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By Larry and June Acheson

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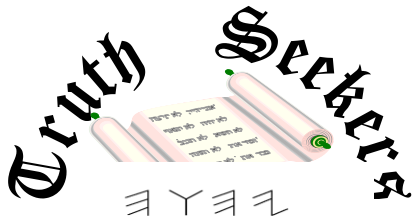

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When Were the Pyramids Built?

By Larry and June Acheson

When fellow believer and friend Kathy Stewart drove her mother to Kentucky to see The Ark Encounter in October 2018, it was out of a desire to combine her annual Sukkot vacation with some pertinent sightseeing. Little did she know the dynamic impact that her visit would have, not only on her life, but our family's as well. Maybe, after reading this commentary, it will also change *your* perspective of Scripture as inspired by our Heavenly Father.

The change I'm referring to had more to do with what happened *after* Kathy's return home than her actual experience touring the Answers in Genesis awe-inspiring replica of Noah's Ark. In the course of showing us her various photos, one thing led to another, and eventually the discussion of Creation versus Evolution arose. Kathy is one of those kindred spirits who loves listening to creationists' answers to evolutionists' claims. She has joined us in watching many hours of creationist Kent Hovind's video seminars, and in the course of discussing our insights, we occasionally discuss my old college days when I was either an agnostic or atheist, depending on how you look at it. When I finally came to understand that there are just too many "coincidences" for our world and everything on it to be the natural by-product of a cosmic "big bang," I jettisoned my evolutionist leanings and embraced creationism. Since then, I have found that I, like Kathy, enjoy listening to or reading creationists' responses to evolutionists' claims. I won't get into the various arguments that are out there, but for the purpose of this article, we will examine a claim that I had never really considered – until Kathy's return from Kentucky.

The brainchild behind The Ark Encounter is creationist Ken Ham, who debated evolutionist Bill Nye in February 2014 on the question "*Is Creation a Viable Model of Origins?*" Two years and a few months later, Bill Nye was Ham's special invited guest to tour the newly-opened Ark Encounter exhibit in Grant County, Kentucky. I watched the 2014 debate, but as debates go, you just don't catch everything, and regrettably I missed an argument from Bill Nye that needs to be addressed. Watching the debate left me with the feeling that Ken Ham could have done a much better job refuting Nye's claims, but at the same time, not being a master debater myself, I was sure I would have done far worse. Having had my fair share of discussions with evolutionists, and having witnessed the facial expressions exposing a bias that won't be shaken—along with answers that defy sound reasoning—I had long ago decided that if an individual doesn't pass the Psalms 14:1 test, there really isn't any point in pursuing a discussion about

Creation vs. Evolution.[1] Nevertheless, I was interested in watching the debate between Ken Ham and Bill Nye. Even from an unbiased perspective, Ken Ham won the debate simply because he has the answer to the all-important question, "How did the atoms that created the Big Bang get there?" Bill Nye could not answer the question, instead deflecting to the non-answer, "This is a great mystery!" Creationists, on the other hand, answer, "There actually is a book out there that tells us where matter came from. And the very first sentence in that book says, 'In the beginning the Almighty created the heavens and the earth.'" From my perspective, based on the wisdom found in the book known as the Bible, combined with archaeological evidence supporting its claims and a culture of people whose history is founded on its precepts, Ken Ham won the debate with his answer above. Nevertheless, based on my life experiences since the debate, I can't say that it had much impact, if any, on persuading atheists to rethink their position; but then again, if that debate changed just one person's life in a positive way, it was beneficial. As I mentioned, there were comments made during the debate that I just didn't initially catch for some reason. It's a comment that Bill Nye made while making a series of points, which Ken Ham ignored; maybe that's why it didn't resonate. I'll get to that comment in a moment.

Ken Ham (at right) responds to Bill Nye's skepticism about dating ice core samples.

Fast forward to the opening of The Ark Encounter in 2016 when Bill Nye toured the Ark replica with host Ken Ham. The entire tour was recorded on film and is currently available for viewing on the Answers in Genesis web site. Kathy Stewart is a frequent visitor to our home on Shabbat and upon her return from her own tour of The Ark Encounter, she shared details, interspersed with photos, of her thrilling experience. In the course of our discussion, we performed an internet search for additional information about The Ark Encounter and that's where we found the Answers in Genesis video of Bill Nye's tour. We watched the entire video, which consists of back-and-forth sparring between two differently-wired individuals. Frankly, I thought watching it was a waste of time, but a comment from Bill Nye piqued Kathy's interest – and that's what proved to be the catalyst of a game-changing experience, not only for Kathy, but for June and me as well.

At around the 27-minute mark of the video, Bill Nye mentioned that the pyramids are older than 6,000 years, which is the age attributed to planet Earth by Ken Ham and many creationists. You can watch a clip of his remark here. I'm pretty sure that Nye meant to say the pyramids are older than *4,000* years old because that's the traditional date attributed to the Biblical flood of Noah's day. In fact, that's precisely the claim he made during his debate with Ken Ham two years previously and *that's* the comment I missed when I first watched the debate. He made that comment in passing at about the 1 hour, 46 minute mark of the debate and you can watch a clip of that passing comment here. While watching the video of Bill Nye's tour of The Ark Encounter, Kathy was intrigued by Bill Nye's commentary about the pyramids being older than 6,000 years. I never really gave it much thought, possibly because I'm not really all that interested in dating issues. However, later that week Kathy did some online knocking and the door was opened.

Kathy sent us the link to a YouTube video that was so captivating that after watching it a couple of times, we contacted the producer, Nathan Hoffman, and obtained a DVD of it. The video is titled "Were

[1] Psalms 14:1 states, "The fool has said in his heart, There is no Elohim (Supreme Being). They have corrupted themselves, and become abominable n their devices; there is none that does righteousness, there is not even so much as one."

the Pyramids Built Before the Flood?" That video is chock-full of verifiable facts and when you put them all together, you find that the dating found in the surviving Hebrew Bibles is so flawed that even if you use conservative dating methods (correcting flawed Egyptian dating records), the best anyone can come up with is that the pyramids were built right at the time of the Flood, which we know would not have been possible for even a few generations of Noah's family to have built, especially when you consider the fact that each stone weighs an average of over two tons!

