



September 3, 2006

### *The Exodus*

Last week the History Channel ran a two hour presentation of a film by Simcha Jacobovici on the Exodus entitled **The Exodus Decoded**. The film began with the question, “Did it happen?” I watched the film and realized that there were several things that were impressive. First of all was the fact that James Cameron, a Hollywood awarding winning director / filmmaker, had produced the program. During the presentation Cameron appeared several times with his own comments about the work that Jacobovici had done. What was equally impressive was the fact that there was a definite admission that God was behind these events. Not the usual sort of thing you hear from the Hollywood crowd. Jacobovici, like many others, linked the events to natural disasters that are recorded in ancient history but always included God as the force that was behind the events. The end result was the result of over ten years of investigative journalism that did much to reinforce belief in the divine being and the validity of the Bible. There were some errors in the film however and some of the explanations were based on conclusions that Jacobovici had made but it was able to stimulate some thought. One of the errors was in the length of time that passed from Abraham to Moses. This was given as 130 years in the film. We are told that on the day that the Israelites actually left Egypt, they had been in the country for 430 years (**Ex 12.41**). This is not an approximate time. The Bible states that this was on the “*selfsame day*”. If we estimate the time between Abraham and Moses from the record we conclude that Moses was born around 350 years after Abraham. Other minor errors are found in the film as the Exodus text is not strictly adhered to. The high points of the film had to do with depictions of various events. Although there was a naturalistic explanation for these, there was no denial of God’s involvement. One stele in particular, which Jacobovici had to recreate from written records after being denied access to the original, was translated to read that the “gods” of Egypt, in spite of their numbers, were defeated by “God”. Jacobovici made a point of detailing the language of the hieroglyphs as stating, “Not one god, but God.” Three other artifacts presented viewers with a record of a group of people being chased into the midst of waters by chariots followed by a depiction of these waters destroying the pursuers. It was noted that the panels on which these scenes were depicted are housed in three separate museums and not until the film was made were they all brought together to recreate the record. There were also references to the papyrus Ipuwer which records the destruction in Egypt during a time of great catastrophe. Jacobovici also broke from the mainstream of archaeologists who believe that the Pharaoh of the Exodus was Ramses II in favor of the Pharaoh Achmose, who had a son, his firstborn, die suddenly at the age of twelve. The historical timeline generally presented by Egyptologists is problematic in that it presents gaps that cannot be reconciled to the Biblical account using the traditional view of Egyptian history. Jacobovici, by shifting the time of the Exodus from that of Ramses II to Achmose, a period of 300 years, eliminated these in his interpretation of historical artifacts and reconciled the timing with other events that have presented historians with problems in achieving an accurate appraisal of when the Exodus occurred. Jacobovici also offered an alternate location for Mount Sinai and used the Biblical account as a guide for doing this based on the record of the Israelites’ movement out of Egypt. It does not take a film such as this to convince Bible believers of what we already accept as fact, nor is it surprising that this reconciles problems in history created by others who do not wish to accept the Biblical account. It was refreshing to see someone use their resources to seriously present Biblical events without the usual denial of their existence in a well done and polished manner.

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