

Josephos, *Against Apion*:

Manetho's and Chaeremon's account of the "Exodus"

(Chaeremon's account begins on page 279)

(26) The first writer, on whom I propose to dwell at some length, is one whose evidence has already served me a little way back ^a to prove our antiquity—I mean Manetho. This author, having promised to translate the history of Egypt from the sacred books, begins by stating that our ancestors entered Egypt in their myriads and subdued the inhabitants, and goes on to admit that they were afterwards driven out of the country, occupied what is now Judaea, founded Jerusalem, and built the temple. So far apparently identifies the Hycsos with the ancestors of the Jews (§ 103).

(i.) Calumnies of
MANETHO

^b Or "nations."

^c Cf. e.g. Juvenal, *Sat.* xv., and *Ap.* ii. 65 below.

^d § 73.

he followed the chronicles ; but at this point, under the pretext of recording fables and current reports about the Jews, he took the liberty of introducing some incredible tales, wishing to represent us as mixed up with a crowd of Egyptian lepers and others, who for various maladies ^a were condemned, as he asserts, to banishment from the country. Inventing ^b a king named Amenophis, an imaginary person, the date of whose reign he consequently did not venture to fix (although he adds the exact years of the other kings whom he mentions), he attaches to him certain legends, having presumably forgotten that he has already stated that the departure of the shepherds for Jerusalem took place 518 years previously.^c For it was in the reign of Tethmosis ^d that they left, and, according to Manetho, the succeeding reigns covered a period of 393 years ^e down to the two brothers, Sethos and Hermaeus,^f the former of whom, he says, took the name of Aegyptus and the latter that of Danaus.^g Sethos, after expelling Hermaeus, reigned fifty-nine years, and his eldest son Rampses, who succeeded him, sixty-six. Thus after admitting that all those years had elapsed since our forefathers left Egypt, he now interpolates this fictitious Amenophis.

on the
exodus from
Egypt.

Story of
Amenophis
and the
lepers.

(§ 232-250). The identification of the Amenophis under whom the second expulsion took place is doubtful, but Josephus is not justified in calling him "an imaginary person." Manetho has already mentioned three kings of that name (§ 95-97). Josephus, notwithstanding his criticism, clearly, by his calculation of an interval of 518 years (= 393 + 59 + 66, § 231 f.), identified him with a later Amenophis IV. This, according to most commentators, was also the identification of Manetho. Reinach, however, gives reasons to show that Manetho identified him with Amenophis III (§ 97).

^a § 94 ; = Thoummosis, § 88.

^e Cf. § 103.

^f Called Harmais §§ 98 ff.

^g § 102.

This king, he states, wishing to be granted, like Or,^a one of his predecessors on the throne, a vision of the gods, communicated his desire to his namesake, Amenophis, son of Paapis,^b whose wisdom and knowledge of the future were regarded as marks of divinity. This namesake replied that he would be able to see the gods if he purged the entire country of lepers and other polluted persons. Delighted at hearing this, the king collected all the maimed people in Egypt, numbering 80,000, and sent them to work in the stone-quarries^c on the east of the Nile, segregated from the rest of the Egyptians. They included, he adds, some of the learned priests, who were afflicted with leprosy. Then this wise seer Amenophis was seized with a fear that he would draw down the wrath of the gods on himself and the king if the violence done to these men were detected; and he added a prediction that the polluted people would find certain allies who would become masters of Egypt for thirteen years. He did not venture to tell this himself to the king, but left a complete statement in writing, and then put an end to himself. The king was greatly disheartened.

Then Manetho proceeds (I quote his actual words):

“ When the men in the stone-quarries had probably confused with the god Horus. Herodotus (ii. 42) tells a similar story of Heracles in Egypt desiring a vision of the Theban Zeus (Amun).

^b Apparently a historical person, viz. Amenothos (or Amenophis), son of Hapi, minister of Amenophis III, whose statue with an inscription was discovered by Mariette (Maspero, *Hist. ancienne*, 1897, ii. 299, 448; quoted by Reinach).