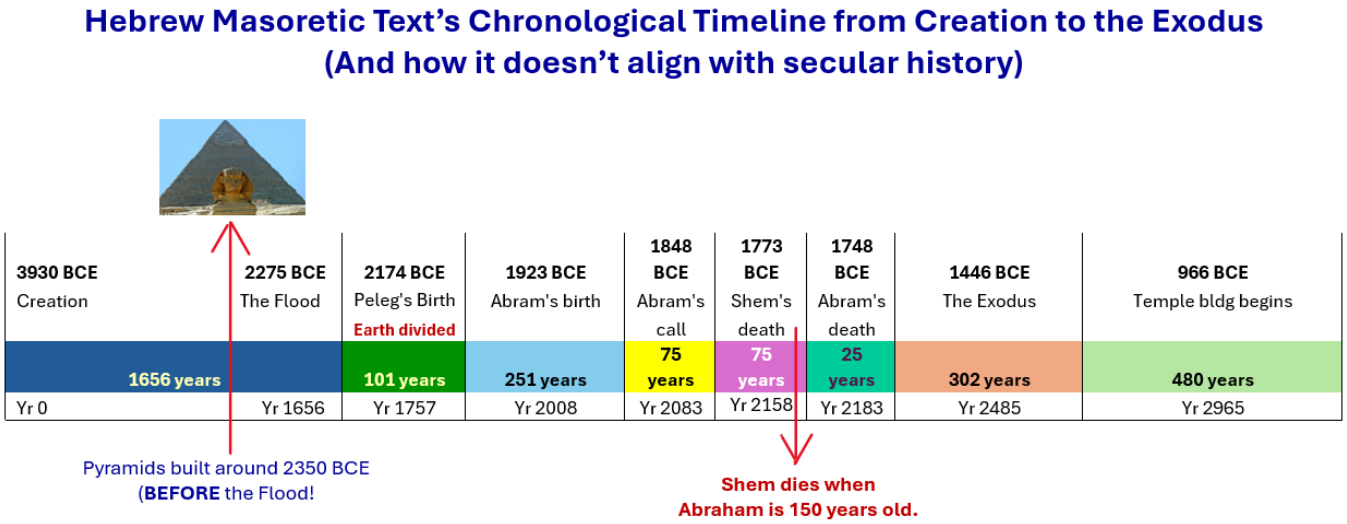
So what's the creationists' answer? Well, Ken Ham, like me, seemed to gloss over Bill Nye's comment. I checked out the Answers in Genesis web site to see if I could find an online rebuttal there and I came across an article that, like Hoffman's video, is titled "Were the Pyramids Built Before the Flood?" You can access that article here. It's a fairly informative article that I'm sure satisfies most creationists, but from a balanced perspective I could see why it wouldn't satisfy evolutionists. It addresses the claim that the pyramids were built around 2,550 BCE, whereas the Flood occurred around 2350 BCE, i.e., 200 years after the pyramids were built, but all it does is call into question the dating of the Egyptian dynasties. It doesn't delve into the how's and why's of inaccurate dating of these dynasties, but it *does* provide ample evidence that the pyramids were in fact built by Israelite slaves – which would naturally have been after the Flood. So what's the problem?

The problem has to do with the dating found in the Hebrew Bible, which is what such highly respected chronologists such as Archbishop James Ussher used to date how long ago the Flood occurred (2348 BCE or roughly 4,366 years ago). We have found what we believe is an even more reliable timeline than Ussher's, which places the flood around the year 2275 BCE. This latter timeline actually makes things even *worse* from a creationist perspective. If the Egyptian pyramids were built around 2,550 BCE, then we have a dating problem that is not so easily dismissed, especially by those who claim there never was a worldwide flood. A cataclysmic worldwide flood would most certainly have wiped out all traces of the pyramids.[2] Yet, the best Egyptian dating corrections only bring the pyramids 200 years closer to the

[2] Some individuals claim the Flood of Noah's day was *not* a worldwide flood, but rather a local one. This belief is not only unsupported by Scripture, but there is no record that ancient believers understood such a turn of events. According to Genesis 7:19, "And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that *were* under the **whole heaven**, were covered." The clear implication is that *everything* on this planet, which is certainly "under the whole heaven," was covered by flood waters. According to Gen. 7:23, "And every living substance was destroyed which was upon the face of the ground, both man, and cattle, and the creeping things, and the fowl of the heaven; and they were destroyed from the earth: and Noah only remained *alive*, and they that were with him in the ark." We read of *no exceptions*, no foreign lands that escaped such devastation. Certainly, we shouldn't need to venture from Scripture to glean the understanding that the Great Flood was worldwide, especially in view of the fact that Scripture doesn't mention *any* land or any peoples on this planet that were unaffected by such a cataclysmic event. Nevertheless, this understanding matches the understanding of ancient believers. According to Philo (20 BCE – 50 CE), "… they [the flood waters] overflowed and inundated all the islands and continents; and incessant floods of everlasting fountains, and of native rivers and torrents combined together, mingled with one another, and rising to a vast height, so as to surmount everything" ("On Abraham," ch. VIII [42]). According to first-century Jewish historian Josephus, "When the Almighty gave the signal, and it began to rain, the water poured down forty entire days, till it became fifteen cubits higher than the earth; which was the reason why there was no greater number preserved, since they had no place to fly to." – *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book I, ch. iii, § 5. **If** the Flood was *not* a worldwide one, there would indeed have been a place for people to "fly to." We are also told that all the flying creatures perished (Gen. 7:21-23), but if it wasn't a *worldwide* flood, the flying creatures could have simply flown to an unaffected land for survival. That's basic survival instinct. Even more basic is the question, "If it wasn't a worldwide flood, why didn't the Almighty simply tell Noah to bring his family to a new and different land where the floodwaters would *not* prevail or even be a factor?"

present, which is right at (or shortly *before*) the time frame given for the flood. In his video on this topic, Nathan Hoffman does a superb job of outlining how utterly impossible it would have been for the eight surviving individuals from the Flood to have built the pyramids; in fact, he demonstrates that if the Tower of Babel was built only 100 years after the flood (as required by the timeline of the Hebrew Bible), it could not have been built by more than 186 people based on a realistic 3.2% growth rate. It is estimated that the pyramids were built by around 30,000 laborers, so clearly a much larger structure such as the Tower of Babel would have needed even *more* laborers.

Displayed below is a timeline based on the chronological sequence presented within the Hebrew Masoretic text:



I should point out that the above timeline is not based on the traditional timeline as supplied by most dictionaries and commentaries. That's because, after comparing the traditional timeline with one proposed by Jonathan Hall in his booklet 'The Ultimate Comprehensive Bible Timeline," I am persuaded that Hall's chronology best fits the timeline presented by Scripture, especially when it comes to resolving the difficulties posed by the reigns of the kings of Judah. His only downfall is his reliance on the Hebrew Masoretic Text for dating time from Creation to the birth of Abraham. Hall's timeline is painstakingly expounded upon by a member of a Canadian church in a document titled "Bible Timeline Analysis," which you may access here. According to Hall's timeline, the Flood occurred during the year 2275 BCE. Most timelines present the Flood as having occurred around the year 2350 BCE. Regardless of which timeline is the most accurate, the fact remains that even with the most conservative timeline, the pyramids would have had to have been built during the same year as the Flood! While I'm sure Noah and his family were bigger and stronger than people today, I doubt that they could have built the pyramids, especially when you consider the fact that the stones used for their construction weighed an average of 2.5 tons each! They simply needed more time -- and more descendents -- to not only build the pyramids, but also the immense Tower of Babel, which preceded the pyramids.

