

War of the Worldviews

Part 1:

The Serpent Conflict
with Pharaoh

King Tut's Chariot



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Amenemhat III's Pyramid



Israel Enslaved by Pharaoh

From an Egyptian wisdom poem: “Satire on the Trades”

The poet says of the brick worker: “He is dirtier than vines or pigs from treading under the mud, his clothes are stiff with clay, his leather belt is going to ruin, entering into the wind he is miserable, his sides ache, his arms are destroyed with technical work, he washes himself only once a season, he is wretched through and through.”

Pharaoh Who?!?
Why Doesn't Moses Tell
Us Who Pharaoh Was?

Pharaoh Who?!?

Who was Horatio Gates?

Who was Benedict Arnold?

Both were generals of the victorious and decisive Revolutionary War battle of Saratoga. Which one is better known among Americans? Why?

Some cultures record & remember their enemies / infamous:

America, Germany, Assyria, later Israelite prophets
Some cultures attempt to erase the memory of the

infamous:

Soviet Union, Rome, ancient Egypt, Mosaic history

The Romans call this practice *Damnatio Memoriae*

Damnatio Memoriae: USSR



Damnatio Memoriae: USSR



Damnatio Memoriae: USSR



Damnatio Memoriae: USSR



Damnatio Memoriae: USSR



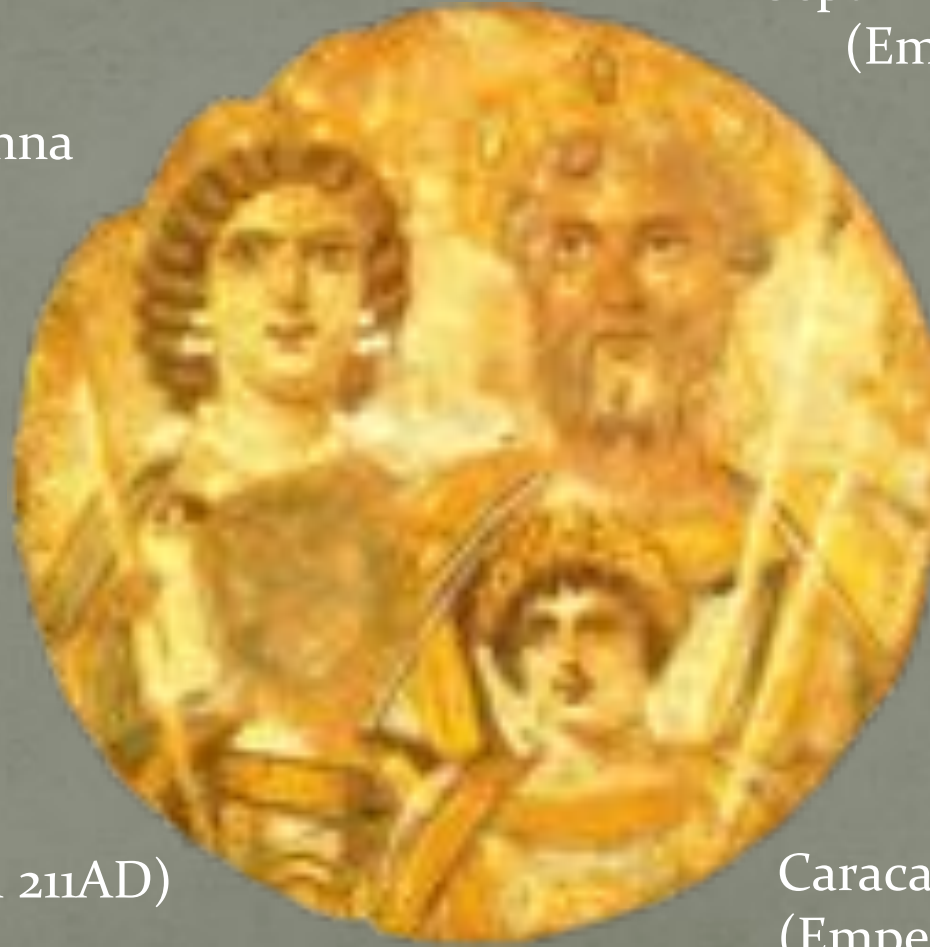
Damnatio Memoriae: USSR



Damnatio Memoriae: Rome

Septimius Severus
(Emperor, 193-211AD)

Julia Domna



Geta (murdered in 211AD)

Caracalla
(Emperor, 198-217AD)

Damnatio Memoriae: Hatshepsut



The Most Famous Pharaoh Of All

Ancient Egypt Interactive Mind Game:

Name the first Pharaoh who comes to mind.