^c Cf. Herod. ii. 8.

tinued long in misery, the king acceded to their request to assign them for habitation and protection the abandoned city of the shepherds, called Auaris, and according to an ancient theological tradition dedicated to Typhon.^a Thither they went, and, having now a place to serve as a base for revolt, they appointed as their leader one of the priests of Heliopolis called Osarsiph,^b and swore to obey all his orders. By his first law he ordained that they should not worship the gods nor abstain from the flesh of any of the animals held in special reverence in Egypt, but should kill and consume them all, and that they should have no connexion with any save members of their own confederacy. After laying down these and a multitude of other laws, absolutely opposed to Egyptian custom, he ordered all hands to repair the city walls and make ready for war with King Amenophis. Then, in concert with other priests and polluted persons like himself, he sent an embassy to the shepherds, who had been expelled by Tethmosis, in the city called Jerusalem, setting out the position of himself and his outraged companions, and inviting them to join in a united expedition against Egypt. He undertook to escort them first to their ancestral home at Auaris, to provide abundant supplies for their multitudes, to fight for them when the moment came, and without difficulty to reduce the country to submission. The shepherds, delighted

^a Cf. §§ 78, 86.

^b Although Osarsiph plays the part of, and is identified with, Moses (§ 250), the name, as Reinach suggests, looks like a transformation of Joseph, the Egyptian Osiris being substituted for the first syllable, incorrectly regarded as derived from the Hebrew JAH.

with the idea, all eagerly set off in a body numbering 200,000 men, and soon reached Auaris.

“The news of their invasion sorely perturbed Amenophis, king of Egypt, who recalled the prediction of Amenophis, son of Paapis. He began by assembling the Egyptians, and, after deliberation with their chiefs, sent for the sacred animals which were held in most reverence in the temples, and instructed the priests in each district to conceal the images of the gods as securely as possible. His five-year-old son Sethos, also called Ramesses after his grandfather Ra(m)pses,^a he entrusted to the care of a ^b friend. He then crossed [the Nile, with] 300,000 of the most efficient warriors of Egypt and met the enemy. Instead, however, of engaging them, he, under the belief that he was about to fight against the gods, turned back and repaired to Memphis. There he picked up Apis and the other sacred animals which he had ordered to be brought thither, and at once, with all his army and the Egyptian population, started up country for Ethiopia, whose king was under obligation to him and at his service. The latter made him welcome and maintained the whole multitude with all the products of the country suitable for human consumption, assigned them cities and villages sufficient for the destined period of thirteen years’ banishment from the realm, and moreover ^c

^a The genealogy here given supports Reinach’s opinion that the King Amenophis of this story (according to Josephus an imaginary person, § 230)=Amenophis III (cf. § 97).

^b Literally, “his”; (?) the king of Ethiopia named later.

^c Or “above all.”

stationed an Ethiopian army on the Egyptian frontier to protect King Amenophis and his subjects.

“Such was the condition of affairs in Ethiopia. Meanwhile the Solymites ^a came down ^b with the polluted Egyptians, and treated the inhabitants in so sacrilegious a manner that the regime of the shepherds seemed like a golden age ^c to those who now beheld the impieties of their present enemies. Not only did they set cities and villages on fire, not only did they pillage the temples and mutilate the images of the gods, but, not content with that, they habitually used the very sanctuaries as kitchens for roasting the venerated sacred animals, and forced the priests and prophets to slaughter them and cut their throats, and then turned them out naked. It is said that the priest who gave them a constitution and code of laws was a native of Heliopolis, named Osarsiph ^d after the Heliopolitan god Osiris, and that when he went over to this people he changed his name and was called Moses.”

(27) Such and much more, which, for brevity's sake, I omit, is Egyptian gossip about the Jews. Manetho adds that Amenophis subsequently advanced from Ethiopia with a large army, his son Rampses at the head of another, and that the two attacked and defeated the shepherds and their polluted allies, killing many of them and pursuing the remainder to the frontiers of Syria. That, with more of a similar kind, is Manetho's account. Before

^a *i.e.* the inhabitants of Hierosolyma (§ 241); *cf.* §§ 173 f. with note.

^b Or “back.” ^c Literally, “gold.” ^d *Cf.* § 238.

proceeding to show the manifest absurdity and untruthfulness of his statements, I will make one preliminary observation, which bears on the replies to be made later on to other authors. Manetho has granted us one fact. He has admitted that our race was not of Egyptian origin, but came into Egypt from elsewhere, conquered it, and afterwards left it. The further facts that we were not, in the sequel, mixed up with Egyptian cripples, and that Moses, the leader of our people, so far from being one of them, lived many generations earlier, I shall now endeavour to prove from Manetho's own statements.