So how do we resolve this apparent problem?

Enter the Septuagint (also referred to as the LXX), the Greek translation of the Bible that was carried out by 72 Hebrew and Greek scholars in the 3rd century BCE. Many "King James only" folks, as well as many in what is known as the "Hebrew Roots Movement," will stop reading this commentary right here because many of those individuals reject the LXX (or *any* ancient writings whose text is not Hebrew). At least that has been our experience. However, during our small assembly's Sukkot observance back in

2004, we carried out a complete reading of the book of Deuteronomy. We took turns reading and as we did so, I followed along with an English copy translated from the Septuagint. It was both uncanny and amazing to see the number of times that the Septuagint text corrects the Hebrew text. The corrections were usually minor ones, but it prompted me to do further reading comparisons and I found an especially glaring error in the Hebrew text of Leviticus 13. I go into some detail about this error in our Pentecost study.[3]

I have long wondered why the Septuagint text was so heavily quoted by New Testament writers; not only that, but Jewish believers such as Philo and Josephus most certainly counted to Pentecost based on the instructions found in the Septuagint text, which has the count to Pentecost starting on the morrow after the first "high day" Sabbath of the Feast of Unleavened Bread. The Hebrew text places the count on the morrow after the *weekly* Sabbath. My most intense research shows that the early believers followed the pattern set forth in the Septuagint. However, every time I would point out this information, I was immediately reminded that if I were to go with the Septuagint's reading, then I should also go by the Septuagint's "skewed" dating, which has Methuselah outliving the Flood by 14 years. I was compelled to admit that the dating of Methuselah's life span, at least within the LXX version we had available at that time, exposed a critical dating problem, and I could only imagine that if the Hebrew scholars who translated the LXX messed up Methuselah's timeline, then they must have messed up the *other* patriarchs' as well. However, as I watched Nathan Hoffman's presentation, I knew he was on to something. Hoffman not only brings out the fact that at some point in time someone subtracted 100 years from the begetting ages of six patriarchs (Arphaxad, Shelah, Eber, Peleg, Reu and Serug), but he also demonstrates that the corrected timeline follows the normal life expectancy pattern of sons outliving their fathers. *But what about the fact that the Septuagint's timeline requires believing that Methuselah outlived the flood?* Hoffman doesn't address this enigma in his video.

It's amazing how one thing can lead to another. In this situation, I knew Hoffman had exposed a significant dating problem with the Hebrew Bible—and suddenly the Septuagint's dating wasn't as skewed as I had been led to believe – *but what about Methuselah*? I knew he couldn't have outlived the Flood. What was I missing? I continued digging (i.e., Googling), and at length I found the answer: With the passing of time, someone had corrupted a later text of the Septuagint! I highly recommend reading "Methuselah's Begetting Age in Genesis 5:25 and the Primeval Chronology of the Septuagint: A Closer Look at the Textual and Historical Evidence" by Henry B. Smith, Jr. The author proves that the *original* text of the Septuagint had Methuselah's age as **187** when he beget Lamech instead of the 167 age listed in current copies of this Greek version. In other words, earlier copies of the LXX showed that Methuselah died *before* the Flood. Later copies were clearly corrupted. In fact, the Septuagint used by Josephus listed Methuselah's begetting age as 187.[4] Smith's article is expertly researched and well worth reading.

There's more.

Not only does the dating of the original copy of the Septuagint have Methuselah dying before the Flood, not only does the timeline show that offspring as a rule outlived their fathers, but the Septuagint's timeline also shows that the Flood occurred long *before* the pyramids were built. In fact, according to Hoffman's calculations, with the expected growth rate of 3.2%, not only would an expected growth rate of 3.2% have allowed for over two million laborers to have built the Tower of Babel, but there would also have been more than enough workers to have built the pyramids.

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[3] *Cf.*, our study "Counting to Pentecost," section subtitled "Room for Speculation," 11/07/2020, pp. 11-13.
[4] *Cf.*, *Antiquities of the Jews,* Book I, ch. iii, § 4.

Here's a timeline based on the chronological sequence presented within the Septuagint text:

Septuagint's Chronological Timeline from Creation to the Exodus

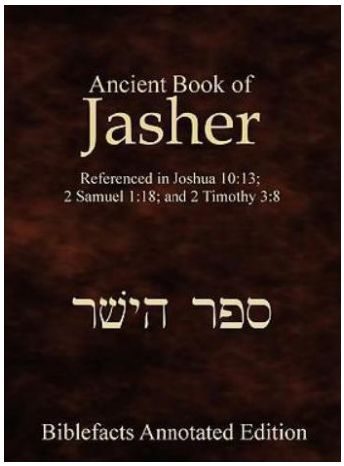
5187 BCE	2925 BCE	2524 BCE	2423 BCE	1923 BCE	1848 BCE	1748 BCE	1446 BCE	966 BCE
Creation	The Flood	Peleg's Birth earth divided	Shem's death	Abram's birth	Abram's call	Abraham's death	The Exodus	Temple bldg begins
2, 262 years		401 years	101 years	500 years	75 years	100 years	302 years	480 years
Yr 0	Yr 2262	Yr 2663	Yr 2764	Yr 3264	Yr 3339	Yr 3439	Yr 3741	Yr 4221

Shem dies 500 years before Abraham's birth.

Pyramids built around 2350 BCE (575 yrs **AFTER** the Flood!

As displayed above, there were approximately 575 years from the Flood to the building of the pyramids—plenty of time for the earth to replenish its human population in time for such massive and extensive building projects.

Bye-bye, Book of Jasher



For me personally, there was a surprising by-product of learning that the timeline of the original Septuagint text corrects the timeline of the Masoretic Text. For several years, the Book of Jasher supplemented my reading of the accounts in Genesis and Exodus. I say "*my* reading" because my wife and daughter were not of the same accord and our differences produced not a little strife. Strife had not been not common to our Bible studies, and heretofore we essentially walked together in unity, so it was not pleasant being at odds over such a seemingly minor thing. The primary argument that I was unable to answer is the fact that in chapter 10, where the *Book of Jasher* lists the descendants of Noah and where they settled, it includes the family of Gomer having settled in "Franza, by the river Franza, by the river Senah." Scholars point out that France was never known as "Franza" until sometime after the fall of the Roman Empire in 476 CE. I assume the river Senah is the Seine River. I mentally resolved the conflict by reasoning that the original name of that region was likely lost in a previous copy and that the medieval scribe who copied the extant Hebrew text supplied the modern name within the otherwise accurate text. However, not only does the *Book of Jasher's* timeline match that of the Hebrew text, which has Shem being contemporary with Abraham, but it flat-out (mis)identifies Shem as being Melchizadek (Adonizedek), the king of Jerusalem who came out to meet Abraham with bread and wine after he had defeated the four kings (Genesis 14). With the Septuagint's timeline, it would have been impossible for Shem to have been Melchizadek. In fact, if you follow the timeline found in the Septuagint text, *Shem died 500 years before Abraham was born*. Since the Bible does not record any interaction between Abraham and Shem (as should be expected), we find the Septuagint's timeline to be more realistic. I still find the *Book of Jasher* a fascinating read, but its embellishments can now only be regarded as a medieval commentary at best.

