

An Analysis of the Joseph Smith Papyri (A Look into the Book of Abraham and the Joseph Smith Method)

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This paper gives testimony to the method(s) used in constructing the Pearl of Great Price, specifically the Book of Abraham

- Background Testimony

As a child raised in the LDS faith, I was most fascinated with the cosmic elements to the Prophet Abraham's Astronomical description of the Heavenly realms. This in combination with the attached hieroglyphic facsimiles gave me my own testimony and interpretation of my understanding of the Universe.

Egyptology was fascinating to me. And by the age of eight, I could already recognize the Egyptian gods in the Book of Abraham Facsimiles. By twelve, I had studied a hieroglyphic dictionary volume and could recognize facsimile one to be Osiris on the alter and not Abraham. I also concluded that the ape looking figure described as a priest of Elkenah was odd and out of place.

By 36 years of age, I found myself renewed in the Earthbound religion of Wicca. Finding strength, great knowledge in Wicca, I decided to set out on a quest to revisit the Book of Abraham Facsimiles. After some brief digging into the history of the papyri and lore around the Book of Abraham. I encountered the tale of Joseph Smith purchasing a number of mummies along with papyri. Immediately, I was filled with fascination and wonder why a Christian Seer would want to purchase these Egyptian artifacts even though the Book of Mormon is said to have been derived from Reformed Egyptian.

The background of the purchase by Joseph Smith helped me confirm something was further amiss with the Book of Abraham. Another rather obvious observation is that the Book of Abraham is five chapters in length. The three facsimiles printed in the Pearl of Great Price cannot possibly have taken up that much text. Even if all lost papyri in the Joseph Smith Collection were to be present, it's still unlikely that the Egyptian text would be close to equaling the text of the Book of Abraham.

This paper describes my approximately four year journey into understanding the Book of Abraham and deciphering the papyri of Joseph Smith.

- Divination Theory

In my adolescent years, I learned and dabbled in Wicca and had an introduction into concepts such as Shamanism, Oriental faiths, Astrology, Astral Projection, divination, energy transfer, communication with the dead and Re-incarnation. Having this early background in the Occult as well as having personally witnessed as a young adolescent, a free standing apparition of a male figure, opened my eyes to the possibilities of communicating with the other side.

Divination. ESP at best or real voodoo? Evidence and testimony of Joseph Smith's use of Seer stones (Urim and Thummim) as well as other testimony of him using other crystals to divine information. The

1800's saw a huge boom of studies in the Occult, as well as Egyptology. It was only approximately 30 years earlier in 1799 that Napoleon's Army and Cultural Experts were able to survey the conquered country of Egypt and locate the Rosetta Stone, possibly the most important discovery of being able to decipher the Egyptian hieroglyphic system. By 1822 Jean Francois Champollion had already laid the ground work for understanding the hieroglyphic system. However, Champollion's work was not organized into a comprehensive book until some many years after the publication of the Book of Abraham. Smith couldn't have had access. Based on preliminary inspection of Smith's Egyptian Grammar, he had no grasp of the ancient tongue.

Joseph Smith had great success in forming the LDS church at a time when conservative values were rampant and Christian sects were splintering off in alarming rates as communities chose to form congregations supporting individual pastors. Smith also timed his discovery of the Book of Mormon, an Egyptian Christian text, with the beginning of the Egyptology boom of the early 1800's.

The divination theory speculates that if it's possible that Joseph Smith did derive the Book of Abraham from the papyri in his possession than he must have done so by supernatural means. What is more likely, based on the evidence is that other forms of inspiration and reference must have been used to fathom the Astronomy of Abraham.

Do I think it's possible that one can slip into a trance gazing at an object, picture or text and divine information? Yes. In Heka or my concept of Numerical Heka, one can divine using general intuition, creative inspiration and information in the mind of the Heka practitioner. It is up to the Heka practitioner to decide if any information conjured is from the supernatural realm or not.

Possession or channeling could have been another possible way Joseph Smith may have divined some information, although the former is not likely. The following chapters will examine the Joseph Smith papyri.

- Initial Translation

Over the course of the years, I took a few different attempts at coming to my own translation of Book of Abraham Facsimiles. My first partial translation was attempted with no additional research other than my existing knowledge of Egyptology.

