

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

The Use of Egyptian Magical Papyri to Authenticate the Book of Abraham

EDWARD H. ASHMENT¹

1

In two recent articles John Gee appeals to ancient Egyptian documents in an effort to establish the historicity of the Book of Abraham. The first appears as the lead article in the September 1991 newsletter, *Insights: An Ancient Window*, published by the LDS-Church-funded Foundation for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies (FARMS), titled 'References to Abraham Found in Two Egyptian Texts'.² His second article (taking advantage of an early version of the unpublished review of the first and of a general request for 'anyone aware of any... references' to Abraham in Egyptian literature to contact him c/o FARMS³) appears in an official publication of the LDS Church, *The Ensign* (July 1992, 60-62), titled 'Abraham in Ancient Egyptian Texts'. Since in his second article he significantly modifies some of the major arguments he makes in his first, it is important to present the review of the first as well as of the second.

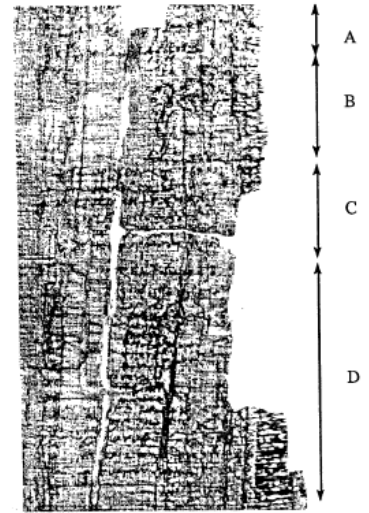


Fig. 1. Pap. Leiden I 384:1

'References to Abraham Found in Two Egyptian Texts'. In his first article, Gee declares that his 'discoveries give students of the Book of Abraham new evidence to evaluate'. Moreover, he asserts as 'premature' any conclusions that Joseph Smith was the first to conceive a relationship between a lion-couch vignette, a hypocephalus (see figs. 3, 4) and the Book of Abraham, because the materials he cites 'expressly mention Abraham and also connect him with representations similar to Facsimiles 1 and 2 of the Book of Abraham' (FARMS 1991, 3; emphasis added).

The documentation that Gee offers as evidence of his extraordinary assertions comes from magical papyri — a fact Gee neglects to tell his readers. He states that the 'texts' he cites 'date to about the same time as the Joseph Smith papyri' (1). He first discusses the

¹ Stephen E. Thompson generously read and commented on an earlier draft of this essay, for which I am grateful.

² While FARMS stated that the article was 'based on research by John Gee', Gee elsewhere takes credit for having written it (1991, 28 note 168).

³ See *Insights: An Ancient Window*, (Jan 1992), 4.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

last column⁴ of Pap. Leiden I 384vo. (fig. 1), which contains a lion-couch vignette (figs. 1 B; 2) that is roughly similar to the vignette in Papyrus Joseph Smith 1 (fig. 3). He claims to identify the name of Abraham in what turns out to be a Greek magical spell immediately below the vignette (fig. 1 C) and utilizes textual material from another Greek magical spell, which he states comes from 'the next to the last column of this papyrus', to suggest that the scene refers to the sacrifice of Abraham on a lion-couch 'altar', thus attempting to authenticate Joseph Smith's interpretation of Facsimile One of the Book of Abraham.

Gee next concentrates on the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden 8.8 (fig. 5), in which he again claims to recognize the name of Abraham identified as the 'pupil [and iris] of the wedjat-eye', appealing to the Book of the Dead, chapters 162 and 163 to assert that the 'pupil of the wedjat-eye' is an Egyptian name ('epithet') for a hypocephalus. Even more astounding, he declares that 'Abraham is called this in the midst of a section on *how to obtain revelation*' (3; emphasis added), ambitiously claiming that Facsimile Two also '*deals with obtaining revelation about the heavens and the cosmos*' (3; emphasis added). Thus, Gee attempts to connect hypocephali-specifically the Facsimile Two hypocephalus (fig. 4)-with Joseph Smith's Book of Abraham.

Do those papyri 'expressly mention Abraham' in the manner Gee avers? That is, do they 'connect him with representations similar to Facsimiles 1 and 2 of the Book of Abraham'? Is the lion-couch vignette of 384:1 a depiction of Abraham as a human sacrifice, and does the text from the previous — or any — column of that papyrus refer to that sacrifice? Does Magical 8.8 connect the hypocephalus with Abraham; and does it deal with 'how to obtain revelation', and the hypocephalus 'with obtaining revelation about the heavens and the cosmos'? Because outside of the Book of Abraham there are no known references to Abraham on a lion-couch 'altar', who is about to be sacrificed by pharaoh's priest (Abr 1:7,12,14), and because Joseph Smith's interpretation of the Facsimile Two hypocephalus is unparalleled, the remarkable substantiating claims that Gee makes for Facsimiles One and Two require scrutiny.

Egyptologically, the papyri from which the alleged evidence comes were written by a single scribe, most likely in Thebes, and date to the third century CE⁵ 200 or more years after the composition of the Joseph Smith Papyri.⁶ They are comprised of magic spells in both Demotic and Greek, with superlinear glosses in Old Coptic to ensure correct pronunciation of important magical words. 384 appears to have been written before Magical (Johnson 1975, 48, 53; in Betz 1992, lvii). The spells in 384 generally are 'designed

⁴ For its designation as the last column, see Johnson 1975, 49f.

⁵ See *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 4:840; Johnson in Hughes Studies, 105.

⁶ For which, see Baer 1968, 111.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

to separate people and make them hate each other'. The vignette that Gee avers is a depiction of the lion-couch sacrifice of Abraham is in the last column of that papyrus. The spells in Magical, among other things,⁷ 'give instructions for divinations, especially divinations using a lamp' (Johnson 1975, 51 note 28).⁸ Gee's attribution of Abraham as the wedjat-eye is in one such lamp-divination spell.



Fig. 2. Lion-Couch Vignette from Pap. Leiden I 384:1 as reproduced by FARMS

Gee's presentation of 384 as evidence of the historicity of the Book of Abraham is misleading. He declares inaccurately that the 'next to the last column', the one preceding the column containing the lion-couch vignette, 'contains a text... entitled "The sacrifice [or burning] of so-and-so"', which he claims includes an appeal of a sacrificial victim to the gods for salvation from the 'jackal-headed god' and his cohorts.

Gee then refers to the magical spell immediately below the vignette (fig. 1 B) as though it were a fragmentary caption (see fig. 2) and translates it as: 'Let Abraham who... upon... wonder marvelously'. Ignoring the text before and after the portion that he chooses to interpret, he inaccurately tells the reader that the 'text is broken at that point, and many endings are possible', conjecturing two possibilities that suggestively parallel Joseph Smith's Book of Abraham: that it is Abraham "who lies upon the altar" or "who calls upon God" (FARMS 1991, 1). Thus, he links his alleged sacrificial victim to the vignette and to Abraham.

