

## STUDY PACK 12

### EGYPT

“The Egyptians had no word for the state. The word state is too limited to express the divine order which their land, government, and ruler expressed. What for us would be slavery to the state meant for them divine order and man’s only hope. Man could not transcend that social order; beyond it or outside it, he was nothing. It was his life. A man might fret at his conditions, but anything outside of his life in the state was for him unimaginable. This faith was written by the vizier Rekhmire in his tomb: “What is the king of Upper and Lower Egypt? \_\_\_\_\_ by whose dealings one lives, \_\_\_\_\_, alone by himself without an equal.” The state was the expression not only of the will of the gods but of the powers of nature. Religion being completely identified with the life of the state, man was man not in terms of transcendental God but only in terms of a divine state and its social order. Man’s happiness was in harmony with this order. As Henri Frankfort has written, in \_\_\_\_\_, “The Egyptian way of life ... appears as one not of struggle but of harmony. Within the all-inclusive unity of nature and society man could move with dignity, safety, and happiness.”  
~ Rousas J. Rushdoony, *World History Notes*, p.13. ~

#### I. THE RIVER NILE

- A. The name of Egypt among Egyptians is \_\_\_\_\_. Mizraim was Ham’s son, Gen. 10:6, and he likely began the settlement of Egypt.
- B. Egypt is often called the \_\_\_\_\_.

The Nile Valley is often said to have \_\_\_\_\_. During ancient times the Sahara region (now a desolate desert) was fertile farm land. It was stripped of forests and vegetation by overuse, but the Nile Valley continued to flourish and it became the key to the economy of the region.

The Nile River \_\_\_\_\_. It is also one of the few rivers in the world which flows south to north. The Nile is the heart of the land of Egypt. It flows approximately 750 miles from its source to the Mediterranean Sea and ends with a broad delta branching out to the sea. The country of Egypt has little rain, but the mighty Nile overflows its banks every summer and deposits rich soil for five to ten miles from its flow. The early Egyptians did not know that the floods came from melting snows and heavy rains near its source. They believed that a god caused the river to overflow, and therefore \_\_\_\_\_. Down through the years and especially under the pharaohs, the Egyptians built dams and irrigation ditches along the Nile in order to expand their agricultural output.

#### II. EGYPTIAN RELIGION

The principles of paganism are seen taking hold at an early period in Egypt. From the earliest records we find the priests of Egypt leading the people in nature worship. The Egyptians taught that men evolved and that the gods were men who had evolved into a divine state. The Pharaoh was \_\_\_\_\_. The state was the solution to all of man’s problems.

Egyptian religion is described in 2 Timothy 3:1-8.

As the god of Egypt, the pharaoh \_\_\_\_\_ (although frequent grants were made to temples and private persons), controlled the irrigation system, decided when the fields should be sown, and received the surplus from the crops produced on the huge royal estates.

This surplus supported a large corps of specialists – administrators, priests, scribes, artists, artisans, and merchants – who labored in the service of the pharaoh.

The people’s welfare was thought to rest on \_\_\_\_\_.  
“If you want to know what to do in life,” advised one Egyptian writer, “cling to the pharaoh and be loyal ...”

The belief that the pharaoh was a god led to the practice of mummification and the construction of colossal tombs – the pyramids – to preserve the pharaoh’s embalmed body for eternity.

The ritual of mummification restored vigor and activity to the dead pharaoh; it was his passport to eternity: “You live again, you live again forever, here you are young once more forever.”

The pyramid tombs, in particular those of the Fourth Dynasty at Gizeh near Memphis, which are the most celebrated of all ancient monuments, reflect the great power and wealth of the Old Kingdom pharaohs.

### III. PREDYNASTIC EGYPT

By 3000 B.C. villagers had begun to build dikes and a canal network to control the Nile for irrigation. As population grew, a central authority was required because this necessary work involved many communities.

Two distinct kingdoms emerged: Lower Egypt comprised \_\_\_\_\_ north of Memphis, while Upper Egypt extended southward along the narrow twenty-mile-wide valley as far as the first cataract at Syene (Aswan).

Each kingdom contained about a score of tribal districts, or nomes, which had formerly been ruled by independent chieftains.

The Predynastic period ended soon after 3100 B.C. when Menes (also known as Narmer), ruler of Upper Egypt, united the two kingdoms and founded the First Dynasty with its capital at Memphis. As little is known of these first two dynasties, the period is called \_\_\_\_\_.

### IV. THE OLD KINGDOM

The kings of the Third through the Sixth Dynasties – the period called the Old Kingdom or Pyramid Age – firmly established order and stability and the essential elements of Egyptian civilization.

The nobility lost its independence, and \_\_\_\_\_, or pharaoh (Per-ao, “Great House”). The pharaoh was considered a god rather than the human agent of a god, as was usual in Mesopotamia.

## **V. THE MIDDLE KINGDOM—2050 B.C. – 1800 B.C.**

Egypt was rescued from anarchy by the pharaohs of the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties, who reunited the country and ruled from Thebes. Stressing their role as watchful shepherds of the people, the Middle Kingdom pharaohs claimed to promote the welfare of the downtrodden.

One of them claimed: “I gave to the destitute and brought up the orphan. I caused him who was nothing to reach [his goal], like him who was [somebody].” No longer was the nation’s wealth expended on huge pyramids, but on public works.

The largest of these, a drainage and irrigation project in the marshy Fayum district south of Memphis, resulted in the reclamation of 27,000 acres of arable land. Moreover, a concession that has been called “the democratization of the hereafter” gave the lower classes the right to have their bodies mummified and thereby to enjoy immortality like the pharaohs and the nobility.

## **VI. THE HYKSOS**

Egyptian history went through a period of quiet ending at approximately 1800 B.C. when the Hyksos conquered the land and ruled until about 1600 B.C. The barbarian tribe was \_\_\_\_\_. It was probably under a friendly Hyksos king that Joseph rose to his high position in the government. \_\_\_\_\_ were probably introduced into Egypt at this time by the Hyksos. A rise in nationalism and the beginning of an aggressive military period resulted in the overthrow of the Hyksos.

## **VII. THE NEW KINGDOM—1570 – 1090 B.C.**

Egypt overthrew the Hyksos and became a strong, aggressive, nationalist state. \_\_\_\_\_ developed.

## **VIII. PERIOD OF DECADENCE—1090 - 332 B.C.**

During the early part of the Period of Decadence, the Amon priesthood at Thebes became so strong that the high priest was able to found his own dynasty and to rule over Upper Egypt.

At the same time, merchant princes set up a dynasty of their own in the Delta. Libyans from the west moved into central Egypt, where in 940 B.C. they established a dynasty whose founder, Shishak, was a contemporary of King Solomon of Israel.

Two centuries later Egypt was conquered by the black Kushites of Nubia, who established the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty and ruled from Napata, near the Fourth Cataract. Kushite domination ended in 671 B.C., when the Assyrians of Mesopotamia made Egypt a province of their empire.

## **IX. THE LATER HISTORY OF EGYPT**

Egypt was conquered by the Persians and incorporated into the Persian Empire. After the Persian Empire was conquered by Alexander the Great, Egypt came under Greek control. For several centuries Egypt had more in common with Europe than Africa or the Arab world. Eventually, Egypt was conquered and forced into the Roman Empire.

**Acts 17:23-24:** For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. <sup>24</sup>God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;