Facsimile 1

Fig 1. Egyptian god Horus

Fig 2. Egyptian god Osiris in Funerary position

Fig 3. Egyptian god Anubis killing Osiris (incorrectly altered depiction)

Fig 4. Funerary altar

Fig 5. Egyptian god Horus represented as a canopic jar

Fig 6. Egyptian god Anubis represented as a canopic jar

Fig 7. Unidentified

Fig 8. Egyptian god Thoth represented as a canpic jar

Fig 9. Unidentified crocodile

Fig 10. Unidentified flower

Fig 11. Designed to represent the pillars of heaven (Pet), as understood by the Egyptians

Fig 12. Unidentified

Facsimile 2

- Fig 1. The Nebulous Pillars of Creation (Eagle Nebula) below Orion/Herne
- Fig 2. Orion/Herne drawing solar light
- Fig 3. Anubis sailing to the underworld
- Fig 4. Unidentified
- Fig 5. An Egyptian ritual
- Fig 6. Egyptian god Uraes, Egyptian god Sothis, Egyptian god Thoth, Egyptian god Horus
- Fig 7. Opening the Eye of Ra
- Fig 8. Unidentified
- Fig 9. Unidentified
- Fig 10. Unidentified
- Fig 11. Unidentified
- Fig 12. Unidentified
- Fig 13. Unidentified
- Fig 14. Unidentified
- Fig 15. Unidentified
- Fig 16. Unidentified
- Fig 17. Unidentified
- Fig 18. Unidentified
- Fig 19. Unidentified
- Fig 20. Unidentified
- Fig 21. Unidentified
- Fig 22. The Sun held by a dog (Egyptian god Sothis)
- Fig 23. The Moon held by a lamb or ape

Facsimile 3

- Fig 1. Egyptian god Ra seated upon throne
- Fig 2. Egyptian goddess Isis
- Fig 3. Opening the eye of Ra
- Fig 4. Female Egyptian princess
- Fig 5. Male Egyptian prince
- Fig 6. Colored Chaldean slave

- Researched Translation

Toward the end of my journey, there came a wave of research into the matter. I decided to investigate Dr. Robert Ritner's perspective and translation of the Joseph Smith Papyri. I purchased The Joseph Smith Papyri, Ritner's book and also listened to him speak on the matter. In addition to reading this, I enriched my knowledge in the Ancient Egyptian religion, to include researching gods, rituals, rites, hymns and prayers. This translation mostly agrees with Ritner's assessment, however, my modern interpretation draws on my background as a Wiccan and Astronomer.

Facsimile 1

- Fig 1. Egyptian god Amun-Ra (Horus)
- Fig 2. Egyptian god Osiris in Funerary position
- Fig 3. Egyptian god Anubis killing Osiris (incorrectly altered depiction)
- Fig 4. Funerary altar
- Fig 5. Egyptian god Qebehsenuef represented as a canopic jar
- Fig 6. Egyptian god Duamutef represented as a canopic jar
- Fig 7. Egyptian god Hapi represented as a canopic jar
- Fig 8. Egyptian god Imsety represented as a canpic jar
- Fig 9. Egyptian god Sobek represented as a crocodile
- Fig 10. Lotus flower representing the rebirth of Osiris
- Fig 11. Designed to represent the pillars of heaven (Pet), as understood by the Egyptians
- Fig 12. Unidentified

Facsimile 2

- Fig 1. The Nebulous Pillars of Creation (Eagle Nebula) below Orion/Herne/Min
- Fig 2. Orion/Herne/Min drawing solar light
- Fig 3. Anubis drawing the Wadjet eyes to the Duat
- Fig 4. Unidentified
- Fig 5. An Egyptian ritual
- Fig 6. Egyptian god Uraes, Egyptian god Sothis, Egyptian god Thoth, Egyptian god Horus
- Fig 7. Opening the Eye of Ra
- Fig 8. Unidentified
- Fig 9. Unidentified
- Fig 10. Unidentified
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- Fig 19. Unidentified
- Fig 20. Unidentified
- Fig 21. Unidentified
- Fig 22. The Sun held by a dog (Egyptian god Sothis)
- Fig 23. The Moon held by a lamb or ape

Facsimile 3

- Fig 1. Egyptian god Osiris seated upon throne
- Fig 2. Egyptian goddess Isis
- Fig 3. Opening the eye of Ra
- Fig 4. Egyptian goddess Maat
- Fig 5. Egyptian god Horus
- Fig 6. Egyptian god Anubis

- Personal translation

Facsimile 1

- Fig 1. Egyptian god Amun-Ra (Horus)
- Fig 2. Egyptian god Osiris in Funerary position
- Fig 3. Egyptian god Anubis killing Osiris (incorrectly altered depiction)
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- Fig 12. Unidentified

