifices, and for other uses. Now I will give a description of these vessels, and the manner of their construction, but not till after I have set down a copy of the epistle which was written to Eleazar the high priest, who had obtained that dignity on the occasion following: When Onias the high priest was dead, his son Simon became his successor. He was called Simon the Just because of both his piety towards God, and his kind disposition to those of his own nation. When he was dead, and had left a young son, who was called Onias, Simon's brother Eleazar, of whom we are speaking, took the high priesthood; and he it was to whom Ptolemy wrote, and that in the manner following: "King Ptolemy to Eleazar the high priest, sendeth greeting. There are many Jews who now dwell in my kingdom, whom the Persians, when they were in power, carried captives. These were honored by my father; some of them he placed in the army, and gave them greater pay than ordinary; to others of them, when they came with him into Egypt,

he committed his garrisons, and the guarding of them, that they might be a terror to the Egyptians. And when I had taken the government, I treated all men with humanity, and especially those that are thy fellow citizens, of whom I have set free above a hundred thousand that were slaves, and paid the price of their redemption to their masters out of my own revenues; and those that are of a fit age, I have admitted into them number of my soldiers. And for such as are capable of being faithful to me, and proper for my court, I have put them in such a post, as thinking this kindness done to them to be a very great and an acceptable gift, which I devote to God for his providence over me. And as I am desirous to do what will be grateful to these, and to all the other Jews in the habitable earth, I have determined to procure an interpretation of your law, and to have it translated out of Hebrew into Greek, and to be deposited in my library. Thou wilt therefore do well to choose out and send to me men of a good character, who are now elders in age, and six in number out of every tribe. These, by their age, must be skillful in the laws, and of abilities to make an accurate interpretation of them; and when this shall be finished, I shall think that I have done a work glorious to myself. And I have sent to thee Andreas, the captain of my guard, and Aristeus, men whom I have in very great esteem; by whom

I have sent those first-fruits which I have dedicated to the temple, and to the sacrifices, and to other uses, to the value of a hundred talents. And if thou wilt send to us, to let us know what thou wouldst have further, thou wilt do a thing acceptable to me.”

6 When this epistle of the king was brought to Eleazar, he wrote an answer to it with all the respect possible: “Eleazar the high priest to king Ptolemy, sendeth greeting. If thou and thy queen Arsinoe, and thy children, be well, we are entirely satisfied. When we received thy epistle, we greatly rejoiced at thy intentions; and when the multitude were gathered together, we read it to them, and thereby made them sensible of the piety thou hast towards God. We also showed them the twenty vials of gold, and thirty of silver, and the five large basons, and the table for the shew-bread; as also the hundred talents for the sacrifices, and for the making what shall be needful at the temple; which things Andreas and Aristeus, those most honored friends of thine, have brought us; and truly they are persons of an excellent character, and of great learning, and worthy of thy virtue. Know then that we will gratify thee in what is for thy advantage, though we do what we used not to do before; for we ought to make a return for the numerous acts of kindness which thou hast done to our countrymen. We immediately, therefore, offered

sacrifices for thee and thy sister, with thy children and friends; and the multitude made prayers, that thy affairs may be to thy mind, and that thy kingdom may be preserved in peace, and that the translation of our law may come to the conclusion thou desirest, and be for thy advantage. We have also chosen six elders out of every tribe, whom we have sent, and the law with them. It will be thy part, out of thy piety and justice, to send back the law, when it hath been translated, and to return those to us that bring it in safety. Farewell.”

7 This was the reply which the high priest made. But it does not seem to me to be necessary to set down the names of the seventy two elders who were sent by Eleazar, and carried the law, which yet were subjoined at the end of the epistle. However, I thought it not improper to give an account of those very valuable and artificially contrived vessels which the king sent to God, that all may see how great a regard the king had for God; for the king allowed a vast deal of expenses for these vessels, and came often to the workmen, and viewed their works, and suffered nothing of carelessness or negligence to be any damage to their operations. And I will relate how rich they were as well as I am able, although perhaps the nature of this history may not require such a description; but I imagine I shall thereby recommend the elegant

taste and magnanimity of this king to those that read this history.

