

# A CHRONOLOGY OF EGYPTIAN DYNASTIES 12, 18, 19, AND 20

## DYNASTY 12

Amenemhat I (*ca.* 1979–1950 BC)  
Sesostris I (*ca.* 1960–1916 BC)  
Amenemhat II (*ca.* 1919–1884 BC)  
Sesostris II (*ca.* 1887–1878 BC)  
Sesostris III (*ca.* 1878–1840 BC)<sup>1</sup>  
Amenemhat III (*ca.* 1859–1813 BC)  
Amenemhat IV (*ca.* 1814–1805 BC)  
Queen Sobekneferu (*ca.* 1805–1801 BC)

## DYNASTY 18

Ahmose (*ca.* 1560–1550 BC)  
Amenhotep I (*ca.* 1550–1529 BC)<sup>2</sup>  
Thutmose I (*ca.* 1529–1516 BC)  
Thutmose II (*ca.* 1516–1504 BC)  
Queen Hatshepsut (*ca.* 1504/2–1483 BC)  
Thutmose III (*ca.* 1504–1450 BC)<sup>3</sup>  
Amenhotep II (*ca.* 1453–1416 BC)  
Thutmose IV (*ca.* 1416–1407 BC)  
Amenhotep III (*ca.* 1407–1370 BC)  
Amenhotep IV = Akhenaten (*ca.* 1370–1353 BC)  
Smenkhkare (*ca.* 1353–1350 BC)  
Neferneferuaten (*ca.* 1350–1347 BC)  
Tutankhamun (*ca.* 1347–1338 BC)  
Ay (*ca.* 1338–1334 BC)  
Horemheb (*ca.* 1334–1307 BC)

## DYNASTY 19

Ramesses I (*ca.* 1307–1305 BC)  
Seti I (*ca.* 1305–1290 BC)  
Ramesses II (*ca.* 1290–1223 BC)  
Merneptah (*ca.* 1223–1213 BC)  
Amenmesse (*ca.* 1213–1209 BC)  
Seti II (*ca.* 1209–1203 BC)  
Siptah (*ca.* 1203–1197 BC)  
Queen Tawosret (*ca.* 1197–1196 BC)

## DYNASTY 20

Sethnakhte (*ca.* 1196–1194 BC)  
Ramesses III (*ca.* 1194–1162 BC)  
Ramesses IV (*ca.* 1162–1155 BC)  
Ramesses V (*ca.* 1155–1151 BC)  
Ramesses VI (*ca.* 1151–1143 BC)  
Ramesses VII (*ca.* 1143–1135 BC)  
Ramesses VIII (*ca.* 1135–1134 BC)  
Ramesses IX (*ca.* 1134–1116 BC)  
Ramesses X (*ca.* 1116–1096 BC)  
Ramesses XI (*ca.* 1096–1069 BC)

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<sup>1</sup>The chronology for Dynasty 12 is based on the astronomical evidence garnered from an ancient Egyptian papyrus discovered at Lahun (near the Fayyum), which records a heliacal rising of Sothis on Day 16 of month 4 of Season 2 *prr* (Month 8 on the Egyptian calendar) of Year 7 of Sesostris III. According to the calculations of R. A. Parker, historically considered the standard work for Dynasty 12's chronology, this astronomical reference effectively dates the papyrus to 1872 BC, in turn dating the beginning of Sesostris III's reign to 1878 BC (William A. Ward, "The Present Status of Egyptian Chronology," in *BASOR* 288:59; W. S. LaSor, "Egypt," in *I. S. B. E.*, vol. 2, 39–40). Both Gardiner (*Egypt of the Pharaohs*, 66) and Redford (*Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, 76) accepted 1878 BC as the date for the beginning of Sesostris III's reign, the date also taken here. Since the aforementioned heliacal rising assumes a Memphite point of observation (near Lahun and Itj-Tawy), and since there is a difference of four years per day for every degree of latitudinal variance in the point of observation, the accuracy of this dating scheme remains relative. Moreover, even if the chosen point of observation is correct, a variable of  $\pm 6$  years can be applied after calculating the date for the rising of Sothis (W. S. LaSor, "Egypt," in *I. S. B. E.*, vol. 2, 40).

<sup>2</sup>The chronology for Dynasty 18 is based on two factors: (1) a date of *ca.* 1290 BC for the beginning of Ramesses II's reign, a number arrived at after synchronizing Egypt's history with that of several other nations of the ancient Near East, and (2) the astronomical dating of the Ebers Papyrus, which records the rising of Sothis on Day 9 of Month 3 of Season 3 *šmw* (Month 11 on the Egyptian calendar) of Year 9 of Amenhotep I. Therefore, the papyrus effectively dates to *ca.* 1541 BC, and the beginning of the king's reign dates to *ca.* 1550/1549 BC. This date for the heliacal rising of Sothis, which is accepted by both numerous Egyptologists and the present writer, is based on a Memphite point of observation, even though the papyrus is known to have Theban provenance; a Theban point of observation, which is rejected here, would yield a date of *ca.* 1523 BC for the rising of Sothis (William A. Ward, "The Present Status of Egyptian Chronology," in *BASOR* 288: 58, 59).

<sup>3</sup>Egyptologists disagree over the date for the accession of Thutmose III: the "high chronology" view dates it to *ca.* 1504 BC; the "middle chronology" view dates it to *ca.* 1490 BC; and the "low chronology" view dates it to *ca.* 1479 BC. The high chronology view is preferable because of its exclusive agreement with the Ebers Papyrus when assuming a Memphite point of observation for the rising of Sothis (Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, 104). The date for Thutmose III's accession harmonizes his son's (Amenhotep II) second Asiatic campaign, which transpired in November of his (regnal) Year 7, with the Israelite exodus from Egypt that transpired on Friday, 24 April 1446 BC.