Proof the Pyramids Were <u>Not</u> Built Before the Flood

It is not all surprising that there are folks out there who would rather hang on to their belief that the dating as presented within the Hebrew Masoretic text can't be wrong than admit that the LXX dating authoritatively answers the evolutionists' claims about the pyramids and the Flood, as well as other dating anomalies. We watched an online video from creationist Kent Hovind in which he makes what I would describe as a rather lame effort at discrediting Hoffman's video, offering nothing of substance to refute any of the information presented. It's essentially a non-answer. We're certain that others who cannot or will not disembrace the Hebrew text will follow Hovind's lead.

In fact, it didn't take long for *another* ardent opponent of the Septuagint translation to come forward, making the brash claim that the pyramids withstood the Great Flood of Noah's day. Even though there is no evidence of significant water damage, and even though Creation scientists agree that the effects of the Flood were cataclysmic, effectively destroying everything on the planet, the man I just referenced is persuaded that the Egyptian pyramids withstood the powerful forces of the Great Flood. Walt Brown, director of the Center for Scientific Creation, who holds a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, authored a book titled *In the Beginning: Compelling Evidence for Creation and the Flood*. Brown describes the devastating effects of the Flood in great detail. Here's an excerpt:

> As the crack raced around the earth, the 10-mile-thick "roof" of overlying rock opened like a rip in a tightly stretched cloth. The pressure in the subterranean chamber immediately beneath the rupture suddenly dropped to almost atmospheric pressure, causing water to explode with great violence out of the ten-mile-deep "slit" that wrapped around the earth like the seam of a baseball.
>
> All along this globe-circling rupture, a fountain of water jetted supersonically into and above the atmosphere. The water fragmented into an "ocean" of droplets that fell to the earth great distances away. This produced torrential rains such as the earth has never experienced. Some jetting water rose above the atmosphere where the droplets froze. Huge masses of extremely cold, muddy "hail" fell at certain locations where it buried, suffocated, and froze many animals, including some mammoths.
>
> **Flood Phase.** The extreme force of the 46,000-mile-long sheet of upward-jetting water rapidly eroded both sides of the crack. Eroded particles (or sediments) were swept up in the waters that gushed out from the rupture, giving the water a thick, muddy consistency. These sediments settled out over the earth's surface in days, trapping and burying many plants and animals, beginning the process of forming most of the world's fossils.
>
> The rising flood waters eventually blanketed the water jetting from the rupture, although water still surged out of the rupture. Global flooding occurred over the earth's relatively smooth topography, since today's major mountains had not yet formed.
>
> The temperature of the escaping subterranean waters increased by about 100°F as they were forced from the high pressure chamber. The hot water, being less dense, rose to the surface of the flood waters. There, high evaporation occurred, increasing the salt content of the remaining water. Once supersaturated, salts precipitated into thick, pasty layers. Later, the pasty (low density) salt was

> blanketed by denser sediments, creating an unstable arrangement of heavy material over lighter material. A slight jiggle will cause a plume of the lighter layer below to flow up through the denser layer above. In the case of salt, that plume is called a salt dome.
>
> The pressure of the water decreased as it rose out of the subterranean chamber. Since high pressure liquids hold more dissolved gases than low pressure liquids, gases bubbled out of the escaping waters. This process occurs when a can of carbonated beverage is opened, quickly releasing bubbles of dissolved carbon dioxide. From the subterranean waters, the most significant gas was carbon dioxide. About 35% of the sediments were eroded from the basalt below the escaping water. Up to 6% of basalt is calcium by weight. Calcium ions in the escaping water, along with dissolved carbon dioxide gas (carbonic acid) caused vast sheets of limestone ($CaCO_3$) to precipitate as the pressure dropped. The flooding uprooted most of the earth's abundant vegetation. Much of it was transported by the flood's currents to regions where it accumulated in great masses. Some vegetation even drifted to the South Pole. Later, during the continental drift phase, buried layers of vegetation were rapidly compressed and heated, precisely the conditions to form coal and oil.[5]

In my opinion, anyone who thinks man-made structures could have endured the circumstances described above is either naïve or so fervently intent on upholding the Hebrew Masoretic Text above the Septuagint's that they simply *will not* see things any other way. Nevertheless, even if you believe the pyramids endured the cataclysmic forces of the Flood with no ill effects, how would you explain the fact that the limestone blocks comprising the Egyptian pyramids contain numerous shell fossils? In fact, scientists have concluded that the entire pyramid complex was at one time submerged under the sea. The following comes from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation website article "Pyramids Packed With Fossil Shells":

> "The analysis determined the primary building materials were pinky granites, black and white granites, sandstones and various types of limestones. The latter contained numerous shell fossils of the genus Nummulites, simple marine organisms whose name means 'little coins'. [At Cheops alone they constituted] a proportion of up to 40% of the whole building stone rock," the researchers write in the latest issue of the *Journal of Cultural Heritage*. Nummulites that lived during the Eocene period around 55.8-33.9 million years ago are most commonly found in Egyptian limestone. Fossils have also been unearthed at other sites, such as in Turkey and throughout the Mediterranean. When nummulites are bisected horizontally they appear as a perfect spiral. Since they were common in ancient Egypt, it's believed the shells were used as coins, perhaps explaining their name. Fossils of their ancient marine relatives—sand dollars, starfish and sea urchins - were also detected in the Egyptian limestone. The fossils are largely undamaged and are distributed in a random manner within the stone.[6]

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[5] Walt Brown, *In the Beginning: Compelling Evidence for Creation and the Flood*, Center for Scientific Creation, Phoenix, AZ, 1995, pp. 88-89.

[6] *Cf.*, ABC Science, "Pyramids Packed With Fossil Shells," by Jennifer Viegas, April 28, 2008. See also "Discovery of Fossils at Giza Plateau," by Antoine Gigal and Sherif El Morsy, Gigal Research website, copyright: AntoineGigal 2011.

It is a true statement that it is rare for fossils to be formed in these modern times. The geological forces required for massive fossilization are not present today, but they *were* as a result of the forces powered by the Great Flood of Noah's day. Prior to the Flood, would there have been any fossils? It should go without saying that were would have been none. The only reasonable conclusion is that the fossils found in the limestone rocks comprising the pyramids were already there when the pyramids were built—centuries *after* the Flood.