8 And first I will describe what belongs to the table. It was indeed in the king's mind to make this table vastly large in its dimensions; but then he gave orders that they should learn what was the magnitude of the table which was already at Jerusalem, and how large it was, and whether there was a possibility of making one larger than it. And when he was informed how large that was which was already there, and that nothing hindered but a larger might be made, he said that he was willing to have one made that should be five times as large as the present table; but his fear was, that it might be then useless in their sacred ministrations by its too great largeness; for he desired that the gifts he presented them should not only be there for show, but should be useful also in their sacred ministrations. According to which reasoning, that the former table was made of so moderate a size for use, and not for want of gold, he resolved that he would not exceed the former table in largeness; but would make it exceed it in the variety and elegance of its materials. And as he was sagacious in observing the nature of all things, and in having a just notion of what was new and surprising, and where there was no sculptures, he would invent such as were proper by his own skill, and would show them to the workmen,

he commanded that such sculptures should now be made, and that those which were delineated should be most accurately formed by a constant regard to their delineation.

9 When therefore the workmen had undertaken to make the table, they framed it in length two cubits and a half, in breadth one cubit, and in height one cubit and a half; and the entire structure of the work was of gold. They withal made a crown of a hand-breadth round it, with wave-work wreathed about it, and with an engraving which imitated a cord, and was admirably turned on its three parts; for as they were of a triangular figure, every angle had the same disposition of its sculptures, that when you turned them about, the very same form of them was turned about without any variation. Now that part of the crown-work that was enclosed under the table had its sculptures very beautiful; but that part which went round on the outside was more elaborately adorned with most beautiful ornaments, because it was exposed to sight, and to the view of the spectators; for which reason it was that both those sides which were extant above the rest were acute, and none of the angles, which we before told you were three, appeared less than another, when the table was turned about. Now into the cordwork thus turned were precious stones inserted, in rows parallel one to the other, enclosed in

golden buttons, which had ouches in them; but the parts which were on the side of the crown, and were exposed to the sight, were adorned with a row of oval figures obliquely placed, of the most excellent sort of precious stones, which imitated rods laid close, and encompassed the table round about. But under these oval figures, thus engraven, the workmen had put a crown all round it, where the nature of all sorts of fruit was represented, insomuch that the bunches of grapes hung up. And when they had made the stones to represent all the kinds of fruit before mentioned, and that each in its proper color, they made them fast with gold round the whole table. The like disposition of the oval figures, and of the engraved rods, was framed under the crown, that the table might on each side show the same appearance of variety and elegance of its ornaments; so that neither the position of the wave-work nor of the crown might be different, although the table were turned on the other side, but that the prospect of the same artificial contrivances might be extended as far as the feet; for there was made a plate of gold four fingers broad, through the entire breadth of the table, into which they inserted the feet, and then fastened them to the table by buttons and button-holes, at the place where the crown was situate, that so on what side soever of the table one should stand, it might

exhibit the very same view of the exquisite workmanship, and of the vast expeses bestowed upon it: but upon the table itself they engraved a meander, inserting into it very valuable stones in the middle like stars, of various colors; the carbuncle and the emerald, each of which sent out agreeable rays of light to the spectators; with such stones of other sorts also as were most curious and best esteemed, as being most precious in their kind. Hard by this meander a texture of net-work ran round it, the middle of which appeared like a rhombus, into which were inserted rock-crystal and amber, which, by the great resemblance of the appearance they made, gave wonderful delight to those that saw them. The chapters of the feet imitated the first buddings of lilies, while their leaves were bent and laid under the table, but so that the chives were seen standing upright within them. Their bases were made of a carbuncle; and the place at the bottom, which rested on that carbuncle, was one palm deep, and eight fingers in breadth. Now they had engraven upon it with a very fine tool, and with a great deal of pains, a branch of ivy and tendrils of the vine, sending forth clusters of grapes, that you would guess they were nowise different from real tendrils; for they were so very thin, and so very far extended at their extremities, that they were moved with the wind, and