Who answered King Tut? Pharaoh Tutankhamun?

Why?

His tomb was the only royal tomb ever found intact.



Why?



Tutankhamun's name was erased from Egyptian history by his successor, Ay. Therefore, no grave robbers (or early archaeologists) knew of his existence.

Damnatio Memoriae: Old Testament

Moses refers to Pharaoh 162 times, but names him never

- No Pharaoh is named until Pharaoh Neco (II Kings 23, Jeremiah 46), Pharaoh Hophra (Jeremiah 44), long after King David
- Likewise, Assyrian and Babylonian kings were named

Exodus 17:14 Then the Lord said to Moses, “I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.”

Hosea 2:17 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more.

Zechariah 13:2 “And on that day, declares the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, so that they shall be remembered no more.

Damnatio Memoriae: Old Testament

By contrast, Moses preserves the name of Joseph's Egyptian wife Asenath (mother of two tribes in Israel)

Exodus 1:15 Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah

Exodus 20:24 In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you.

Psalms 83:4 They say, "Come, let us wipe them out as a nation; let the name of Israel be remembered no more!"

Psalms 45:17 I will cause your name to be remembered in all generations; therefore nations will praise you forever and ever.

War with Pharaoh

Pharaoh = *pa'ra* = ancient Egyptian, “Big House”

Refers to the office rather than the individual

Much like referring to the “White House” suggests the administration of the President, the role rather than the person

God is waging war with Pharaoh, with the gods of Egypt

A war of worldviews / spiritual warfare

**God's Covenant with Israel is a *spiritual*
*Covenant***

God's salvation of Israel is *spiritual and physical*

Serpent Confrontation

Serpent Confrontation

Exodus 7:8-13 8 Then the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 9 “When Pharaoh says to you, ‘Prove yourselves by working a miracle,’ then you shall say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and cast it down before Pharaoh, that it may become a serpent.’” 10 So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the Lord commanded. Aaron cast down his staff before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. 11 Then Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and they, the magicians of Egypt, also did the same by their secret arts. 12 For each man cast down his staff, and they became serpents. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs. 13 Still Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he would not listen to them, as the Lord had said.

Pharaoh is unimpressed

His own magicians replicate the miracle

How?

Power of Satan? Demonic power?