The fact is that the magical spell from which Gee develops his interpretation of Abraham's desperate appeal for deliverance does not come from the next to the last column on the papyrus. Rather, it is the last spell in the last column on the papyrus (fig. 1 D). Contrary to Gee, the subject of the spell is a woman-not Abraham. Moreover, its title is not 'The sacrifice of so-and-so' and does not contain a desperate appeal of a human-sacrifice victim. Instead, the spell is entitled 'Another' — a variant of the previous spell (fig. 1 C), in which the magician was instructed to write the spell, including a drawing of the lion-couch scene, on a piece of new papyrus. The magician was to take the piece of papyrus with the spell on it and 'cook it in the bath!' The spell itself consists of a series of magical abracadabra words, followed by the actual conjuration, in which the magician would bedevil a woman to him by commanding a demon 'to become a bath-woman and to inflame the beloved with the heat of



Fig. 3. Lion-Couch Vignette from Pap. Joseph Smith 1

⁷ See Griffith and Thompson 1904, 14; Johnson 1976, 2f.

⁸ For a discussion about Egyptian lamp divination, see Jacq 1985, 61f.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

the bath waters' (Daniel 1991, xxiii). In certain places, the magician was to supply the name of the woman over whom the spell was cast. The incantation is as follows:

ALLANTH BIREIBAMETIRA / EMETHIRE THARABLATH PNOUTHE
THOUCHARA OSOUCHARI SABACHAR ..., / burn [inflamm] her, NN, until she
[comes] to me, NN, immediately, immediately; quickly, quickly. I conjure you,
daimons of the dead, [by] the dead and by the daimon of [Balsames], and the /
dog-faced god [Anubis], and the gods with him (Johnson in Betz 1992, 171).⁹

4

Contrary to Gee, the text of the spell cannot authenticate the historicity of the Book of Abraham, because it has nothing to do with the human sacrifice of a victim on a lion-couch that is about to be killed by a jackal-headed god.

The text from which Gee extracts his caption for the lion-couch vignette that 'expressly mentions Abraham', is actually in the middle of a series of magical abracadabra words for the spell immediately underneath the vignette (fig. 1 C).¹⁰ The subject of that conjuration, too, was a woman — not Abraham. It reads:

... AIDIO ORICH THAMBITO, Abraham who at... PLANOIEGCHIBIOTH MOU
ROU and the whole soul for her, NN [whom NN bore]... the female body of her,
NN [whom NN bore], I conjure by the... [and] to inflame her, NN whom [NN bore]
[Write these] words together with this picture [the lion couch vignette] on a new
papyrus (Johnson in Betz 1992, 171).



Fig. 4. Facsimile of the now-lost Joseph Smith hypocephalus

There simply is no support for Gee's assertion that the vignette is a depiction of a human sacrifice, with the victim lying on the altar and calling upon God for deliverance. Rather it is a normal lion-couch vignette, showing 'Anubis administering to a mummy lying on a lion-couch' (Johnson 1975, 30), which here seems to have been used as a magical representational device in connection with certain magical spells.¹¹

⁹ Betz (1992, xlvi) notes that the "underworld deities, the demons and the spirits of the dead, are constantly and unscrupulously invoked and exploited as the most important means for achieving the goals of human life on earth: the acquisition of love, wealth, health, fame, knowledge of the future, control over other persons, and so forth. In other words, there is a consensus that the best way to success and worldly pleasures is by using the underworld, death, and the forces of death."

¹⁰ In fact, the lion-couch vignette is not captioned. For a vignette with captions, see Leiden I 384:4: 'The god is labelled Seth, in Old Coptic; the two spears are labelled Gerbeth and Bolxoseth Oseiro, also in Old Coptic' (Johnson 1975, 30).

¹¹ See Johnson 1975, 44 note A.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

Gee fails to point out that Magical 8 (fig. 5), his ‘section on how to obtain revelation’, is in reality a pagan lamp-divination spell and leaves his Mormon audience to misunderstand divination as having the same meaning as ‘revelation’ that they learned in church. The purpose of lamp divination was to conjure the presence of a deity by using a properly prepared wick lamp and casting various spells. The divinity was then to respond to questions about topics of interest to the magician (Jacq 1985, 62). Contrary to Gee’s assertion, Magical 8 was merely a follow-up spell to be recited if a conjured divinity had not already appeared. Several times, the magician recited magical abracadabra words and called the god to answer his queries. Then he uttered more abracadabra words:

“Come in, PIAToy CHITRE! O SHOP SHOPE SHOP ABRAHME [Old Coptic gloss: ABRACAM], the pupil of the sound eye, QMR QMR QMR QMR KMRO, who created creation, great flourishing creation. SH[JKNYSH is your real name. Let an answer be told to me / about everything concerning which I am asking here today” (Johnson in Betz 1992, 208).

Finally, the magician appealed once more to the divinity to come and truthfully answer his questions. The entire spell was to be recited seven times (Griffith and Thompson 1904, 63-65; Johnson in Betz 1992, 208). Certainly Gee does not want to imply that conjuring by lamp divination is the method by which prophets converse with God.

Contrary to Gee, the hypocephalus (fig. 4) has nothing to do with ‘obtaining revelation about the heavens and the cosmos’. Hypocephali appeared in the latter part of Egyptian history, serving as magical amulets placed under the head of the deceased to provide heat (‘the flame of Re’) for his/her birth into and continued life in the netherworld. Formulae were written on them from Book of the Dead chapter 162 for that purpose, often accompanied by protective (‘prophylactique’) representations. Hypocephali had the secondary effect of procuring for the deceased a part of the divinity of the sun god, Re. The Greek name, hypocephalus (‘under the head’), is derived from the term ‘heat under the head’ in the Egyptian title of BD 162: ‘Spell for providing heat under the head of the blessed dead’. Parenthetically, the hypocephalus may have been a prototype of the halo that crowned the heads of personages in Egyptian art from before the Fourth Century CE (Bonnet 1952, 389f.; Kessler, 1980, 693; Goyon 1972, 276; Barguet 1967, 228 note 1).

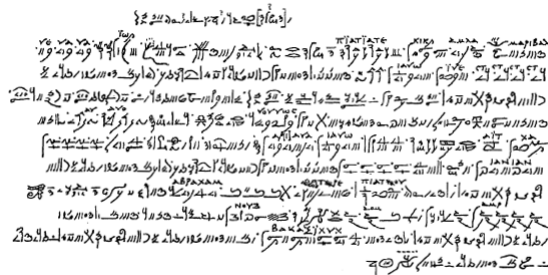


Fig. 5. A lamp divination spell from Magical 8.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Contrary to Gee, Book of the Dead chapter 163 is not related to chapter 162 or to hypocephali.¹² But since BD 162 does not contain the phrase, 'the pupil of the wedjat-eye',¹³ which Gee has identified with Abraham and considers to be 'one of the Egyptian names' for a hypocephalus, he must treat BD 163 as though it too were a hypocephalus chapter, because of its reference to the deceased as one 'hidden within the pupil of the Sound Eye [wedjat]' (Allen 1974, 159). Gee thus improperly asserts that 'the pupil of the wedjat-eye' refers to a hypocephalus in order to make a connection between it and Abraham in his effort to authenticate 'Joseph Smith's explanation of the hypocephalus in the Book of Abraham' (FARMS 1991, 3).¹⁴

A crucial claim of Gee's article is that ABRACAM (Magical 8.8)/ABRAAM (384:1.6) refer to the biblical Abraham in such a way as to prove the historicity of Joseph Smith's Book of Abraham. Unfortunately, he fails to acknowledge that his alleged references occur within series of magical abracadabra words. An important question, therefore, is whether those occurrences actually refer to Abraham probatively; or do they, like the words around them, primarily have the significance of magical abracadabra words? Appeals to Abraham and other Judeo-Christian elements — even Jesus — appear frequently in the syncretistic magical papyri.¹⁵ One spell cites a portion of the Lord's Prayer, after which it appeals to, inter alia, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Kotansky in Betz 1992, 300). Another conjurs the god 'by the great, famous name, Abraam...' (Smith in Betz 1992, 125). Indeed, coming from the Greco-Roman period, the magical material 'reflects an amazingly broad religious and cultural pluralism', with most spells being 'mixtures of several religions — Egyptian, Greek, Jewish, to name the most important', including 'a few sprinkles of Christianity' (Betz 1992, xlv). It is not known how the Jewish material made its way into

¹² See Mosher 1992, 155f.