made one believe that they were the product of nature, and not the representation of art. They also made the entire workmanship of the table appear to be threefold, while the joints of the several parts were so united together as to be invisible, and the places where they joined could not be distinguished. Now the thickness of the table was not less than half a cubit. So that this gift, by the king's great generosity, by the great value of the materials, and the variety of its exquisite structure, and the artificer's skill in imitating nature with graying tools, was at length brought to perfection, while the king was very desirous, that though in largeness it were not to be different from that which was already dedicated to God, yet that in exquisite workmanship, and the novelty of the contrivances, and in the splendor of its construction, it should far exceed it, and be more illustrious than that was.

10 Now of the cisterns of gold there were two, whose sculpture was of scale-work, from its basis to its belt-like circle, with various sorts of stones enchased in the spiral circles. Next to which there was upon it a meander of a cubit in height; it was composed of stones of all sorts of colors. And next to this was the rod-work engraven; and next to that was a rhombus in a texture of net-work, drawn out to the brim of the basin, while small shields, made of stones, beautiful in their

kind, and of four fingers' depth, filled up the middle parts. About the top of the basin were wreathed the leaves of lilies, and of the convolvulus, and the tendrils of vines in a circular manner. And this was the construction of the two cisterns of gold, each containing two firkins. But those which were of silver were much more bright and splendid than looking-glasses, and you might in them see the images that fell upon them more plainly than in the other. The king also ordered thirty vials; those of which the parts that were of gold, and filled up with precious stones, were shadowed over with the leaves of ivy and of vines, artificially engraven. And these were the vessels that were after an extraordinary manner brought to this perfection, partly by the skill of the workmen, who were admirable in such fine work, but much more by the diligence and generosity of the king, who not only supplied the artificers abundantly, and with great generosity, with what they wanted, but he forbade public audiences for the time, and came and stood by the workmen, and saw the whole operation. And this was the cause why the workmen were so accurate in their performance, because they had regard to the king, and to his great concern about the vessels, and so the more indefatigably kept close to the work.

11 And these were what gifts were sent by Ptolemy to Jerusalem, and

dedicated to God there. But when Eleazar the high priest had devoted them to God, and had paid due respect to those that brought them, and had given them presents to be carried to the king, he dismissed them. And when they were come to Alexandria, and Ptolemy heard that they were come, and that the seventy elders were come also, he presently sent for Andreas and Aristens, his ambassadors, who came to him, and delivered him the epistle which they brought him from the high priest, and made answer to all the questions he put to them by word of mouth. He then made haste to meet the elders that came from Jerusalem for the interpretation of the laws; and he gave command, that every body who came on other occasions should be sent away, which was a thing surprising, and what he did not use to do; for those that were drawn thither upon such occasions used to come to him on the fifth day, but ambassadors at the month's end. But when he had sent those away, he waited for these that were sent by Eleazar; but as the old men came in with the presents, which the high priest had given them to bring to the king, and with the membranes, upon which they had their laws written in golden letters he put questions to them concerning those books; and when they had taken off the covers wherein they were wrapt up, they showed him the membranes. So the king stood admir-

ing the thinness of those membranes, and the exactness of the junctures, which could not be perceived; (so exactly were they connected one with another;) and this he did for a considerable time. He then said that he returned them thanks for coming to him, and still greater thanks to him that sent them; and, above all, to that God whose laws they appeared to be. Then did the elders, and those that were present with them, cry out with one voice, and wished all happiness to the king. Upon which he fell into tears by the violence of the pleasure he had, it being natural to men to afford the same indications in great joy that they do under sorrows. And when he had bid them deliver the books to those that were appointed to receive them, he saluted the men, and said that it was but just to discourse, in the first place, of the errand they were sent about, and then to address himself to themselves. He promised, however, that he would make this day on which they came to him remarkable and eminent every year through the whole course of his life; for their coming to him, and the victory which he gained over Antigonus by sea, proved to be on the very same day. He also gave orders that they should sup with him; and gave it in charge that they should have excellent lodgings provided for them in the upper part of the city.