Those who insist on following the chronology found in the Masoretic Text, such as the "King James Only" believers, will not likely accept any exterior data contradicting their pre-determined conclusion that the pyramids were built before the Flood. Nor will they accept historical testimony from Herodotus, the 5th century BCE historian, known as "the father of history," who wrote the following in his work *The Histories*:

> Up to the time of Rhampsinitus, Egypt was excellently governed and very prosperous; but his successor Cheops (to continue the account which the priests gave me) brought the country into all sorts of misery. He closed all the temples, then, not content with excluding his subjects from the practices of their religion, compelled them without exception to labour as slaves for his own advantage. Some were forced to drag blocks of stone from the quarries in the Arabian hills to the Nile, where they were ferried across and taken over by others, who hauled them to the Libyan hills. The work went on in three-monthly shifts, a hundred thousand men in a shift. It took ten years of this oppressive slave-labour to build the track along which the blocks were hauled—a work, in my opinion, of hardly less magnitude than the pyramid itself, for it is five furlongs in length, sixty feet wide, forty-eight feet high at its highest point, and constructed of polished stone blocks decorated with carvings of animals. To build it took, as I said, ten years—including the underground sepulchral chambers on the hill where the pyramids stand; a cut was made from the Nile, so that the water from it turned the site of these into an island. To build the pyramid itself took twenty years; it is square at its base, its height (800 feet) equal to the length of each side; it is of polished stone blocks beautifully fitted, none of the blocks being less than thirty feet long."[7]

Those who reject the external evidence of the limestone blocks, which contain fossils, as well as the evidence that the entire Giza plateau was once under the sea, are bound to likewise dismiss the record of the pyramids' construction, as handed down to the 5th century BCE historian Herodotus. This is extreme bias based solely on the desire to uphold the timeline found in the Masoretic Text.

As a truth-seeker, I will say that I may not agree with Nathan Hoffman on several doctrinal points, including whether or not we honor our Heavenly Father by referring to Him as God; but he certainly presented the truth in the debate over whether or not the LXX translation comes closer to an older, original Hebrew than the extant Hebrew copies available to us today. The Septuagint wins on many levels, including the resolution to the conflict between the Hebrew text's timeline of the Great Flood and the time frame for when the pyramids were built. What do evolutionists have to say about *that*?

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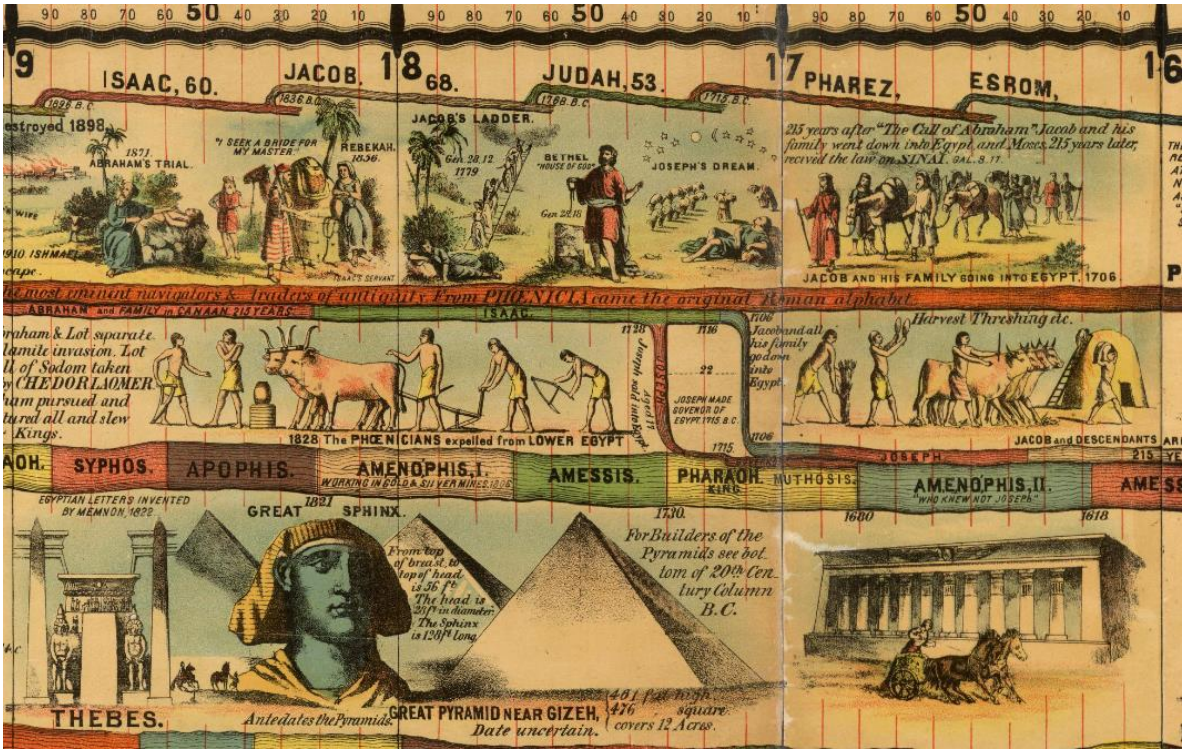
[7] Herodotus, *The Histories*, Book Two, translated by Aubrey De Sélincourt, Penguin Books, London, England, revised ed., 2003, p. 146.

Pyramids Built Later Than We Previously Thought?

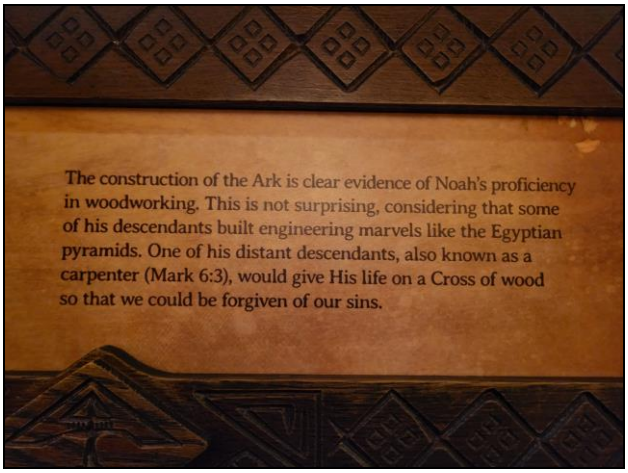
In 2023, June and I were finally able to visit The Ark Encounter for ourselves. It was an amazing experience. For those who, like me, *already* believe the account of the Flood in the Bible, the exhibit's primary benefit is validating the fact that yes, the Ark would have had sufficient room for all creatures, as recorded in the book of Genesis. A secondary benefit is appreciation of the skill involved in the workmanship, as well as the intense labor required to construct such a massive vessel. And it *is* indeed massive!