¹³ Rather, it invokes a god, who, among other things, hap sw m wedjat r msw.f 'conceals himself in the Sound Eye from his children' (Allen 1960, 285). There is no indication in the spell that the 'sound eye' refers to a hypocephalus.

¹⁴ Budge (1901, 119) speculated that the hypocephalus 'represents the pupil of the eye of Horus'. But Bonnet (1952, 390) cites only Spiegelberg's explanation that the hypocephalus originally was a round pillow (Kopfkissen) that later Egyptians misinterpreted as a round disk when they saw it on ancient depictions (Gerštfriesen). More recently, Kessler (1980, 693) suggests 'a biscuit' as the Middle Kingdom precursor to the hypocephalus. In that the purpose of the hypocephalus was to provide the heat of the sun-god Re to the deceased in order to facilitate rebirth, it would not be unreasonable to regard it as a representation of the solar disk. See Goyon 1972, 276.

¹⁵ For references to Jesus, see Betz 1992, 62, 96, 319, 323. Ritner (1993, 246) notes that the presence of 'foreign elements in the latest Demotic spells... simply continues the syncretistic nature of Egyptian theology, absorbing Nubian, Greek, and Semitic elements as the New Kingdom had assimilated the gods (Baal, Astarte, Reshep, and Huruna) and spells of its neighbors (Cretan and Semitic)'.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

the magical papyri, although at least some may have originated in the Greek Septuagint, written in the second century BCE.¹⁶ To the itinerant magicians,

“the gods from the various cults gradually merged, and as their natures became blurred, they often changed into completely different deities. For these magicians, there was no longer any cultural difference between the Egyptian and the Greek gods, or between them and the Jewish god and the Jewish angels; even Jesus was occasionally assimilated into this truly “ecumenical” religious syncretism of the hellenistic world culture” (xlvi).¹⁷

Moreover, the magician ‘no longer understood the old languages, although he used remnants of them in transcription’ (xlv). In addition, ‘incomprehensible words’ were often used in the magical spells, ‘arranged into patterns of sounds which are judged to be effective; they are a mixture of Egyptian, Babylonian, Cretan, and other foreign languages to make “abracadabra” spells’ (Jacq 1985, 20f.). ‘Abra-’ was a widely-used formative element in the magical texts that was combined with various other elements to produce abracadabra words. It ‘was probably originally a secret paraphrase of the name of the Jewish God Yahweh written in four (Hebrew: arba = abra) consonants (tetragram)’ (Rudolph 1983, 311).¹⁸ For example, observe how abra is combined with another element in the following instance: In the magical spell of which fig. 6 is a part, the magician stood on top of his house and sought divination from the moon, pronouncing an incantation from seven to nine times until the divinity appeared to him. This part of the incantation was ‘Ho! Sax, Amun, Sax, Abrasax; for thou art the moon’ (Griffith and Thompson 1904, 147). ‘Abra’ here was combined with s(t)-`ks¹⁹ ‘saks’ to form the magical word ‘Abrasaks’.²⁰ ‘Abrasax’/‘Abraxas’ continued to be used throughout the centuries in connection with magical spells.²¹

¹⁶ See Grese in Betz 1992, 96 note 395.

¹⁷ See Merkelbach and Totti (1991, 146) regarding the Greek god Aion and Iao, a Greek form of Jehovah: ‘The highest god and creator of the world is called by many names. One of his names is Aiwn. When the vowels were rearranged, the name of the one Jewish God, Iaw, was produced. While Aion, the great god that lived in Alexandria, was Greek, [he] was Iao himself to the many Jews in [Egypt]’.

¹⁸ See Meyer in Betz 1992, 37 note 12.

¹⁹ For the unusual writing of ‘s’, see Griffith 1909, 130.

²⁰ In the Egyptian Gnostic tradition, ‘the lowest class of angels created the world and men’. Abrasaks (‘Abrasax’, ‘Abraxas’), which had ‘for its basis the numerical value 365’, was the name of their leader, ‘the God of the Jews’. The Gnostics believed that Jesus was sent to deliver the world from the tyranny of Abrasaks (Rudolph 1983, 311). Rudolph (1983, plate 3-7) notes that ‘Abrasax or Abraxas has the Greek letters corresponding to the number 365, and thus represents the god of the (solar) year and of eternity (aion)’. See Harris 1971, 159-161.

²¹ See Quinn 1987, 55; citations in *A Supplement to the Oxford Dictionary of the English Language*, vol. 1, s.v. ‘abraxas’.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

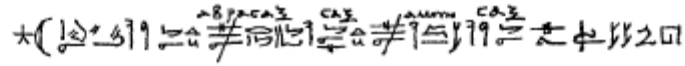


Fig. 6. 'Saks' and 'Abra-saks' in Magical 23.24

Note the various uses of abra in other magical spells:

- abra (Betz 1992, 96);
- abrae abrao abraoa (17);
- abra abra sabaoth (37);
- abrat abrasax (45);
- abraiaoth (57, 58, 59);
- abraoth (61, 96, 103);
- abrasax (20, 22, 24, 30, 36, 67, 101, 103 [2], 107 [3], 121, 122, 136, 146, 148, 150 [2], 152, 155, 161 [2], 163, 174, 176, 184, 187, 233, 265, 266, 270, 272, 277, 282, 286 [2], 291, 292, 296, 297 [3], 299 [2], 302 [6], 303, 309, 314);
- ABRA BRACHA (67);
- ABRAA (77);
- ABRASILOA (11);
- ABRASIAOUA (159);
- ABRAARM (190); ABRAACH (190);
- ABRATHIAOTH (193);
- ABRASAKS (218, 245);
- ABRATHIAOTH (261);
- ABRAXAS (30, 262);
- ABRATHIAO (277);
- ABRA A O (293);
- ABRASAKX (299);
- ABRASICHOOU (302);
- ABRAO (304);
- ABRASA (305).

It is therefore not surprising that the biblical name 'Abraham' would be popular in the spells — not only when the magicians would appeal to, among others, the god of 'Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob'²²; but especially because it contained the magically potent *abra* element, and consequently was a word that was felt to contain magical power *suo jure*.²³

²² See Betz 1992, 110, 164, 191, 268.

