

Are the pyramids mentioned in the Bible?

<https://www.gotquestions.org/pyramids-Bible.html>

The first settlers in Egypt migrated from the area of Shinar, near the Euphrates River, the location of the attempted construction of the Tower of Babel. The Tower of Babel itself was probably a ziggurat, pyramidal in shape, and made of baked bricks mortared with pitch (see Genesis 11:1-9). Given their engineering experience, it is easy to see how these settlers would begin building smaller pyramids of mud bricks and straw, called mastabas, beneath which the early pharaohs were buried.

As time passed, the Egyptians began constructing large, impressive edifices entirely of stone. These are the structures that typically come to mind when one thinks of pyramids, such as the Great Pyramid at Giza. The granite blocks used for these pyramids were quarried near Aswan and transported down the Nile on barges.

Later, during the so-called Middle Kingdom, the royal tombs were smaller and made of millions of large, sun-dried mud-and-straw bricks. These bricks were faced with massive slabs of smooth granite to give the appearance of traditional stone pyramids. During this period, which lasted approximately 1660 to 1445 BC, the Israelites took up residence in Egypt (see 1 Kings 6:1). Pharaoh, concerned that they might turn on the Egyptians, enslaved them at some point after the time of Joseph (Exodus 1:8).

The Bible tells us that during that period the Israelite slaves were forced to make mud bricks (Exodus 5:10-14). This detail is consistent with the type of brick used to construct pyramids. In fact, according to Exodus 5:7, Pharaoh told the taskmasters, "You shall no longer give the people straw to make brick as before. Let them go and gather straw for themselves." While we are not told specifically that the bricks were used for

pyramids, it seems plausible that they were. The Jewish historian Josephus supports this theory: “They [the Egyptian taskmasters] set them also to build pyramids” (*Antiquities*, II:9.1).

The slavery of the Israelites ended abruptly at the Exodus. According to archeologist A. R. David, the slaves suddenly disappeared. She admits that “the quantity, range and type of articles of everyday use which were left behind in the houses may indeed suggest that the departure was sudden and unpremeditated” (*The Pyramid Builders of Ancient Egypt*, p. 199). The Egyptian army that was destroyed at the Red Sea was led by Pharaoh himself (Exodus 14:6), and this could account for the fact that no burial place or mummy has been found for the 13th-dynasty Pharaoh Neferhotep I.

Pyramids are not mentioned as such in the canonical Scriptures. However, the Apocrypha (approved as canonical by Catholics and Coptics) does mention pyramids in 1 Maccabees 13:28-38 in connection with seven pyramids built by Simon Maccabeus as monuments to his parents.

Pre-Alexandrian Jews would not have used the word pyramid. However, in the Old Testament, we do see the word migdol (Strong's, H4024). This word is translated “tower” and could represent any large monolith, obelisk or pyramid. Migdol is the Hebrew word used to describe the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:4, and it is translated similarly in Ezekiel 29:10 and 30:6. In describing a “pyramid,” this is the word the Hebrews would have most likely used. Furthermore, Migdol is a place name in Exodus 14:2, Numbers 33:7, Jeremiah 44:1, and Jeremiah 46:14 and could mean that a tower or monument was located there.

The Bible does not explicitly state that the Israelites built pyramids; nor does it use the word pyramid in association with the Hebrews. We may surmise that the children of Israel worked on the pyramids, but that is all we can do.