

18th-Dynasty Egyptian Rulers and the Exodus

Ahmose I (r. 1570-1546) During the Hyksos fifteenth dynasty (1663-1555) the pharaohs of the Theban seventeenth dynasty (1663-1570) tried to maintain some control of Upper Egypt. The last of these pharaohs was Khamose (r. 1573-1570). His brother, Ahmose I, followed him as the first pharaoh of the eighteenth dynasty and the New Kingdom. Khamose and Ahmose drove out the last of the Hyksos and reestablished rule by native Egyptians. The lingering Egyptian suspicion and fear of Semitic peoples corresponds with the increasing oppression of the Hebrews during this time.

Amenhotep I (r. 1551-1524); Thutmose I (r. 1524-1518) It was Amenhotep who decreed the slaying of all of Israel's male infants during the time of Moses' birth. Moses was born around 1526, so the policy of male genocide occurred at the end of Amenhotep's rule. Thutmose I, formerly Amenhotep's general, adopted a different policy toward the Hebrews.

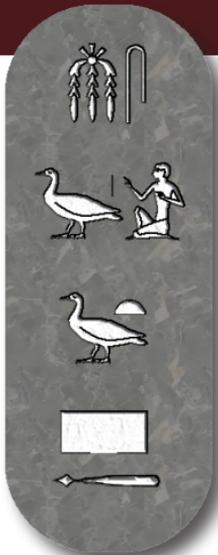
Hatshepsut (r. 1498-1483) When Thutmose II died (r. 1518-1504) the young Thutmose III was heir to the throne. But Hatshepsut, daughter of Thutmose I and both the wife and half-sister of Thutmose II, acted as queen regent for six years. Rather than release control, in 1498 she deposed Thutmose III, declaring that her father had crowned her as pharaoh. Her reign lasted until her death. She must have been a powerful, influential person. The phrase "Daughter of Pharaoh" is probably an official title (cf. "son of Pharaoh's daughter" in Hebrews 11.24). Although it is not necessary to equate Hatshepsut with this daughter of Pharaoh, she fits the story well.

Thutmose III (r. 1504; usurped 1498-1483; sole ruler c. 1482-1450) He deeply resented the reign of his stepmother and continued the military policies of his grandfather. He was involved in extensive building projects and was very antagonistic toward foreigners. In about 1486 Moses fled from Egypt for 40 years and in about 1446 he returned after the threatening king had died (cf. Exodus 2.23-25). Thutmose III of the 18th Dynasty fits this scenario well. His rule lasted long enough for him to be influential at the time Moses fled, yet the timing of his death permitted Moses' return.

Amenhotep II (c. 1453-1419) Amenhotep II fits as the pharaoh of the exodus, the one confronted by Moses upon his return to Egypt. Moses had easy access to the pharaoh when he returned. Amenhotep often lived in this area, garrisoning it against the threat of invasion from the northeast. As a young ruler, Amenhotep would have opened himself to the legendary Moses. It would have been his oldest son that died in the plague.

Thutmose IV (1419-1386) The pharaoh that followed Amenhotep II found it necessary to prove his right to be pharaoh. He is prophesied as the next pharaoh on the Dream Stele near the Sphinx at Gizeh (the sun god promises he will become king if he clears the sand away from the Sphinx). Such a prophecy would not have been necessary if he had been the oldest son and the obvious successor, but it makes sense if the expected heir had died in the tenth plague.

"Pharaoh « Daughter-of « Son-of « Moses"



The Egyptian name *Moses*, in the first line of this proposed cartouche, fits with the names of other eighteenth dynasty rulers (cf. *Ahmose*, *Thutmose*). The cartouches of these kings contain the same two-consonant symbol for the sound "ms"—three joined fox tails. The verb means to give birth, to be drawn out (e.g., *Ahmose*, the moon is born; *Thutmose*, born of the god Thoth). Moses was born (cf. "drawn out", Exodus 2.10) of the Nile.