Facsimile 2

- Fig 1. The Nebulous Pillars of Creation (Eagle Nebula) below Orion/Herne/Min. Min holding his lightning scepter drawing the worm and snail to Q. Cloud sign.
- Fig 2. Orion/Herne/Min drawing solar light
- Fig 3. Anubis drawing the Wadjet eyes to the Duat
- Fig 4. Unidentified
- Fig 5. A, Qea, Ra, drawing sage from Hathor the Egyptian Cow Goddess
- Fig 6. Egyptian god Uraes, Egyptian god Sothis, Egyptian god Thoth, Egyptian god Horus
- Fig 7. Opening the Eye of Ra
- Fig 8. Unidentified
- Fig 9. Unidentified
- Fig 10. Unidentified
- Fig 11. Unidentified
- Fig 12. Unidentified
- Fig 13. Unidentified
- Fig 14. Unidentified
- Fig 15. Unidentified
- Fig 16. Unidentified
- Fig 17. Unidentified
- Fig 18. Unidentified
- Fig 19. Unidentified
- Fig 20. Unidentified
- Fig 21. Unidentified
- Fig 22. The Sun held by a dog (Egyptian god Sothis)
- Fig 23. The Moon held by a lamb or ape

Facsimile 3

- Fig 1. Egyptian god Osiris seated upon throne
 - Fig 2. Egyptian goddess Isis drawing down the star
 - Fig 3. Opening the eye of Osiris-Re
 - Fig 4. Egyptian goddess Maat
 - Fig 5. Egyptian god Horus
 - Fig 6. Egyptian god Anubis
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- Book of Abraham text interpretation

Source Theory

As previously explained, it is highly unlikely that the story contained within the text of the Book of Abraham was directly translated from the papyri in the Joseph Smith collection. Where was it derived from? This chapter seeks to ponder on the sources and thought processes he may have used when writing the text.

- Book of the Dead Spell 125 Vignette

There is strong evidence that Joseph Smith may have seen this particular vignette before constructing Facsimile 2 Fig 6.

Papyri of Ta-Sherit-Min

As Dr. Robert Ritner points out Facsimile 2 is the Hypocephalus or a papyri that would have been placed under the head of the buried dead. It was largely copied from an incomplete/damaged source document. Some parts such as Fig 3 were copied from other papyri documents.

The Joseph Smith Papyri

The papyri they have largely been kept in possession of either Joseph Smith or the LDS church scholars agree that they are fragments of Egyptian funerary texts such as the book of the dead and breathing permits. I agree with this assessment.

- Vocabulary

The vocabulary of the Book of Abraham, derived from Egyptian papyri, appears to be actually derived from primarily the Hebrew language. Elkenah, Libnah, Mahmackrah and Korash, all are purported to be the names of Egyptian gods are in fact false. It is likely that these names were invented, conjured or divined because Smith had no form of reference into the actual Ancient Egyptian gods or another theory is he utilized these names as banishing names for gods he deemed evil. No scholar is familiar with the Hebrew derived names in the Book of Abraham, prior to the text's publication.

Kolob potentially means center.

- Searching for Kolob

As a young boy, I was fascinated with idea of Kolob, a planet nearest Heaven or in the LDS tongue, Celestial Kingdom. Of course, having had an interesting in astronomy since I was a boy, I already had my own personal relationship with universe and the night sky. By the time I had become an adult, I had already formed a hypothesis regarding the location of Kolob. My intuition was that the three ghost or hump looking objects in Facsimile 2 were in fact the nebula pillars in the Eagle Nebula. My inspiration was the Hubble images of the Eagle Nebula and various astronomical data I compiled at the time.

Kolob, the word, like the other proper nouns of the Book of Abraham is most likely Hebrew in origin likely meaning center.

- Coordinates of Kolob?

Through the Wiccan ritual of Drawing Down the Star to include the use of Numerical Heka, I conjured the numerical shifts or shift keywords used in the Betel Venus Heqet tranformation which draw from Betelgeuse the red giant star in the constellation Orion (in the LDS tongue, I like to call this the constellation of Nephi). To make Numerical Heka easier, I authored a program that automates the shifts so that anyone can use it. This was included as the Code Generator in the Book of Egyptian Cryptography. The Code Generator connects names or words with celestial objects, Egyptian deities, directions and more.

Two names, two bearings, two sets of coordinates. First inspired to use the name of the Book of Mormon hero I best associate with Orion, Nephi (also meaning in Egyptian air or nifu). The Bow Hunter. Entering the name Nephi into the code generator gave a set of coordinates. The next obvious name to enter would be Kolob. Entering the name Kolob into the code generator gave a set of coordinates.

Before consuming two days of Numerical Heka, I observed the morning after a rainy night, a stone and near it an earth worm. The worm was injured, blood was visible. As I pondered and gazed upon it, I beheld that it moved it's body to the right or directly facing west. I took a bearing with a compass. I also compared a compass bearing with the direction in which I sleep and pray. 38-39 degress West. Using this coordinate in the night sky as the initial vector, I was able to apply the Betelgeuse Venus Heqet transformation to discern the following coordinate map.