²³ For a discussion of the magical potency of divine names and wording in the magical papyri, see Betz 1995, 163-165.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

For example, in the first magical spell that Gee cites (384:1.6-11, fig. 1 C), composed in Greek, ABRAAM occurs as part of a group of magical words. The second spell in which Gee finds an authenticating reference to Abraham (Magical 8.8; see fig. 5), does not refer probatively to the biblical Abraham. Rather, ABRACAM functions as a magical word, the proper pronunciation of which was important for making the spell effective. (Since the Demotic and hieratic writing systems were only consonantal, leaving uncertain the proper vocalization of important magical words, the scribe of 384 and Magical provided glosses in Old Coptic²⁴ for certain magical words so that they would be pronounced correctly [Johnson 1975, 48, 53]).²⁵ ABRACAM here is a gloss in Old Coptic for two Demotic elements: *abra* and *hmy*, the word for 'artificer'²⁶:

ⲁⲃⲣⲁⲙ	ⲁⲃⲣⲁ-
ⲉⲓⲛⲃⲩⲩ	ⲛⲙⲓ

The same word, ABRACAM, was used magically in another instance (in 384:2*.16f. = PDM 12.6-20), which Gee does not cite: 'Write this name on [a white, grape-shaped stone] ... saying, "ABRACAM FILHN . . . CNI . . ."' (Johnson 1975, 33 [Johnson in Betz 1992, 152]).²⁷ ABRACAM clearly has no significance as the biblical Abraham in these spells. Note (Abrm) as 'Abraham' in Demotic (Lÿddeckens 1980, 1:1.8) and as 'Abraham' in the Coptic Nag Hammadi codices (Nag Hammadi 2:82.26; 133.29).²⁸

The lion-couch vignette of 384:1 does not depict a human sacrifice. The adjacent text Gee cites does not contain a plea for deliverance by an intended sacrificial victim. Book of the Dead chapter 163 has nothing to do with hypocephali, which in turn have nothing to do with Abraham. ABRAAM and ABRACAM, possibly originating from the name 'Abraham', serve merely as potent magical words; they have no authenticating

²⁴ 'Old Coptic' is the term for the earliest period (i.e., the third century C.E.) when the Egyptian language was written in Greek script with additional letters to represent sounds not found in Greek. See Lambdin 1983, vii.

²⁵ The Egyptians feared that Greek was 'unable to transmit the hidden active force (energeia) of the Egyptian words, which had special, magic, qualities and functions (ergwn)' (Iversen 1984, 50).

²⁶ This is how Griffith (1909, 127) interpreted the word: '(`Br`)-hme with det. of wood and man in magic name: gloss (ABRA)CAM. Preserved in Copt. construct [ham-] "artificer": possibly the absolute form also'. See Erichsen 1954, 303f., who notes an occurrence of the word in Magical 21:29 with the meaning of 'handiwork, art'.

²⁷ Johnson (1975, 52 note 41) observes that ABRACAM in 384:2*. 16 is the same word as the gloss in Magical 8:8.

²⁸ For informative discussions on the origin and meaning of 'Abraham', see Thompson 1974, 22-36; Van Seters 1975, 40-42.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

connection with Abraham as depicted in the Book of Abraham. As a result, Gee's statement that Pap. Leiden I 384 and the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden 'expressly mention Abraham' is misleading, and it is impossible for them to 'connect him with representations similar to Facsimiles 1 and 2 of the Book of Abraham'. As a result, conclusions that Gee asserts as 'premature' (FARMS 1991, 3) must still be considered seriously:

- 1) There are no known ancient Egyptian documents that are related to the text of the Book of Abraham, and the likelihood that any will be found is slim at best.
- 2) The only relationship between hypocephali and the text of the Book of Abraham is the one that Joseph Smith asserted.

'Abraham in Ancient Egyptian Texts'. John Gee's evidence for his second article is comprised of the two magical spells he presented in his first (Pap. Leiden 384vo. 1 and Magical 8) and four additional spells: one introduced in the above review of his first article (Pap. Leiden 384vo. 2* = PDM 12.6-20) and three new ones (PGM 12. 260-321; PGM 36.295-311; and PGM 5.459-89). They are reviewed in the order he presents them.

The first spell to which Gee appeals in his effort to establish the historicity of the Book of Abraham was designed to magically empower an iron ring to 'cause praise' for the petitioner (PDM 12.6-20). As part of the procedure, the magician was to take a white, grape-shaped stone and empower it by writing several magically potent words on it, one of which was ABRACAM. (See Johnson in Betz 1992, 152.) For Gee, ABRACAM must refer to the patriarch Abraham and the white stone must be a seer stone. He draws his readers' attention to three scriptural texts to support the interpretation he has read into the spell according to Mormon hermeneutics:

- Rev 2:17: To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.
- DC 130:10-11: Then the white stone mentioned in Revelation 2:17, will become a Urim and Thummim to each individual who receives one, whereby things pertaining to a higher order of kingdoms will be made known. ... The new name is the key word.
- Abr. 3:1: And I, Abraham, had the Urim and Thummim, which the Lord my God had given unto me, in Ur of the Chaldees; (cf. v. 4: And the Lord said unto me, by the Urim and Thummim...)

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Unfortunately, nothing in the spell indicates that the white, grape-shaped stone is an analog to a seer stone, a medium through which revelation is to be obtained. Even more unfortunate for Gee's interpretation, the white stone of Rev 2:17 (on which DC 130:10-11 is a pesher) was not a seer stone. Braumann (TDNT 9:606) observes that it was

“thought to be an amulet. In religious history the amulet has a place in the magical beliefs of the time. Magical formul', in this case the new name, mediate supernatural powers and offer protection against demons and evil forces.”

The fact is that this is only one among numerous magical spells prescribing that the magician write magically-potent words, figures, and/or numbers on papyrus, linen, gold, lead, silver, copper, tin, iron, branches, leaves, roots, bat wings, and stones.²⁹ Gee's reference to the grape-shaped, white stone as a seer stone is unwarranted; and abracam, as noted in the review of Gee's first article, is a magically-potent word that has no authenticating significance for the Book of Abraham.

The second magical spell to which Gee appeals (PGM 12.270-350) also utilized a stone with writing on it. The purpose of this spell was to empower a ring to make 'men famous and great and admired and rich as can be', or at least making possible for the ring-bearer to make friends with famous-and-great-and-admired-and-rich-as-can-be men. The ring-bearer was instructed that whenever he had the ring with him,

“you will always get whatever you ask from anybody. Besides, it calms the angers of masters and kings. Wearing it, whatever you may say to anyone, you will be believed, and you will be pleasing to everybody. [The power of the ring can] call back souls, move spirits, subject legal opponents, strengthen friendships, produce all [sorts of] profits, bring / dreams, give prophecies, cause psychological passions and bodily sufferings and incapacitating illness, and perfect all erotic philters” (Smith in Betz 1992, 163f).