Among its many exhibits, I was hoping to find something explaining how and when the pyramids were built, along with a credible timeline. They *do* offer a full-length version of *Adam's Chart of History*, which is a whopping 23 feet long, and if you follow along that chart, Sebastian Adams, who compiled it, ascribes "Date uncertain" to the Great Pyramid near Gizeh, yet he places its construction within the lifetimes of Jacob and his sons, which, of course, is hundreds of years after the Flood (which he places at 2348 BCE). Placing the construction of the pyramids during the lifetime of Jacobs' sons is significant. Here's the pertinent excerpt from *Adams' Chart of History*:



If we have already demonstrated that the pyramids may have been built around the year 2350 BCE, then why is it we're giving room for believing some *other* time period in history for their construction? Quite frankly, although I'm certain the pyramids were built after the Flood, I'm *not* so certain about the historians' dating of 2350 BCE. Could Sebastian Adams have come close with his "Chart of History"? I

am persuaded he did. According to Jonathan Hall's "The Ultimate Comprehensive Bible Timeline," Joseph was born around the year 1672 BCE. If he began his tenure of second in command of Egypt when he was 39, this brings us to 1633 BCE. I think this general time frame could very well serve as a general marker for when the first pyramids were constructed because I am persuaded that Joseph *may* have been the mastermind behind their construction. Later, the Great Pyramid of Gizeh was built with the help of Israelite slaves, which fits the understanding expressed by both Herodotus and Josephus.[8]



According to Egyptian history, the mastermind behind construction of the pyramids was a man named *Imhotep*. A few scholars are persuaded that Imhotep was another name given to the man we know from the Bible as Joseph. Of course, many others argue against such a view. There are enough similarities between the accounts of the two men that I can certainly understand believing that they may well have been one and the same person.

Anne Habermehl, in her paper "Revising the Egyptian Chronology: Joseph as Imhotep, and Amenemhat IV as Pharaoh of the Exodus," presents compelling arguments supportive of believing that Imhotep and Joseph were indeed the same individual, living during what is known as the 3rd dynasty of Pharaoh Djoser. She dates the beginning of Joseph's tenure as vizier to Pharaoh as circa 1700 BCE, but most scholars date Djoser's 3rd dynasty to 2600 BCE, i.e., around a thousand years before Joseph was born. Her conclusions clearly fly in the face of secular scholars, but as she points out, "This time difference interposed between Imhotep and Joseph has proven to be a nearly insurmountable obstacle to equating the two men. It is easier to believe that it is a sheer coincidence that both men were alike in so many ways."[9] Habermehl presents a timeline that brings Djoser's dynasty in synche with Joseph's lifetime. We do not intend to detail all of her insights and explanations here, but we can at least offer the following summary of what we feel are her most persuasive points:

1. ***Fascinating similarity between Scriptural account and the Egyptian legend.*** Imhotep and Joseph both predict a seven-year famine. Although details of the Egyptian record are somewhat different

[8] *Cf*., Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book II, ch. ix, § 1. He writes, "… for they [the Egyptians] enjoined them [the Israelites] to cut a great number of channels for the river, and to build walls for their cities and ramparts, that they might restrain the river, and hinder its waters from stagnating, upon its running over its own banks: they set them also to build pyramids, and by all this wore them out; and forced them to learn all sorts of mechanical arts, and to accustom themselves to hard labor."

[9] Habermehl, Anne, "Revising the Egyptian Chronology: Joseph as Imhotep, and Amenemhat IV as Pharaoh of the Exodus," Proceedings of the Seventh International Conference on Creationism, Pittsburgh, PA, p. 12.

than what we read in the Bible (Joseph predicted seven years of plenty followed by seven years of famine, whereas Imhotep predicted the reverse sequence), it appears to refer to the same famine and strongly backs Imhotep as Joseph. To the best of our knowledge, there is no record of *two* seven-year famines in Egypt.

2. ***Be careful about trusting chronologists' conclusions.*** Scholars have known for years that Egyptian chronology is suspect at best. In his book *Time Upside Down*, the late Dr. Erich A. von Fange, who devoted his life to the study of the ancient world in a Biblical framework, wrote, "Evidence is accumulating rapidly that Egyptian chronology is off by as much as 500–600 years. Since most scholars calibrate Old Testament events and the history of other ancient cultures by Egyptian dates, the effect is devastating, crippling, and stifling." *Could Egyptian chronology be off by* ***more*** *than 600 years?*
3. ***Name similarity.*** Habermehl writes, "Although the name 'Joseph' is pronounced 'Yosef' in modern Israeli Hebrew, it wasn't always so. There is a form of archaic Hebrew called Tiberian, considered to go back to at least second temple times, in which 'Joseph' is pronounced 'Yehosep' (Yəhôsēp̄)." She adds, "The phonetic similarity between (Ye)hosep and (Im)hotep is striking, especially considering that we do not know with certainty how either name was actually pronounced 3700 years ago. A further similarity of the two names is claimed by Metzler (1989, pp. 7–9, fn. 10), who says that an original spelling form of 'Joseph' is 'Ihosep,' and 'Imhotep' may be spelled Ihotep. The variant spelling 'Ihotep' appears in a long inscription of the tomb of sixth-Dynasty Weni, who mentions the Gate of Ihotep, a place near the coast of the Mediterranean (Horne, 1917, p. 39). This leaves only the 's' and 't' phonetic difference between the two names. The Egyptians of Joseph's day may have simply pronounced his name as if it was an Egyptian one."

Even if one should argue against a phonetic similarity between "Yehosep" and "Imhotep," another component to consider is the fact that Egyptians were known for attributing multiple names to individuals. Jimmy Dunn, webmaster for Egypt's Ministry of Tourism and editor of the Tour Egypt website, writes:

> At times, some of the naming techniques of the ancient Egyptians could also lead to considerable confusion. <u>This is obvious among some kings, who had a number of different names, but at times also changed their names, particularly when they inherited or otherwise ascended to the throne of Egypt</u>. Furthermore, some individuals seem to possibly have had different names in different parts of Egypt. It has been suggested, for example, that the first born son of Ramesses II, Amunhikhopshef, may have been called Sethikhopshjef in the north of Egypt. Hence, the god Amun of the south was used in Upper Egypt while the favored deity, Seth, was used in Lower Egypt. The possibility that people could be called one name in one location, and a different one elsewhere, has some justification in the names of gods. For example, chapter 142 of the Book of the Dead carries the heading "Knowing the names of Osiris in his every seat where he wishes to be," and is an extensive list of geographically local versions of Osiris.[10]

There are many publications affirming the fact that the Egyptian naming system is vastly different from that of many cultures, so this contingency is no secret; thus, even if "Yehosep" and "Imhotep" should happen to be completely different names, this would not change the fact that with the Egyptian

[10] "Ancient Egyptian Names," by Jimmy Dunn, August 2011, available for reading at https://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/names.htm.

naming system, an individual could actually be known by more than one name. For example, according to the Talmud's Tractate Megillah, Moses had several names, including Jered, Gedor, Heber, Soco, Jekuthiel and Zanoah.[11] The pseudepigraphal *Book of Jasher*, though it has been shown to be a medieval forgery, nevertheless presents Pharaoh's daughter as having named Amram's son *Moses*, but his father called him *Chabar*, his mother called him *Jekuthiel*, his sister Miriam called him *Jered*, his brother Aaron called him *Abi Zanuch*, his grandfather called him *Abigdor*, and their nurse called him *Abi Socho*, but all Israel called him *Shemaiah*.[12] If Moses was known by eight or more names, then why should we be surprised that Joseph was known by two?