Kolob Coordinate Map as guided by the Betel Venus Heqet transformations:

Betelgeuse – Star Conduit

Kolob – Vega

Rigel – Coordinate

Altair – Coordinate

Sadina – Coordinate

Cygnus – Coordinate

Betelgeuse Rigel Venus Quadrant

Lyra Cluster – Coordinate

Eagle Nebula - “The Pillars of Creation” - Theorized logical location of Heaven or place nearest Heaven based on present knowledge of the universe and interpretation of figure 22 in Facsimile 2.

- An Analysis of the Kolob Theorem

Dr Lynn M. Hilton has written a book regarding her theories into Abraham's Astronomy, detailing of relationships between doctrine and the universe as observed using modern astronomical data called, The Kolob Theorem: A Mormon's View of God's Starry Universe.

At first, I was overjoyed to hear someone else's perspective on the mysterious Kolob. The cover was inspiring, showing a spiral galaxy labeled Celestial Kingdom, Terrestrial Kingdom and Telestial Kingdom on the layers of galaxy starting from the center. Opening the book and reading the first few pages, I fell unimpressed.

The author names the Andromeda galaxy as the location of the three kingdoms of the afterlife. The Celestial, Terrestrial and Telestial kingdoms. Knowing the LDS lore that one can govern a planet body of their own in the afterlife. An entire galaxy dedicated to this may or may not be sufficient. I commend Hilton for giving forth effort to express her educated perspective on the subject.

One educated theory into Hilton's choice of the Andromeda galaxy is one that the Andromeda galaxy is a spiral galaxy much like our Milky Way galaxy and is often thought to be a parallel galaxy. The other thought though is the name Egyptus is used in the Book of Abraham to describe the father of Pharaoh, King of Egypt. Egyptus or more properly spelled Aegyptus in Greek Mythology was a king of Egypt living at the same time as Andromeda daughter of king Aethiopia. Smith and Hilton may have been privy to this Greek Egyptian myth.

My own understanding of the Wicca faith, Ancient Egyptian faith and astronomy theorizes that there is only one kingdom per se, a Celestial Kingdom. The Ancient Egyptian polytheists in their great lore and understanding and love of the night sky believed in a singular Celestial realm, the Duat where the gods resided and where Osiris and other gods cared for dead souls.

Modern astrophysicists teach us about many fiery and explosive ignitions to the creations of the universe. Our knowledge of the mystical gaseous formations of nebulae that form the planetary creation bed for stars and planets help us form our own opinions on where life may have begun first in the universe and where is Heaven, if such a place exists.

- Conclusions

The Joseph Smith Method employs the use of seer objects for creative inspiration in conjunction with great research into myths, legends, lore, ancient customs and languages. Smith's mixture of language, rooted in Hebrew phonetics and pseudo Native American tongue have no verifiable meaning or origin.

Although some of the divine concepts of the Book of Abraham inspire the mind to conceptualize eternity and the universe around us, the book is simply inspired from a combination of Jewish lore of Abraham, Greek and Egyptian mythology. There is little evidence to support that the text of the Book of Abraham was derived directly from the Joseph Smith Papyri. At best the alteration and fabrication of all three Facsimiles included in the Pearl of Great Price may have served as artistic representation of Smith's tale of Abraham intercepted by a malicious Egyptian priest and subjected to sacrificial

execution for failing to submit to the Egyptian idolatrous gods of wood and stone. Furthermore, Ancient Egyptian rituals traditionally did not involve human sacrifice and were more generally focused on the honing of the solar and lunar elemental powers.

The Book of Abraham's small lexicon of pseudo-Hebrew proper nouns label the four sons of Horus to be the idolatrous gods. Whether the alteration of the Fig 3 in Facsimile 1 was a deliberate attempt to make an issue of race and color is debate able but also very plausible.

My summary of the Joseph Smith Method and the construction of the text of the Book of Abraham is that the text is in no way a definitive map to Heaven, nor does it construct a time fluid tale of a conglomerate of Hebrew, Greek and Egyptian myths.

- Name translations

Elkenah – A Hebrew sounding word for the Egyptian god Anubis

Oliblish – A Hebrew sounding word

Libnah – A Hebrew sounding word

Korash – A Hebrew sounding word possibly meaning Cyrus or Cygnus

Kolob – A Hebrew derived word most likely meaning center

Betelgeuse – Ghost of the House of God (Betel or Bethel's Ghost)