12 Now he that was appointed to take

care of the reception of strangers, Nicanor by name, called for Dorotheus, whose duty it was to make provision for them, and bid him prepare for every one of them what should be requisite for their diet and way of living; which thing was ordered by the king after this manner: he took care that those that belonged to every city, which did not use the same way of living, that all things should be prepared for them according to the custom of those that came to him, that, being feasted according to the usual method of their own way of living, they might be the better pleased, and might not be uneasy at any thing done to them from which they were naturally averse. And this was now done in the case of these men by Dorotheus, who was put into this office because of his great skill in such matters belonging to common life; for he took care of all such matters as concerned the reception of strangers, and appointed them double seats for them to sit on, according as the king had commanded him to do; for he had commanded that half of their seats should be set at his right hand, and the other half behind his table, and took care that no respect should be omitted that could be shown them. And when they were thus set down, he bid Dorotheus to minister to all those that were come to him from Judea, after the manner they used to be ministered to; for which cause he sent away their sacred

heralds, and those that slew the sacrifices, and the rest that used to say grace; but called to one of those that were come to him, whose name was Eleazar, who was a priest, and desired him to say grace; who then stood in the midst of them, and prayed, that all prosperity might attend the king, and those that were his subjects. Upon which an acclamation was made by the whole company, with joy and a great noise; and when that was over, they fell to eating their supper, and to the enjoyment of what was set before them. And at a little interval afterward, when the king thought a sufficient time had been interposed, he began to talk philosophically to them, and he asked every one of them a philosophical question and such a one as might give light in those inquiries; and when they had explained all the problems that had been proposed by the king about every point, he was well-pleased with their answers. This took up the twelve days in which they were treated; and he that pleases may learn the particular questions in that book of Aristeus, which he wrote on this very occasion.

13 And while not the king only, but the philosopher Menedemus also, admired them, and said that all things were governed by Providence, and that it was probable that thence it was that such force or beauty was discovered in these men's words, they then left off asking any more such ques-

tions. But the king said that he had gained very great advantages by their coming, for that he had received this profit from them, that he had learned how he ought to rule his subjects. And he gave order that they should have every one three talents given them, and that those that were to conduct them to their lodging should do it. Accordingly, when three days were over, Demetrius took them, and went over the causeway seven furlongs long: it was a bank in the sea to an island. And when they had gone over the bridge, he proceeded to the northern parts, and showed them where they should meet, which was in a house that was built near the shore, and was a quiet place, and fit for their discoursing together about their work. When he had brought them thither, he entreated them (now they had all things about them which they wanted for the interpretation of their law) that they would suffer nothing to interrupt them in their work. Accordingly, they made an accurate interpretation, with great zeal and great pains, and this they continued to do till the ninth hour of the day; after which time they relaxed, and took care of their body, while their food was provided for them in great plenty: besides, Dorotheus, at the king's command, brought them a great deal of what was provided for the king himself. But in the morning they came to the court and saluted Ptolemy, and then went away to their

former place, where, when they had washed their hands, and purified themselves, they betook themselves to the interpretation of the laws. Now when the law was transcribed, and the labor of interpretation was over, which came to its conclusion in seventy-two days, Demetrius gathered all the Jews together to the place where the laws were translated, and where the interpreters were, and read them over. The multitude did also approve of those elders that were the interpreters of the law. They withal commended Demetrius for his proposal, as the inventor of what was greatly for their happiness; and they desired that he would give leave to their rulers also to read the law. Moreover, they all, both the priest and the ancientest of the elders, and the principal men of their commonwealth, made it their request, that since the interpretation was happily finished, it might continue in the state it now was, and might not be altered. And when they all commended that determination of theirs, they enjoined, that if any one observed either any thing superfluous, or any thing omitted, that he would take a view of it again, and have it laid before them, and corrected; which was a wise action of theirs, that when the thing was judged to have been well done, it might continue for ever.