²⁹ Examples of other spells that involve stones are: - PGM 1.42-95: the magician was to take a magically-provided oblong stone and engrave on it, inter alia, the name 'acha achacha chach charchara chach'. The purpose of the spell was to conjure a spirit assistant for the magician (O'Neil in Betz 1992, 5-7). - PGM 4.930-114: the magician was to 'clasp... to [his] breasts' a pebble with the magically-potent number 3663 on it. The purpose of the spell was divination (Grese in Betz 1992, 56). - PGM 4.1716-1870: the magician was to take a stone and engrave on it, inter alia, ACHMAGE RARPEPSEI... ACHAPA ADONAIE BASMA CHARAKO IAKOB IAO E PHARPHAREI... SSSSSSS... EEEEEEEE'. The purpose of the spell was to attract women (O'Neil in Betz 1992, 69). - PGM 4.2785-2890: the magician was to take a stone and carve faces into it. The purpose of the stone was to be a protective charm (O'Neil in Betz 1992, 92). - PGM 5.213-303: the magician was to carve a scarab out of 'costly green stone' and engrave Isis on the underside. The purpose of the spell was to magically empower the scarab (Smith in Betz 1992, 104-105). - PGM 5.447-58: the magician was to take 'a jasper-like agate' and, inter alia, engrave 'the [magical] name [of Serapis?]'. The stone was to be used with a ring in lamp divination (Smith in Betz 1992, 109).

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

The ring was empowered by a 'first-rate name', Helios, inscribed on a stone, which, when made potent by the magical spell 'can open doors and break chains and rocks' (164). At dawn the magician was to face the sun (Helios) and magically imbue the 'well-planned, beneficent, divine, holy, useful, economical, merciful stone which provides your needs' by invoking the 'Greatest god, who exceed[s] / all power'.

From the long list of names of the god the magician was to recite, Gee focuses on 'IAO SABAOTH ADONAI EILOEIN [ELOHIM]', and 'Abraham, Isaac, Jacob'. He declares that the 'first four names are Hebrew for "LORD of hosts, my Lord, God"' (1992, 60). But he fails to acknowledge that by the time the magical spells were written, 'even the Jewish god Iao', originally YHWH, was in many respects an underworld deity (Betz 1992, xlvi-xlvii) who 'became an important deity in magical literature' (335); that the meaning of 'my Lord' for ADONAI 'had been long lost to the practitioners of the Roman Empire' and now referred to an 'important angelic figure in gnosticism and in magic' (331). In fact, IAO, SABAOTH, ADONAI, and ELOHIM occur so frequently in the magical spells that their appearance is not noteworthy. Moreover, the occurrences of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in several magical spells³⁰ are disconnected from any biblical context and therefore do not constitute an assurance 'that we are dealing with references to the biblical Abraham' (61) in any more than the vaguest sense. The currency of these terms in Egyptian literature is unknown before the Late Period and therefore they are not evidence of a long tradition that dates to the second millennium BCE that would in any way authenticate the Book of Abraham.

Gee's third example is a modified appeal to Pap. Leiden I 384:1 (PGM 12.480-495) that he introduced in his first article. This time he concedes that the spell is a 'love charm' (60) instead of merely a 'text . . . entitled "The sacrifice [or burning] of so-and-so"' (1991,1) and that the subject of the spell is a woman, not Abraham.

But Gee's new interpretation does not correctly reflect the data he cites. In the first place, he misleads his readers when he takes license to translate *neku n* as 'the dead (pharaohs)' in his attempt to relate the spell to the Book of Abraham. As justification for his interpretation, he claims that 'Neukoi [sic] can refer to the dead in general or specifically to certain dead pharaohs,' appealing to the Ptolomaic Egyptian chronographer Manetho as his authority (62 note 4). What he fails to mention is that Manetho's work was a translation of the Egyptian king lists into Greek, with the obvious result that Manetho's

³⁰ See also Betz 1992, 8, 110, 191, 268, 310.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

use of 'the dead' would refer to kings. The word *neku n* itself has no intrinsic meaning that refers to dead pharaohs.³¹

Secondly, because Joseph Smith restored a man's head to the damaged Anubis from the lion-couch vignette and identified him as the 'Idolatrous Priest of Elkenah' in Facsimile One of the Book of Abraham, Gee wants to minimize the fact that the facsimile should have been restored with Anubis' head, instead of a man's. Accordingly, he begs the question with his assertion that Anubis 'is indistinguishable from his priest, who wears a jackal mask over his head' (61), appealing for support to an article about masks by Seeber (1980, 1196-1199). The Egyptians in fact were concerned about representing the god in their illustrations, not the person doing the officiating, which may be why there is only one known illustration of a priest wearing the mask of a god-and it may not even be a depiction of an actual event (see Seeber 1980, 1197).³² The question is not whether priests impersonated gods on cultic occasions by wearing masks. The question is whether or not Joseph Smith's reconstruction of the standing figure in his lion-couch vignette is accurate. It is not.

³¹ Liddell and Scott 1166b, sv. *nekuV*. Griffiths (1980, 169) points out that when the Egyptian tradition "is reproduced by Manetho, a typically Greek twist is given by the statement that the following dynasty was that of the 'Heroes' or 'Spirits of the Dead' and 'Demigods' [*nekueV kai hmideoi*]." See Beckerath 1975, 1233, 1235 note 6.

³² What Seeber says is that ancient Egyptian illustrations ordinarily made no distinction between gods and possibly-masked priests in the role of gods (1980, 1197). The Egyptians focused on depicting the gods rather than their human portrayers because, as Assmann (1992, 98-99) observes, the vignettes, or iconic portions, tend to be the canonical parts of Egyptian writings. The texts are interpretations of the vignettes designed to 'enrich the meaning and to adapt the rite to specific theological and mythological contexts'. He notes that: "The temple reliefs of the Late period reflect a full-fledged tradition of ritual exegesis, a culture of interpretation ("Auslegungskultur") applied not to texts-as in the more-or-less contemporaneous Alexandrian and Jewish institutions of interpretation-but to pictures. However, this culture of interpretation is anything but a symptom of Hellenistic influence; on the contrary, it is deeply rooted in the Egyptian cult." In that regard, Bleeker (1975, 100) observes that 'the illustrations of the texts are no artistic extras, but form an essential part of the texts, and sometimes even the main part'. Note that the Egyptians never depicted the priests performing rituals as substitutes for the king: 'All the priests serving the myriad cults were merely [the king's] delegates, temple iconography depicting only the king performing the ritual' (Trigger, Kemp, O'Connor, and Lloyd 1983, 201). Concerning the one known instance in which the priest's head is depicted within the mask, SchŠfer (1974, 121f.) observes that the artist wished to show how the priest was placed in the mask and needed to be led. But that is a rare exception, since it never occurred to anyone to show the human head inside the very common figures of a priest dressed as a jackal-headed funerary deity who attends to the mummy; instead the priest playing the role of the god is always represented as if he really had an animal head.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

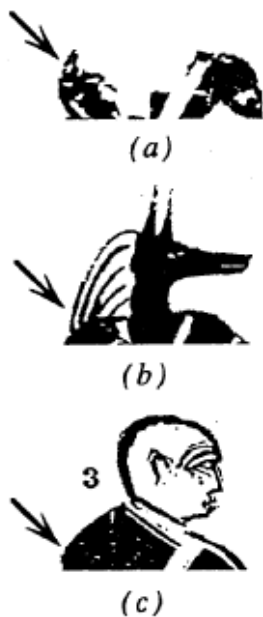


Fig. 8.