(28) At the outset, the very hypothesis of his fictitious story is ridiculous. King Amenophis, he says, desired to see the gods. What gods? If those established by their law are intended—bull, goat, crocodiles, and dog-faced baboons—he saw them already. Or the celestial gods—how could he have seen them? And why had he this passionate desire? Because, forsooth,^a another king^b before him had seen them. He had^c therefore learnt from his predecessor what they were like and how he saw them; consequently no new method of procedure was required. Again, the seer, by whose help the king hoped to achieve his end, was a sage. How was it then that he failed to foresee the impossibility of attaining it? For it was not realized. And what ground was there for attributing the invisibility of the gods to the presence of mutilated persons or lepers? Impiety excites their wrath, not physical deformities. Then, how could 80,000 lepers and which sounds strange in a Jewish work, recurs (according to the restored text) in *Ap.* ii. 263.

^b Or (§ 232).

^c Possibly we should insert *ἄν*, "would therefore have learnt."

Criticism
of
Manetho's
story. Its
various
absurdities

invalids be collected in practically a single day ^a? And why did the king neglect the seer's advice? The latter had bidden him banish the cripples from Egypt, whereas the king put them into the quarries, like one in need of labourers, rather than one who was determined to purge his country. Manetho further states that the seer killed himself, because he foresaw the anger of the gods and the fate in store for Egypt, leaving to the king his prediction in writing. Then how was it that the seer did not divine his own death from the first? Why did he not at once oppose the king's desire to see the gods? Was it reasonable to fear misfortunes that were not to happen in his lifetime? Or what worse fate could have befallen him than the suicide he was in such a hurry to commit?

But let us consider the most ludicrous item in the whole story. Notwithstanding the warning he had received and his dread of the future, the king even then did not expel from the country the cripples, of whose presence he had been already told to purge Egypt, but instead gave them at their request a city called Auaris, once (according to Manetho) the residence of the shepherds. Here, he continues, they assembled, and chose for their leader one who had formerly been a priest of Heliopolis; and by him were instructed not to worship the gods nor to abstain from the flesh of the animals revered in Egypt, but to kill and devour them all, and to have no connexion with any save members of their own confederacy. Then, after binding his followers by oath faithfully to abide by these laws, he fortified

^a This is not mentioned in § 234.

Auaris and declared war on the king. He also, adds Manetho, sent an invitation to the inhabitants of Jerusalem to make an alliance with him, promising them the city of Auaris, as the ancestral home of any recruits from Jerusalem, and as a base from which to become masters of the whole of Egypt. Thereupon, he proceeds, they brought up an army of 200,000 men, and Amenophis, king of Egypt, thinking it wrong to fight against the gods, fled forthwith to Ethiopia, after entrusting Apis and some of the other sacred animals to the custody of the priests. The Jerusalemites then overran the country, destroyed the cities, burnt down the temples, massacred the priests, and in short indulged in every kind of crime and brutality. The priest who gave them a constitution and a code was, according to Manetho, a native of Heliopolis, named Osarsiph after the Heliopolitan god Osiris, but changed his name to Moses. Thirteen years later—that being the destined period of his exile—Amenophis, says our author, advanced from Ethiopia with a large army, attacked and defeated the shepherds and their polluted allies, and pursued them, with great slaughter, to the Syrian frontier.

(29) Here again the author is unconscious of the improbability of his fictitious tale. However indignant the lepers and their horde may formerly have been with the king and the others who had, under the seer's directions, so ill-treated them, yet surely on emerging from the stone-quarries and being pre-

² *ed. pr.* : καταβαλλόμενος L.

³ Om, Lat.

sented by him with a city and land, their feelings towards him would have been mollified. Even supposing their hatred of him still persisted, they would have conspired against him alone, and not have declared war on the whole nation, which must obviously have included very many relations of their numerous body. Granted that they decided on war with the Egyptians, they would never have ventured to make war on their gods, nor would they have framed laws directly opposed to the national code under which they had been brought up. However, we must be grateful to Manetho for stating that this violation of the laws originated, not with the immigrants from Jerusalem, but with the Egyptians themselves, and that it was their priests in particular who conceived the idea and administered the oath to the people.

