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WORDS FOR LIVING MINISTRIES

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Dear ones,

I want very much to be in touch with all of you wonderful people; but ever since I was hurt, more than two years ago, it has been extremely difficult. These less expensive, irregular newsletters help to alleviate my frustration.

I am still in Ocean Springs, recovering, and am still not allowed to drive. I am still in therapy to prepare me to drive again and am making good progress. Physical therapy, which I love, is ongoing. I am doing well in preparing to take a very difficult mental, neurological and physical examination. I have abandoned making predictions, but by my birthday (30 November) I hope to be driving. I will be grateful for your prayer to this end. Please pray with me that the Lord will enable me to succeed.

Earlier this month I was able to fly to Branson, MO and attend a reunion of the survivors of the rifle company I was in in the Korean War. It was good to be with the men and their families; there are not many of us left.

Susan and I continue to teach our Bible class which has given birth to our study guide to the Bible. The New Testament is finished, except for final editing; the Old Testament is finished, but I am going over it for the last time, fine-tuning it; I am in Ezra now. Meanwhile, the class requested and is enjoying individual book studies.

We are near the end of Genesis and, in the process, have recently been discussing a fascinating possibility concerning the final chapters. A summary of this follows.

Could Imhotep of Egyptian Archeology Be Joseph of Genesis 39-50?

One attack by critical scholars on the historicity of Genesis is that nowhere in the study of ancient Egyptian records has there been found any mention of Joseph and his rise to power in Egypt. But could the critical scholars be wrong?

In Egyptian archeological history there was a Pharaoh of the 3rd Dynasty (about 2,500 BC) named Djoser. His Regent (assistant and close advisor) is

identified as one Imhotep, who came to the Pharaoh as an 18-year old lad to explain dreams that troubled him

and that he could not understand. Imhotep interpreted the dreams, and predicted a seven-year drought and famine which would follow seven years of plenty. By storing the excess grain in storage silos during the years of plenty, Egypt would have enough grain to survive the seven years of drought and have excess grain to sell to people from Canaan and other countries, for the drought was vast in scope.

The Famine Stela. A stela is an ancient inscription, usually carved in stone. By far the most fascinating single bit of archeological evidence is The Famine Stela, a hieroglyphic inscription carved into a large granite outcrop on Sehel Island in the Nile River. The inscription speaks of Pharaoh Djoser and Imhotep. Although archeologists generally believe that the inscription was done toward the end of the period of the pharaohs, the events it describes are believed to have occurred during the time of Djoser and Imhotep.

The inscription speaks of Djoser's dreams, of an 18-year-old boy named Imhotep who interpreted the dreams and saved Egypt from a disastrous seven-year famine. When all farm land was taken over by Djoser in order for the people to survive, the inscription even



states that only the priests retained ownership of their

land, In these and other ways the inscription is an amazing parallel to the account in Genesis 41.

The Famine Stela on Sehel Island

of the Egyptian records have actually been the Egyptian name for Joseph? We will probably never know until we get to Heaven; but the amazing similarities would be difficult to explain otherwise.

The Chronology Problem. When dealing with dating and chronologies so far into far distant ancient history it is impossible in most cases to be precise. Most scholars who study such things place Djoser and Imhotep in the 3rd Dynasty, or about 2,500 BC; and a fair estimate of the time of the Exodus is about 1,500 BC. This results in an apparent period of about 1,000 years between the two events, thus the "chronology problem."

A Possible Reconciliation of the Problem. The "sojourn" of the children of Israel in Egypt was 430 years before the Exodus (Ex 12:40). Joseph, however, was sold into Egypt a number of years before he brought his family to Egypt. He was there long enough to serve Potiphar and be promoted to the number 2 position in Potiphar's service. Then he was in prison long enough to rise to a position second only to the master of the prison (an unknown period of time). Then he interpreted the dreams of the royal baker and cup bearer, and two more years passed before Pharaoh called him out of prison to interpret his dreams.

After Joseph saved Egypt from famine and was promoted as Pharaoh's Regent (second in authority only to Pharaoh himself) he was given an Egyptian wife, had two sons, and served an unknown number of years, wisely ruling all of Egypt, before Jacob brought his family down to Egypt to begin the 430-year "sojourn."

It is impossible to calculate precisely the number of years that Joseph was in Egypt before his family moved there to begin the 430-year sojourn; but we can estimate with some assurance. By the time Jacob brought his family to Egypt Joseph had grown from a 17-year-old lad to a grown man, was married with two sons, and had become the ruler of Egypt, experienced in solving difficult political, social and economic problems.

It would be reasonable to estimate that Joseph had been in Egypt about 20 years before he brought he brought his family down. If we add those years to the 430 years of the sojourn, that would reduce the "problem" to about 500 years in the gap between the estimated time of Djoser and Imhotep, and Joseph's early adventures with the great famine.

When we consider that the dating of the 3rd Dynasty is only an educated **estimate** reaching back more than 5,000 years, it is possible that there is no chronology

The cleft in the boulder was there when the ancient inscription was made; the text is continuous.

And so, we may wonder, could this Imhotep problem after all. We cannot know; but it is an interesting possibility.

A Dear Friend Is In Heaven

My dear friend and right arm in researching the Jack Hinson story is in Heaven where (I believe) she is young and beautiful again, reunited with her husband Charles Dudley Hinson who is (I believe) young and handsome again, enjoying eternity in one of the many mansions. In searching for the story, when I finally found the family, I met Frances and Dudley (as he was called by friends) and she, an avid local historian, quickly became my research partner and my right arm.

Together we scoured area libraries, visited people she knew who also gave us further leads, historical societies, and followed in Jack's footprints all over Stewart, Houston, Humphreys, Montgomery and Henry Counties. We travelled hundreds of miles, searching out facts that I would never have been able to discover without her. I couldn't take her with me to the National Archives and other far-away sources, but she gave me the heart of the story; and we had a lot of fun in the process. A photo of the two of us "on the trail" is below; I think we were in Danville that day.



The Miracle Van, Tom & Frances Hinson

A FINAL WORD

Treasure and use each day as if it were your last, and never give up hope: God has a limitless supply of new beginnings, and He makes beautiful things out of broken pieces.

*And during this special time of the year
Serve the LORD with gladness, come before His
presence with singing....*

*.... Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into
His courts with praise: **be thankful unto Him, and
bless His name.***

For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations

A small, handwritten signature or set of initials, possibly "JSM", located below the text.