Egyptian Magician's Serpent Staff

British Museum

Bronze staff in the shape of a uraeus

Egypt, early 18th Dynasty, 1550-1291 BC

From Thebes, Upper Egypt

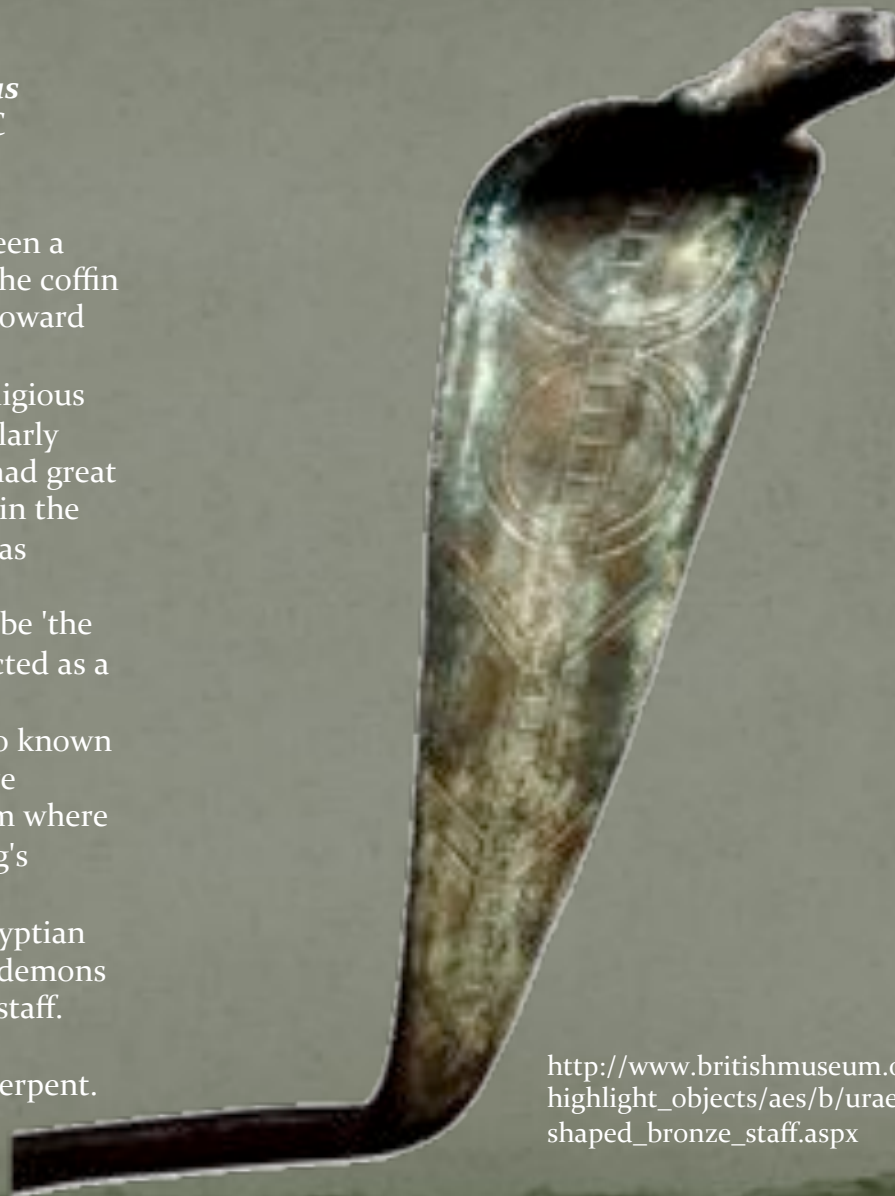
This unique item is thought to have been a magician's wand. It was found inside the coffin of Mentuhotep by the archaeologist Howard Carter in 1911.

In ancient Egyptian mythology and religious iconography the serpent was a particularly potent image, so this staff must have had great ritual significance. Other items found in the tomb with it suggest that the owner was indeed a magician.

The serpent *uraeus* was considered to be 'the great enchantress' and was often depicted as a cobra with a human head (as on Tutankhamun's shrine), but it was also known for its protective attributes. It therefore appeared on the pharaoh's crown, from where it could spit fire and venom at the king's enemies.

There are many representations on Egyptian papyri and wall paintings of gods and demons holding serpents which resemble this staff.

There is also a biblical account of the metamorphosis of Moses' staff into a serpent.



http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aes/b/uraeus-shaped_bronze_staff.aspx

Egyptian Magician's Serpent Staff

Snake charmers put snakes into trance state, even into modern times



http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/aes/b/uraeus-shaped_bronze_staff.aspx

Pharaoh's Uraeus Crown



A newly enthroned Pharaoh would address the serpent uraeus-crown thusly: “O Red Crown, O Inu, O Great One, O Magician, O Fiery Snake! Let there be terror of me like the terror of thee. Let there be fear of me like the fear of thee. Let there be awe of me like the awe of thee.” (Currid, 92)

The Serpent Represented Pharaoh's Power

“Dreadful is thy serpent-crest
among them [Pharaoh's enemies];
the war-mace is in thy right
hand.” (of Ramses III, Currid , 90)

Ezekiel 29:3 “This is what the Sovereign
Lord says: ‘I am against you, Pharaoh,
king of Egypt, you great serpent, lying
among your streams. You say ‘The Nile
is mine; I made it for myself.’”