Again, how absurd to suppose that, while none of their own relations and friends joined in the revolt and shared the perils of war, these pariahs sent to Jerusalem and obtained recruits from that quarter! What alliance, what connexion existed previously between them? On the contrary, these people were enemies, and their customs utterly opposed to their own. Yet, says Manetho, they lent a ready ear to the promise that they should occupy Egypt, as if they were not intimately acquainted with the country from which they had been forcibly expelled! Had they been in straitened circumstances or unfortunate, they might, conceivably, have undertaken the risk; but inhabiting, as they did, an opulent city and enjoying the fruits of an extensive country, superior

to Egypt, what inducement could there be to hazard their lives in support of their former foes, those maimed cripples, whom not one even of their own people would tolerate? For of course they did not foresee that the king would take flight. On the contrary, the author himself has told us that the son of Amenophis ^a marched to Pelusium to meet them at the head of 300,000 men. Of his approach the advancing enemy would undoubtedly be aware; how could they possibly conjecture that he would change his mind and flee? After conquering Egypt, our author proceeds, the Jerusalem invaders committed many horrible crimes; and for these he reproaches them, as though he had not brought them on to the scene as enemies, or as if actions when performed by imported foreigners deserved reprobation, which before their arrival were being performed by the native Egyptians, who had sworn to continue the practice. In the sequel, however, Amenophis returned to the charge, won a battle, and drove the enemy back, with slaughter, to Syria. So easy a prey, it appears, is Egypt to invaders from whatever quarter! And yet its former conquerors, though aware that Amenophis was alive, neither fortified the passes between it and Ethiopia, notwithstanding their ample resources for the purpose, nor had the rest of their army in readiness! Amenophis, says our author, pursued them to Syria, killing them all the way, across the sandy desert. But the difficulty of marching an army across the desert, even without a battle, is notorious.

^a Rather, Amenophis himself, the son being only five years old (§ 245); probably written *per incuriam*. Reinach reads "he," regarding "of Amenophis" as a misplaced gloss on "the king" in the previous line.

(30) We have therefore Manetho's authority for saying both that our race was not of Egyptian origin,^a and that there was no mixture of the races. For, presumably, many of the lepers and other sick folk died during that long period of hardship in the quarries, many more in the subsequent battles, and most of all in the final engagement and the rout.^b

(31) It remains for me to say a word to Manetho about Moses. The Egyptians, who regard that man as remarkable, indeed divine, wish to claim him as one of themselves, while making the incredible and calumnious assertion that he was one of the priests expelled from Heliopolis for leprosy. The chronicles, however, prove that he lived 518 years earlier^c and conducted our forefathers out of Egypt into the country which we inhabit to-day. And that he suffered from no physical affliction of this nature is clear from his own statements. In fact, he forbids lepers either to stay in a town or to reside in a village; they must be solitary vagrants, with their clothes rent; anyone who touches or lives under the same roof with them he considers unclean. Moreover, even if the malady is cured and the victim returns to his normal condition, Moses prescribes certain rites of purification—to cleanse himself in a bath of spring-water and to cut off all his hair—and requires him to offer a numerous variety of sacrifices before entering the holy city.^d Yet one would have

Manetho's admissions

Manetho on Moses.

His laws on leprosy could not have been made by a leper.

^a Cf. §§ 75, 104, 252.

^b Reinach supposes that there is a lacuna in this paragraph; as the text stands the argument is not very clear.

^c Cf. § 230. Manetho never mentions Moses in connexion with the expulsion of the Hycsos.

^d For the laws on leprosy, here summarized, see Lev. xiii. (especially 45 f.) and xiv.

expected, on the contrary, a victim of this calamity to have shown some consideration and fellow-feeling for others equally unfortunate. His legislation on these lines was not confined to lepers. The very slightest mutilation of the person was a disqualification for the priesthood, and a priest who in the course of his ministry met with such an accident was deprived of his office.^a Is it likely that he was so foolish as to make, or persons brought together by such misfortunes to approve, laws enacted against themselves, to their own disgrace and injury? One more remark. Manetho's transformation of the name is extremely unconvincing. He was called, he says, Osarsiph. This name bears no relation to that which it replaces. The true name signifies "one saved out of the water"; for water is called by the Egyptians "mōu."^b

The conclusion, I think, is sufficiently obvious. So long as Manetho followed the ancient records, he did not go far wrong; but when he had recourse to unauthenticated legends, he either concocted from them a most improbable story, or else trusted the statements of prejudiced opponents.