The evidence from the lion-couch vignette of Pap. Joseph Smith 1 (fig. 8a) clearly shows the remnants of Anubis' headdress (fig. 8b), which Joseph Smith's restoration omits (fig. 8c). But then, because Smith was unacquainted with ancient Egyptian lion-couch scenes, it is only natural that he would not recognize the headdress remnants for what they are, and he instructed Reuben Hedlock to restore hypothetically a man's head, consonant with his interpretation of Anubis as the 'Idoltrous Priest of Elkenah'. As figure 8 indicates, the correct restoration of the vignette would require Anubis' head, not a man's. There is no evidence of a man's head on the papyrus, and there is no precedent for one on any known lion-couch scene.³³

In light of the review of his first article, Gee drops his original claim that the person about to be sacrificed was Abraham and now maintains that it was a woman on the lion-couch vignette of the magical spell who was the intended sacrificial victim: 'The idea of incinerating the woman as a punishment in case the woman does not yield to the man who casts the spell is an old Egyptian formula' (61). This would call to his readers' mind Abr 1:11-12:

"Now, this priest had offered upon this altar three virgins at one time, who were the daughters of Onitah, one of the royal descent directly from the loins of Ham. These virgins were offered up because of their virtue; they would not bow down to worship gods of wood or of stone, therefore they were killed upon this altar, and it was done after the manner of the Egyptians. And it came to pass that the priests laid violence upon me, that they might slay me also, as they did those virgins upon this altar; and that you may have a knowledge of this altar, I will refer you to the representation at the commencement of this record."

In support of his singular assertion that the lion-couch was used to sacrifice unyielding women, Gee misinterprets PDM 12.147-164 as referring to human sacrifice, when its real purpose was intended to inflame a woman with passion, as pointed out in the review of his first article. Worse, he wrongly appeals to a ca. 20th-Dynasty love charm to support his contention for the immolation of women. Unfortunately for Gee, it contains no reference to lion couches or to incinerating, sacrificing, or even harming women in any

³³ For a fuller discussion of this problem, see Ashment 1979, 36-38.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

way.³⁴ Instead, the suitor threatens to set fire to the city of Busiris and Osiris himself if the gods do not make the intended woman submissive:

“Hail to you, gods, lords of heaven and earth-let (the woman) NN born of NN come after me like a cow after grass, like a maidservant after her children, like a herdsman after his cattle. If they fail to make her come after me I will set <fire to> Busiris and burn up <Osiris>!” (Borghouts 1978, 1)

There is no evidence to support Gee’s claims that men (e.g., Abraham in his first article) and/or unyielding women (in his second article) ever were sacrificed on lion couches.

Gee’s fourth example is a modification of his appeal to Magical 8 (= PDM 14.150-231) from his first article. He now at least refers to it as a magical papyrus even though he places magical in quotation marks (61). This time he almost admits that the text is a lamp divination spell — he now calls it ‘a long chapter on using a lamp to get revelation’ (61) — whereas before he referred to it merely as a ‘section on how to obtain revelation’ (1991, 3). His second article wisely omits the claim he made in his first that, like Magical 8, ‘Joseph Smith’s explanation of the hypocephalus in the Book of Abraham also deals with obtaining revelation about the heavens and the cosmos’ (3); for Magical 8 has no such stated purpose.

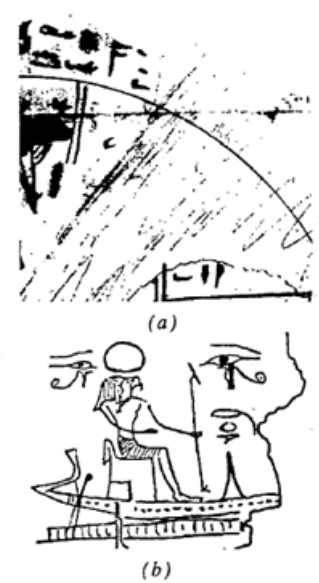


Fig. 9.

Gee focuses his attention on the phrase *br`hmy p3 df n t3 irt n t3 wedat*, ‘ABRAHME [Old Coptic gloss: ABRACAM], the pupil of the sound eye’ (Johnson in Betz 1992, 208), trying to use it as the link between Abraham and Facsimile Two of the Book of Abraham. He first claims significance for the ‘sound’ (wedjat) eye by noting that it ‘occurs four times’ in Facsimile Two. But only two occurrences are certainly authentic. The other two come from Joseph Smith’s hypothetically-restored section of the badly-damaged hypocephalus (fig. 9a; see fig. 4). The restoration was taken from a vignette in Pap JS 2:8 (fig. 9b).³⁵

He misleadingly quotes Hopfner that ‘it is very noteworthy that the Patriarch Abraham is called “the apple of the wedjat-eye”’ (61), by omitting why Hopfner thought it was remarkable, for Gee wants his readers to equate the wedjat eye with the Facsimile Two hypocephalus and Abraham in such a way as to authenticate the Book of Abraham. What

³⁴ For the date of the spell, see Smither 1941, 131.
³⁵ See Ashment 1979, 40-42.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

Hopfner found remarkable was that 'ABRACAM' was equated with the full moon; not with an wedjat-eye-as-hypocephalus as Gee would have his readers believe. Here is his full statement:

"Finally, it is very remarkable that the patriarch Abraham is called 'the apple of the wedjat eye'; that is, the full moon. [Endlich ist es sehr bemerkenswert, da?der Patriarch Abraham änder Apfel des Auges der Uzat", d. h. der Vollmond genannt wird.]" (Hopfner 1935, 118)³⁶

16

Continuing with his wedjat-Abraham-Facsimile-Two theme, Gee next declares that 'in Christian times it [the wd̄st eye] was the word the Copts used for salvation' (61). Unfortunately, Gee's claim incorrectly reflects the Coptic toujw, 'salvation' (Rettung), and its etymology. toujw is the causitive of oujai ('whole, uninjured', originating from wd̄z), and comes from di wd̄z (Westendorf 1977, 261, 287; Vycichl 1983, 226, 242; Cerny 1976, 224)-not the wd̄st eye, also a derivative of wd̄z (an adjectival verb meaning 'be uninjured' [Wb. 1:399]).

Gee next uses the wd̄st eye to connect Facsimile Two to Book of the Dead chapters 162-167, which he claims 'treat the theme of preserving the dead until the time of the resurrection' and discuss 'the hypocephalus — the general class of documents to which facsimile no. 2 belongs' (61). He describes these spells as being 'closely related' and consequently treats them as a unit ('this set of chapters'), even though BD 163-167 are not even related to BD 162. In contrast to the rest of the Book of the Dead, in which the sun god Re is the primary deity, BD 163-167 as a group is characterized by the Theban god Amun acting as the sun god (Barguet 1967, 233). BD 163 and 165 appeal to Amun, who is prominent also in BD 167; and Mut is the primary deity in BD 164. Mosher (1992, 156) points out that their 'stature in these spells is unique, for neither held such status in the funerary cult, at least as far as the Book of the Dead was concerned'. In fact, BD 163-165 were excluded from Memphite versions of the Book of the Dead, suggesting that 'they were rejected by the Memphite clergy, at least by the 3rd century if not earlier, as non-traditional, perhaps as the upstart work of Amen adherents'.