The late archaeologist Ron Wyatt was also persuaded that Imhotep was another name for Joseph. Wyatt most likely unlocked the secret to how the Egyptians constructed the pyramids, and a terrific video detailing this discovery, along with his expressed belief that Imhotep was in fact the Joseph of the Bible, can be viewed at this link. Ron Wyatt passed away in 1999, and his wife, Mary Nell, carried on much of his work, including composing a study titled "Joseph in Ancient Egyptian History," where she likewise supplies evidence that Imhotep was Joseph.[13] Of course, this information is rejected by majority of the "scholarly world," primarily because, as expressed by author Anne Habermehl, it's easier to believe any similarities between Imhotep and Joseph are mere coincidences than evidence of a dating problem.

Based on the information I have seen, I personally lean towards believing that the Great Pyramid of Giza was built with the help of Israelite slaves, as presented by first-century historian Josephus, and it follows that the older pyramid, Djoser's pyramid complex at Saqqara was quite likely built during Joseph's lifetime; moreover, he very well could have been its designer. This basic timeline fits the timeline as described by ancient historians, contrary to what today's modern scholars teach.

Of course, believing that the first pyramid was designed by Joseph requires a substantial shift in the historical timeline I previously displayed—a discrepancy of over 700 years! Nevertheless, unless I can be shown contradictory evidence otherwise, here's the approximate timeline I lean towards believing as the most accurate:

Septuagint's Chronological Timeline from Creation to the Exodus

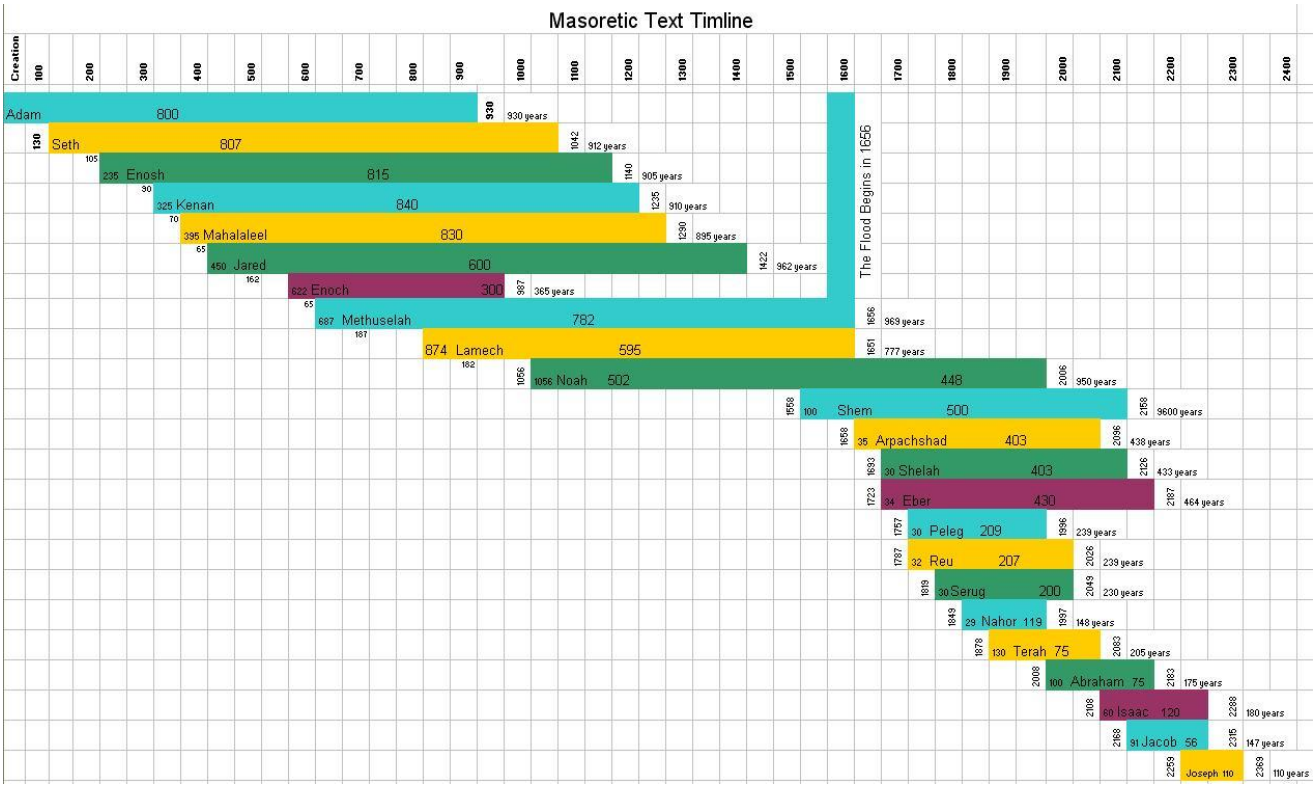
5187 BCE Creation	2925 BCE The Flood	2524 BCE Peleg's Birth earth divided	2423 BCE Shem's death	1923 BCE Abram's birth	1848 BCE Abram's call	1748 BCE Abraham's death	1446 BCE The Exodus	966 BCE Temple bldg begins
2,262 years		401 years	101 years	500 years	75 years	100 years	302 years	480 years
Yr 0	Yr 2262	Yr 2663	Yr 2764	Yr 3264	Yr 3339	Yr 3439	Yr 3741	Yr 4221

Shem dies 500 years before Abraham's birth.