(32) The next witness I shall cross-examine is Chaeremon.^c This writer likewise professes to write the history of Egypt, and agrees with Manetho in giving the names of Amenophis and Ramesses to the king and his son. He then proceeds to state that

(ii.) CHAEREMON'S version of the story

^b This etymology, which recurs in *A.* ii. 228 (with the addition that *esēs* = "persons saved") and in Philo, *De vit. Mos.* i. 4. § 17, is now generally abandoned. In *Ex.* ii. 10 the name is derived from Hebr. *mashah*, "draw out."

^c 1st cent. A.D.; Stoic philosopher, librarian of Alexandria, and afterwards tutor of Nero; besides his chief work, the *History of Egypt*, wrote on hieroglyphics, etc.

Isis appeared to Amenophis in his sleep, and reproached him for the destruction of her temple in war-time. The sacred scribe Phritobautes told him that, if he purged Egypt of its contaminated population, he might cease to be alarmed. The king, thereupon, collected 250,000 afflicted persons and banished them from the country. Their leaders were scribes, Moses and another sacred scribe—Joseph!^a Their Egyptian names were Tisithen (for Moses) and Pete-seph (Joseph). The exiles on reaching Pelusium fell in with a body of 380,000 persons, left there by Amenophis, who had refused them permission to cross the Egyptian frontier. With these the exiles concluded an alliance and marched upon Egypt. Amenophis, without waiting for their attack, fled to Ethiopia, leaving his wife pregnant. Concealing herself in some caverns she gave birth to a son named Ramesses, who, on reaching manhood, drove the Jews, to the number of about 200,000, into Syria, and brought home his father Amenophis from Ethiopia.

(33) Such is Chaeremon's account. From these statements the mendacity of both writers is, I think, self-evident. Had they any foundation in fact, such wide discrepancy would be impossible. But consistency with others is not the concern of authors of fiction; they invent according to their fancy. Thus, according to Manetho, the expulsion of the contaminated people originated in the king's desire to

Discrepan-
cies between
Manetho
and
Chaeremon.

^a Or perhaps "and Joseph, the latter also a sacred scribe." But it is doubtful whether any antithesis between "scribe" and "sacred tribe" is intended.

32

see the gods: Chaeremon invents his own story of the appearance of Isis in a dream. Manetho says that this mode of purification was suggested to the king by Amenophis: Chaeremon mentions Phritobantes. Observe too how nearly their figures coincide in their estimate of the crowd; one speaks of 80,000, the other of 250,000! Again, Manetho begins by throwing the polluted wretches into the quarries, then makes them a present of Auaris for their abode and incites them to war against the rest of the Egyptians, and not until then does he represent them as appealing for aid to Jerusalem. According to Chaeremon's account, they found, on their departure from Egypt, in the neighbourhood of Pelusium, 380,000 persons left there by Amenophis, with whom they retraced their steps and made a raid upon Egypt, resulting in the flight of Amenophis to Ethiopia. But the gem of his narrative is his omission to state who these myriads of soldiers were or whence they came, whether they were native Egyptians or foreign immigrants. He does not even explain why the king would not admit them into Egypt, though his Isis dream about the lepers showed no lack of imagination. With Moses, Chaeremon has associated, as a contemporary and companion in exile, Joseph, who died four generations, that is to say about 170 years, before Moses.^a Again, according

^a The four generations come from Ex. vi. 16-20, some forty-two years being reckoned to a generation. "P [the Priestly editor of the Pentateuch] consistently represents Moses or his contemporaries as being in the *fourth* generation (*cf.* Gen. xv. 16) from one or other of Jacob's sons" (Driver); and yet inconsistently makes the duration of the sojourn in Egypt 430 years (Ex. xii. 40; *cf.* Jos. A. ii. 204, "400 years").

to Manetho, Ramesses, son of Amenophis, fought as a young man in his father's army, and shared his flight and banishment to Ethiopia: according to Chaeremon's version, he was born in a cave after his father's death,^a and subsequently defeated the Jews and drove them out, to the number of about 200,000, into Syria. What reckless levity! First he omitted to state who the 380,000 were; then he tells us nothing of the fate of the 430,000,^b whether they fell in battle or went over to Ramesses. But—most astounding fact of all—it is impossible to discover from him whom he means by the Jews or to which of the two groups he applies this designation, the 250,000 lepers or the 380,000 at Pelusium. However, it would, I think, be foolish to spend more time in refuting authors who refute each other. To have left refutation to others would have shown more decency.