14 So the king rejoiced when he saw that his design of this nature was

brought to perfection, to so great advantage; and he was chiefly delighted with hearing the Laws read to him; and was astonished at the deep meaning and wisdom of the legislator. And he began to discourse with Demetrius, "How it came to pass, that when this legislation was so wonderful, no one, either of the poets or of the historians, had made mention of it." Demetrius made answer, "that no one durst be so bold as to touch upon the description of these laws, because they were Divine and venerable, and because some that had attempted it were afflicted by God." He also told him, that "Theopompus was desirous of writing somewhat about them, but was thereupon disturbed in his mind for above thirty days' time; and upon some intermission of his distemper, he appeased God by prayer, as suspecting that his madness proceeded from that cause." Nay, indeed, he further saw in a dream, that his distemper befell him while he indulged too great a curiosity about Divine matters, and was desirous of publishing them among common men; but when he left off that attempt, he recovered his understanding again. Moreover, he informed him of Theodectes, the tragic poet, concerning whom it was reported, that when in a certain dramatic representation he was desirous to make mention of things that were contained in the sacred books, he was afflicted with a darkness in his eyes;

and that upon his being conscious of the occasion of his distemper, and appeasing God by prayer, he was freed from that affliction.

15 And when the king had received these books from Demetrius, as we have said already, he adored them, and gave order that great care should be taken of them, that they might remain uncorrupted. He also desired that the interpreters would come often to him out of Judea, and that both on account of the respects that he would pay them, and on account of the presents he would make them; for he said it was now but just to send them away, although if, of their own accord, they would come to him hereafter, they should obtain all that their own wisdom might justly require, and what his generosity was able to give them. So he then sent them away, and gave to every one of them three garments of the best sort, and two talents of gold, and a cup of the value of one talent, and the furniture of the room wherein they were feasted. And these were the things he presented to them. But by them he sent to Eleazar the high priest ten beds, with feet of silver, and the furniture to them belonging, and a cup of the value of thirty talents; and besides these, ten garments, and purple, and a very beautiful crown, and a hundred pieces of the finest woven linen; as also vials and dishes, and vessels for pouring, and two golden cisterns to



be dedicated to God. He also desired him, by an epistle, that he would give these interpreters leave, if any of them were desirous of coming to him, because he highly valued a conversation with men of such learning, and should be very willing to lay out his wealth upon such men. And this was what came to the Jews, and was much to their glory and honor, from Ptolemy Philadelphus.

## Plutarch

The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans: Antony

86 The Ptolemys rule Egypt until the death of Cleopatra in 30 B.C.; Egypt becomes a Roman province

86 It is said that the asp was brought with those figs and leaves and lay hidden beneath them, for thus Cleopatra had given orders, that the reptile might fasten itself upon her body without her being aware of it. But when she took away some of the figs and saw it, she said: "There it is, you see," and baring her arm she held it out for the bite. 2 But others say that the asp was kept carefully shut up in a water jar, and that while Cleopatra was stirring it up and irritating it with a golden distaff it sprang and fastened itself upon her arm. But the truth of the matter no one knows; for it was also said that she carried about

poison in a hollow comb and kept the comb hidden in her hair; and yet neither spot nor other sign of poison broke out upon her body. 3 Moreover, not even was the reptile seen within the chamber, though people said they saw some traces of it near the sea, where the chamber looked out upon it with its windows. And some also say that Cleopatra's arm was seen to have two slight and indistinct punctures; and this Caesar also seems to have believed. For in his triumph an image of Cleopatra herself with the asp clinging to her was carried in the procession. These, then, are the various accounts of what happened. 4 But Caesar, although vexed at the death of the woman, admired her lofty spirit; and he gave orders that her body should be buried with that of Antony in splendid and regal fashion. Her women also received honourable interment by his orders. When Cleopatra died she was forty years of age save one, and had shared her power with Antony more than fourteen. 5 Antony was fifty-six years of age, according to some, according to others, fifty-three. Now, the statues of Antony were torn down, but those of Cleopatra were left standing, because Archibius, one of her friends, gave Caesar two thousand talents, in order that they might not suffer the same fate as Antony's.