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Two Brothers Reflection

“Come, let us spend an hour lying down. It will be beneficial for you.” (Page 6)

This ancient story had similarities to Joseph’s story in the Book of Genesis in the Bible. When Anubis’ wife attempts to seduce his little brother Bata, Bata vehemently refuses her advances. Bata claims that he looks at her as a mother figure and Anubis like a father; he would never betray his brother like that. In response to his rejection, Anubis’ wife tells Anubis that Bata attempted to sleep with her, and she rejects him. In response to her alleged rejection, she was beaten by Bata in order to keep her quiet. As a result, Anubis prepares to kill his brother for his supposed betrayal. This part of the story mirrors Joseph’s conflict with Potiphar’s wife.

Potiphar’s wife tries to seduce Joseph while he is under Potiphar as his personal servant. Joseph also refuses to sleep with Potiphar’s wife. She uses this opportunity to frame Joseph for rape.

The aftermath of these stories differs, however. In Bata’s situation, he ends up running away from his brother, who intends to kill him. He prays to the sun god Pre-Harakhty for protection against his brother because he is innocent. Pre-Harakhty creates a crocodile-infested river to separate the two brothers. To prove his innocence to his older brother, Bata castrates himself and throws his genitals into the water. This measure, while extreme, helps his brother to see the truth.

On the other hand, Joseph is imprisoned for Potiphar’s wife’s accusation. However, one similarity between these two outcomes is that divinity intervenes in the fate of both characters.

Pre-Harakhty protects Bata because he is innocent, while Genesis chapter 39 states that the Lord was with Joseph. I find it very interesting that these ancient texts we have been reading in class (Gilgamesh and Tale of Two Brothers) contain similarities to the Bible. It makes me wonder how these stories have come to be so similar. In addition, I can't help but wonder which of these stories came first and if that has anything to do with how historians view the credibility of the Bible itself. (Disclaimer: I believe that the Bible is the Word of God and everything in it is the Truth and God-breathed)