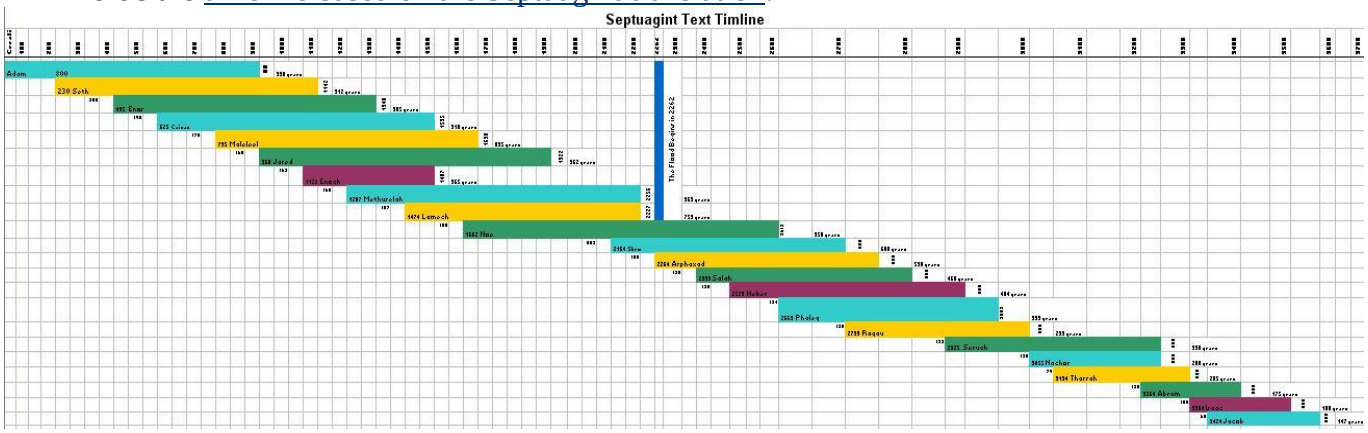
Pyramids built around 1626 BCE (1,299 yrs **AFTER** the Flood!

For those of you who like to compare charts, June put together a couple of Bible timelines, first for the Hebrew Bible, then for the Septuagint translation. Here's the Hebrew Bible timeline:

[11] *Cf.*, Megillah 13a, accessed via the Sefaria library website, https://www.sefaria.org/Megillah.13a.7?lang=bi
[12] *Cf.*, *The Book of Jasher*, ch. LXVIII 24-31: a reprint of Photo Lithographic Reprint of Exact Edition published by J. H. Parry & Company, Salt Lake City, UT, 1887, republished by Artisan Sales, Thousand Oaks, CA, 1988, pp. 203-204.
[13] This article can be read at https://www.arkdiscovery.com/joseph.htm.



Here's the timeline based on the Septuagint translation:



We realize the above charts are too small to read here, so if you click on the links you can access the spreadsheets for a closer look.

Will the Bridegroom Be Delayed, and What Does This Have to Do with Biblical Timelines?

As I compiled the Septuagint's Chronological Timeline, it occurred to me that some will dismiss it due to the "a day is as a thousand years" rule, as outlined in 2 Peter 3:8:

> But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with Yahweh as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

Many folks attribute the above "day is as a thousand years" equation to believing that not only has mankind has been given six *days* to work and do all our labors and the seventh *day* to rest (the weekly

Sabbath), but in the same way, mankind has also been 6,000 *years*, but the next 1,000 *years* belongs to Yahweh and will usher in the Millennium. If we go with the timeline we presented in accordance with the Masoretic Text, our world has not yet completed 6,000 years of existence. I would anticipate the completion of 6,000 years to be around the year 2070 (not that I'm into making predictions).

On the other hand, if we go with the timeline we presented in accordance with the Septuagint, our world completed 6,000 years in the year 813. Moreover, Earth completed 7,000 years in 1813. The year 2024 marks year #7,211. *Surely*, the Septuagint's chronology cannot be correct, or so it might be reasoned. I would say we shouldn't be so certain because we shouldn't forget the "delay factor."

In Matthew chapter 25, we read about ten virgins who waited for a bridegroom, who was delayed in coming:

> 1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
> 2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.
> 3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
> 4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
> 5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
> 6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
> 7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.
> 8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.
> 9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.
> 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.
> 11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Master, Master, open to us.
> 12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.
> 13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

I'm sure the ten virgins all expected the bridegroom to be punctual; after all, why would the bridegroom be late for his wedding? As we know, five of the virgins were foolish and didn't bring any additional oil, apparently assuming they wouldn't need it. They mistakenly assumed He would be "right on time," just as many believers we have encountered do. The other five were prepared with extra oil, just in case there was an unexpected delay. *And there was a delay*. The question is, "Was Yeshua speaking prophetically of His second coming? Will He tarry?"

We hopefully understand that Yeshua is the bridegroom. If He's the bridegroom represented in the parable, we should anticipate the possibility that He will be *delayed*, and not on time. The only question is, "How much of a delay might there be?" We should *always* be prepared, whether He returns in 2370 or 2324.

Conclusion

When I initially composed this study, I *assumed* the chronological experts rightly calculated the general time frame for when the pyramids were built. That date is around 2350 BCE, which would have been *prior* to the Flood, based on the chronology as presented in the Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT). That year would have been approximately 2275 BCE. Many believers, especially the very biased "King James only" faction, are uncompromising in their conviction that the MT chronology cannot be flawed in any way, which in turn means they believe we must summarily reject any alternate chronological timelines as presented in any other versions of the Bible, namely the Septuagint (the LXX). If these same believers unquestioningly accept the general timeline for the pyramids' construction as presented by Egyptian chronologists, they are left with no choice but to believe the pyramids were built before the Flood. And some do.

Creation experts whose writings we have consulted agree the Flood was a cataclysmic event that shook the very core of our planet, forming deep canyons and the highest mountains. No manmade structures could have withstood the extreme forces unleashed by such a colossal event. And yet, one such creation expert, who is also a "King James only" adherent, has been recorded as stating it *may* have been possible for the pyramids to have withstood the Flood. He doesn't explain how any manmade structure could have weathered such a raging outburst, nor does he address how or why the immense stone blocks comprising the pyramids are filled with fossilized sea creatures.

Those who uphold the chronology as found in the Septuagint have no concerns whatsoever about the timeline of when the pyramids were built versus when the Flood occurred, *even if we accept the chronological timeline offered by Egyptian chronologists*. If we believe the Flood occurred in the year 2925 BCE, that year is 575 years ***before*** 2350 BCE, the year submitted by leading chronologists for when the pyramids were constructed.

Not everyone puts their trust in the Egyptian chronologists. Under such questionable circumstances, I prefer to go with the historical record. In fact, I find it extremely bizarre that believers would prefer to ignore historical writings in favor of modern chronologists; nevertheless, that's what is really at stake here. According to the historical record as presented by 5th century BCE historian Herodotus, the pyramids were built by slaves. Could those slaves have included Israelites? According to 1st CE century historian Josephus, the answer is yes.

While I continue to lean towards the LXX chronology as being more accurate than that of the MT, nevertheless, it is true that *regardless* of which version of the Bible you prefer, if we incorporate the historical record into our research and ignore the writings of modern chronologists, we can safely conclude that the pyramids were built *after* the Flood, i.e., somewhere around the year 1626 BCE.

We are so glad Kathy made the trip to Kentucky! It opened the door for us to conduct a serious timeline investigation that we had never done before! The subsequent visit that June and I made to The Ark Encounter in 2023 served to further motivate me to more closely examine potential timeline for when the pyramids may have been built. We now have an ironclad response to anyone arguing that Creationists must believe the pyramids were built before the Flood. The problem is not with the Bible or the historical record—the problem *may well* be traced to the highly suspect dating of Egyptian chronology—the real culprit and catalyst of this controversy.

Truth Seekers