³⁶ Hopfner's observation accurately reflects the Egyptian context. The 'apple' (pupil [ʃf(?)], inter alia, refers to 'the pupil of the moon-eye' (Mondaage; Wb. 5:573.4). The wedjat eye itself refers to the 'undamaged eye of Horus, that is, the full moon' (der volle Mond; Wb. 1:401.12). Elsewhere the magical texts relate the wedjat eye and the moon: 'You should speak to the moon when it fills the sound-eye [wedjat]'; 'when [the moon] fills the sound-eye [wedjat], you see the figure of the god in sound-eye [wedjat] speaking to you' (Johnson in Betz 1992, 233). Elsewhere, the wedjat eye is a vignette in a moon spell (Betz 1992, 29).

Lion and Lamb Apologetics



Fig. 10. BD 162 in Papyrus Berlin 3031 (as reproduced by Möller 1905, 48).

Not only do the disparate deities demonstrate that BD 162-167 did not originate as a group, but they they are temporally disparate as well. Mosher (1992, 155) argues convincingly against Yoyotte, whom Gee (1992, 62 note 12) cites with approval. Yoyotte concludes that BD 162-167 ‘were composed in the Theban milieu during the Ramesside period’ and ‘were popularized for the benefit of the dead in Dyn. 21’ (1977, 200), even though BD 163-165 ‘are not attested until the 26th Dynasty’ (Mosher 1992, 155 note 58). BD 167 is first attested in Dynasty 18; BD 166 is first attested in Dynasty 19; BD 162 is first attested in Dynasty 21 (fig. 10); BD 163-165 are first attested in Dynasty 26; and there are no attestations of BD 166-167 ever occurring on the same papyrus as BD 163-165 (Mosher 1990, Appendix C). But Gee must treat BD 162-167 as a unit, because otherwise he has no justification for calling the hypocephalus an wedjat eye and relating it to Abraham probatively, as the review of his first article makes clear.

Moreover, contrary to Gee, the Egyptians had no theological concept of ‘the time of the resurrection’. Rather, their hope was that after death they would be revived by being re-integrated into the cycles of nature and cosmos (Frankfort 1948, 117), and their religion contained numerous ‘models of continuity’ that symbolized their hope. The term ‘resurrection’, with its heavy Eurocentric Christian presuppositions, does not properly describe the content of the ancient Egyptian beliefs, and therefore is unsuitable (Buchberger 1986, 1254).

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

Gee's attempt to get his readers to connect the biblical Abraham to the wedjat eye, to Facsimile Two, to salvation, and to the Mormon notion of the resurrection is based on incorrect and misleading evaluations of the evidence.

Gee declares that his fifth reference to Abraham in the Roman Period magical spells 'is linked to a Bible story' placed in a 'love charm' (viz., PGM 36.295-311):

"The heavens opened and the angels of God descended and destroyed the five cities: Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim and Zoar. When a woman heard the sound she became a salty pillar." The individual using this charm also calls upon "the great Michael, Souriel, Gabriel,... Istrael [sic], [and] Abraham." (61-62)

Gee leaves his readers with the misimpression that he is citing a clean reference to a biblical story by omitting several important items: Firstly, using associative magic, the magician was to take lumps of sulfur and throw them into a fire, appealing to them as though they were the sulfur that God reigned down on the five cities of the plain: 'You are the sulfur which served God — so also serve me'. Secondly, Gee does not inform his readers that the purpose of the spell was to bedevil a woman so thoroughly as to 'not allow her to go to bed or to find sleep until she comes' and makes love to her suitor. Thirdly, he omits all the other deities to whom the magician was to appeal:

"As you throw [the lumps] into the fire, say: "If I throw you into the fire, I adjure you by the great PAP TAPHEIAO SABAOOTH ARBATHIAO ZAGOURE PAGOURE, and by the great MICHAEL/ ZOURIEL GABRIEL SESENGENBARPHARANGES ISTRAEL ABRAAM, attract her, NN, to NN" (O'Neil in Betz 1992, 276).

Finally, Gee changes the spelling of one of the cities of the plain from the 'Segor' (Chgwr) of the original spell to 'Zoar' (r[wx]). That the spell refers to the city as 'Segor' argues in favor of the 2d Century BCE Septuagint (where the city is also spelled 'Segor' [Shgwr]) as the source of the biblical material in this spell, and against Gee's claim of a long-standing tradition of Abraham in ancient Egypt.

In contrast to his other references, Gee fails to document the last magical spell in which he claims to find a reference to the biblical Abraham. Attempting to establish the ancient Egyptian historical claim of the Book of Abraham, Gee invites his readers to compare his creative rendering of this spell with several Book of Abraham citations:

"I call upon thee, the creator of earth and bones and all flesh and every spirit and the one who stands upon the sea and shakes the heaven, who separated the light

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

from the darkness [compare Gen. 1:4; Moses 2:4; Abr. 4:4], O great mind, lawful administrator of the universe [see explanation to facsimile no. 2, notes of figures 1, 3 and 7], eternal eye, daimon of daimons, god of gods, the lord of the spirits [compare Abr. 3:22-23], the fixed planet [compare explanation to facsimile no. 2, notes on figure 5], Jehovah [compare Abr. 1:16], hear my voice. Thou canst not misunderstand my voice in Hebrew: [many foreign words] Blessed is my Lord, the God of Abraham. I babble in a foreign tongue” (1992, 62).

19

Unfortunately, Gee’s rendering misrepresents the contents of the spell. PGM 5.459-489 is an alternate spell that was to enable the petitioner to loosen shackles, make himself invisible, send dreams, gain favor, and get whatever else he may want (Aune in Betz 1992, 110). By omitting key parts of the spell’s invocation to the ‘Supreme Intelligence’, Gee gives the impression that the magician is addressing ‘Jehovah’ and pronouncing a variation of the Jewish blessing, ‘Blessed is my Lord, the God of Abraham’.

In fact, the magician syncretistically invokes the ‘Supreme Intelligence’ in his various names:

“Eternal Eye, Daimon of daimons, god of gods, the lord of the spirits, the invariable AION IAO OYEI, hear my voice. I call upon you, master of the gods, high-thundering Zeus, sovereign Zeus, ADONAI, lord IAO OYEE; I am he who calls upon you, great god, in Syrian: ‘ZAALAERIPHPHOU’, and you must not ignore my voice in Hebrew ‘ABLANATHANALBA ABRASILOA’.”

Gee altogether omits ‘master of the gods, high-thundering Zeus, sovereign Zeus’ and ‘I am he who calls upon you, great god, in Syrian: “ZAALAERIPHPHOU”’. Moreover, he dismisses as ‘many foreign words’ and accordingly omits the un-Hebrew name of the Supreme Intelligence, ‘ABLANATHANALBA ABRASILOA’. In addition, he omits the fact that the Jewish blessing (BAROUCH ADONAI ELOAI ABRAAM) occurs in the magician’s proclamation of his own name:

“for I am SILTHACHOOUCH LAILAM BLASALOTH IAO IEO NEBOUTH SABIOTH ARBOTH ARBATHIAO IAOTH SABAOTH PA/TOURE ZAGOURE BAROUCH ADONAI ELOAI ABRAAM BARABRAOU NAUSIPH” (Aune in Betz 1992, 109-110).