The Pharaoh as All-Knowing

From a stele demanding worship of Amenemhat III (possibly the Pharaoh who tried to kill Moses)
“Worship Ni-Maat-Re [Amenemhat], living forever, within your bodies, and associate with his majesty in your hearts. He is perception which is in men’s hearts, and his eyes search out every body. He is Re, by whose beams one sees, He is one who illumines the two lands more than the sun disc... He who is to be is his creation, for he is the Khnum of all bodies.”

(Currid, 93)



But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” Genesis 3:4

Serpent Confrontation

Pharaoh's claims:

Horus on earth, Seed of the woman (Isis)
god incarnate, god among men, god with us
Egypt's guardian, protector, savior, prophet, priest, and king
the physical manifestation of the gods
Pharaoh is to Egypt what Christ is to Christianity

“The hostilities were not primarily between Moses and Pharaoh, or between Moses and the Egyptian magicians, or for that matter between Israel and Egypt. What the serpent contest portrays is a heavenly combat – a war between the God of the Hebrews and the deities of Egypt.” (Currid, *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament*, 86)

On all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord.

Exodus 12:12

On their gods also the Lord executed judgments.

Number 33:4

Pharaoh's Heart Hardened

Ex. 7:13 Pharaoh's heart was hardened

Ex. 7:14 Pharaoh's heart is hardened

Ex. 7:22 So Pharaoh's heart remained hardened

Ex. 8:15 When Pharaoh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart

Ex. 8:19 But Pharaoh's heart was hardened

Ex. 8:32 But Pharaoh hardened his heart this time also

Ex. 9:7 But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened

Ex. 9:12 But the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh

Ex. 9:34 He sinned yet again and hardened his heart, he and his servants.

Ex. 9:35 So the heart of Pharaoh was hardened

Ex. 10:1 [the Lord] "I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants

Ex. 10:20 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart

Ex. 10:27 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart

Ex. 11:10 And the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart

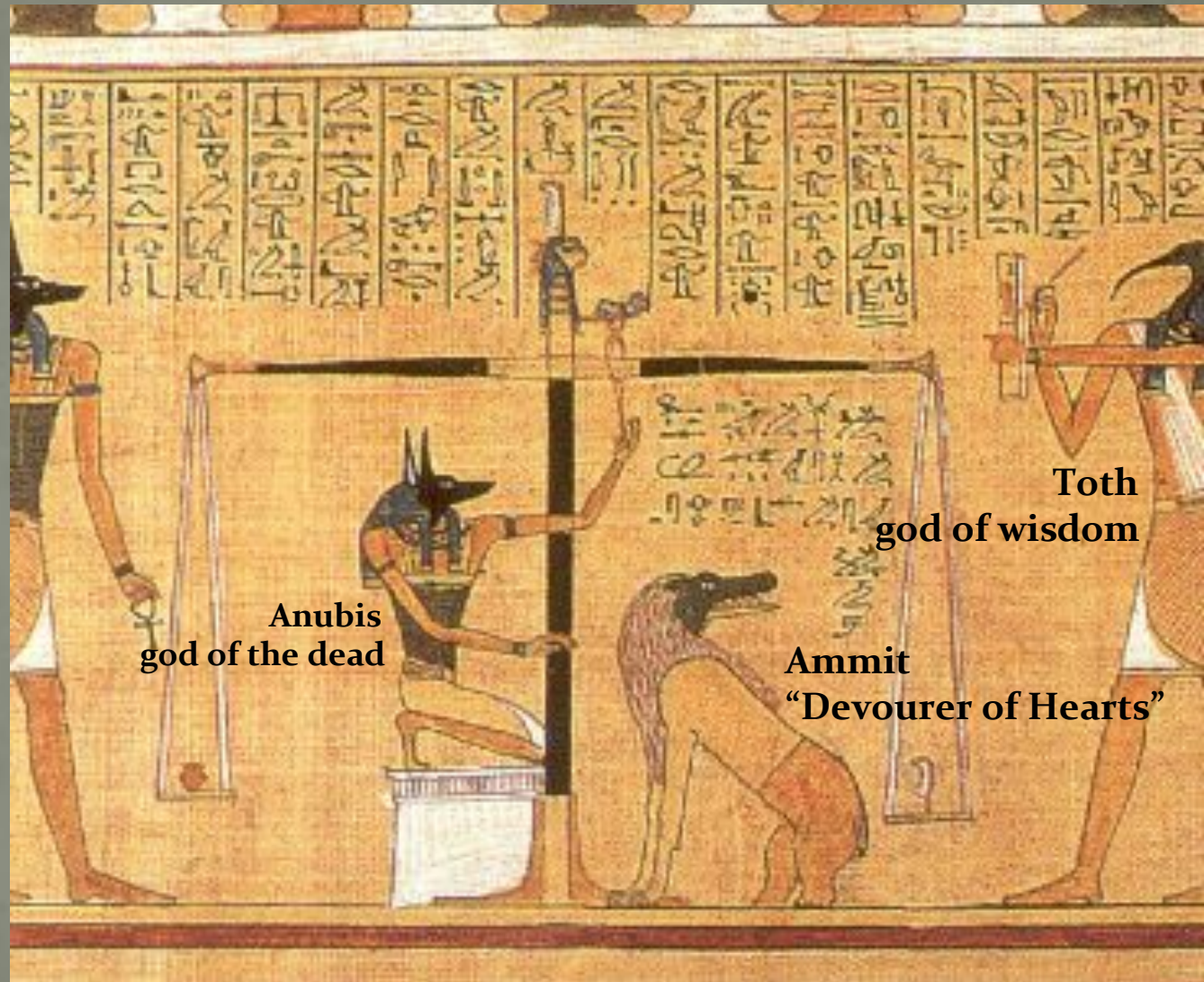
Ex. 14:4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart

Ex. 14:8 And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt

Ex. 14:17 And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians

Pharaoh's Heart was made Heavy

This detail scene, from the Papyrus of Hunefer (ca. 1275 B.C.), shows the scribe Hunefer's heart being weighed on the scale of Maat against the feather of truth, by the jackal-headed Anubis. The Ibis-headed Thoth, scribe of the gods, records the result. If his heart is lighter than the feather, Hunefer is allowed to pass into the afterlife. If not, he is eaten by the waiting chimeric devouring creature Ammit composed of the deadly crocodile, lion, and hippopotamus. Vignettes such as these were a common illustration in Egyptian books of the dead.



Anubis
god of the dead

Toth
god of wisdom

Ammit
"Devourer of Hearts"

Osiris, Judge of the Dead



Osiris,
Judge of the Dead,
The Book of the Dead

Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York City
photo by Michael Pixley

Pharaoh's Heart was made Heavy

The Egyptians believed in works-based goodness and salvation, in the lightness of heart representing purity from sin. God, however, was judging Pharaoh and his heart was found heavy-laden with sin.



Weighing of the heart ritual, Book of the Dead
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, photo by Michael Pixley

Ammit: Devourer of Hearts



Ammit,
“Devourer of Hearts”
The Book of the Dead

Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York City
photo by Michael Pixley

Ammit swallows the heavy
(hard) heart

Pharaoh hardened his heart

God hardened Pharaoh’s heart

Aaron’s staff serpent swallowed
Pharaoh’s serpents

Pharaoh was swallowed by the
Red Sea

A Spiritual / Worldview Battle

This was not merely a physical battle with Pharaoh, played out with plagues

This was a spiritual battle between competing worldviews

The plagues represent spiritual assaults on Egypt's pagan nature-deities

This war of worldviews has played out through history and is still raging

The battle started with an assault on Pharaoh's power and authority in the serpent confrontation.

It continued with assaults on Egypt's pagan gods and pagan worldview

**God's Covenant with Israel is a *spiritual*
Covenant**

God's salvation of Israel is *spiritual and physical*

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. -

Ephesians 6:12