By those omissions, Gee makes it seem that the Jewish blessing is what the magician, addressing ‘Jehovah’, speaks in Hebrew, instead of merely being part of the magician’s abracadabra designation of himself.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

It is not clear that the the magician even understood the phrase BAROUCH ADONAI ELOAI ABRAAM.³⁷ Moreover, as the review of Gee's first article points out, abraam often only has the force of a magical abracadabra word. In ADONAI ELOAI ABRAAM, ABRAAM is interchangeable with other abra- words, as the same or similar phrases in other magical spells make clear:

ADONAI ELOAI ABRASAX (Betz 1992, 270);
ADONAIOS SABAOTH ABRASAX (296);
IAO SABAOTH ADONAI ABRASAX (20, 136);
IAON SABAOTH ADONAI [ABRASAX] (155);
IAO SABAOTH ABRASAX (163);
IAO SABAOTH ABRATIAOTH ADONAI (193);
IAHO ABRASAKS (218);
[IAEO] SABAO ABRASAX ADONAI (286);
ABAOTH ABRATHIAOTH [SABAOTH] ADONAI (261);
SABAOTH ADONE SALAMA TARCHEI ABRASAX (265);
ADONAI ABRASAX PINOUTI (266); and
ADONAIOS SABAOTH ABRASAX (296).

Gee's affirmation that ABRAAM in this spell is a reference to the biblical Abraham that in some way substantiates the historicity of the Book of Abraham is hopeful at best.

Gee curiously interprets 'the invariable AION IAO OYEI' as 'the fixed planet'. Thus he creates a parallel to Joseph Smith's note about Facsimile 2.5 of the Book of Abraham: 'Kae-e-vanrash, which is the grand Key, or, in other words, the governing power, which governs fifteen other fixed planets or stars'. Gee's claim is unparalleled. The fact is that AION is the name of a god³⁸ who 'plays an important role in the magical papyri, and 'whose name signifies "long period of time," "eon," "eternity"' (Betz 1992, 331) not Gee's 'fixed planet'.

John Gee's *Ensign* article is a revised and expanded version of his FARMS piece this time in a more sophisticated package. Echoing the apologetic creed that even though a spiritual witness through faith is the only way a person will know that Joseph Smith's

³⁷ See Aune in Betz 1992, 110 note 63.

³⁸ In another spell (PGM 1.42-195) Aion is called 'God of Gods, mighty, boundless, undefiled, indescribable, firmly established Aion' (O'Neil in Betz 1992, 7). Merkelbach and Totti (1991, 146) observe that Aion is one of the names of 'the highest god and creator of the world'. ('Other names of the god are Zeus, Adonai ("Lord") and Sarapis'.) The vowels from Aion are the same as those that comprise Iao the Greek 'name of the one Jewish God'. That seems to account for the interchangeability and parallel use of Aion and Iao.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

scriptural writings are True, Gee declares that any supporting evidence that can be proffered would be helpful:

“Of course, acceptance of the book of Abraham, like acceptance of all scripture, will always depend on faith, and the only real proof of scripture can come only through the power of the Holy Ghost. But a knowledge of external factors can help in the search for truth, and a number of Egyptian texts mention Abraham” (1992, 60).³⁹

In contrast to his first article, however, he now concedes that his evidence is not good. In the first place, of the ‘dozens of references to Abraham in Egyptian texts’, the six examples he produces are from the Third Century CE and from a category that has, he now admits, ‘traditionally, been called “magical”’. Because he selects only six from the ‘dozens of references’, it is reasonable to assume that he considers those six to be the most compelling. Accordingly, in his conclusion, Gee represents his examples as though they are compelling, indeed-so compelling that had they been accessible to Joseph Smith, critics would have accused Smith of copying them. For that reason, he is careful to point out that all his examples ‘have come forth since Joseph Smith translated the book of Abraham’ (62).⁴⁰

Secondly, his discomfort with and consequent attempt to neutralize the significance of his appeals to ‘Abraham’ in magical texts is reflected by the fact that he offsets magic within quotation marks and declares that ‘many scholars are not sure how to distinguish

³⁹ Other apologists have made similar remarks about the Book of Mormon: Hilton 1990, 90: “The understanding that the Book of Mormon has a divine origin is obtainable only by developing faith. Thus, while valid and objective wordprinting is no substitute for faith, wordprinting can, nevertheless, bolster the establishment of faith by rigorously demonstrating factual information about the book.”
Skousen 1992, 24:

“My own testimony of the Book of Mormon is not based on my work on the critical text, but rather on my own personal witness of some 15 years ago that this book records events which actually happened. Nonetheless, it has been a delight to have discovered evidence in the original manuscript to support what witnesses said about how Joseph Smith translated.”

Hoskisson 1982, 41:

“suffice it to say that in addition to the personal witness of the Spirit that is extended to prayerful readers, these evidences sustain the truth that the Book of Mormon is what it purports to be: a document with deep roots in the ancient Near Eastern milieu of Lehi’s culture.” Ostler 1987, 67: “I bring to this study a believer’s experience. I see meaning and possibilities where the nonbeliever does not or finds no reason to see such meaning.... Faith enables one to see and expresses commitments before all the evidence is in.”

⁴⁰ That is a moot point, since Smith’s exposure to the concept of Abraham in Egypt came from the King James Version of the Bible, from which the majority of the contents of the Book of Abraham originated (viz., chapters 2, 4-5). See Ashment 1990b, 245.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

ancient magic from religion' (1992, 60).⁴¹ His statement is problematic in the context of Mormon hermeneutics, for Mormonism *clearly* distinguishes between magic and religion:

“In imitation of true religion with its miracles, signs, and gifts of the Spirit, Satan has substitute rituals and practices called *magic*. Attempts by unauthorized and therefore powerless ministers to duplicate the miraculous wonders of true religion result in the degenerate worship of magic. In its nature magic is the art which produces effects by the assistance of supernatural beings or by a mastery of secret forces in nature; *magicians* (those skilled in magic) are necromancers, sorcerers, conjurers, and the like.

22

Magic has flourished among apostate peoples in all ages. The magicians of Pharaoh's court had power given them from Satan to duplicate many of the miracles wrought by Moses” (McConkie 1966, 462).

Consequently the magical spells, as examples of satanic imitations of ‘true religion’ — and Gee's citations of Abraham in them — could not serve validly as evidence to his Mormon audience; that is, unless he ignores Mormonism's strong antipathy against magic by elevating it to the category of ‘true religion’. In any event, Gee obscurantistically tries to authenticate more convincingly the historicity of the Book of Abraham.

Thirdly, while Gee concedes that ‘these texts tell us nothing directly about Abraham’, he asserts correctly that ‘they do tell us that there were traditions of Abraham circulating in Roman Egypt’. Declaring that traditions ‘often stem from older truths’, he is strangely silent about the Egyptian Late Period (664-323 BCE) as a source for Abraham in Egyptian writings. For during that time, large numbers of Jews migrated to Egypt, bringing with them their magic and their holy book, which they soon translated into Greek (the Septuagint). Because the Egyptian magicians appealed to any and all deities and powers that might make spells effective, and because ‘Jewish magic was famous in antiquity (Betz 1992, xlv), it was only natural that the Jewish God, angels, and heroes would appear in the spells.

In fact, Gee fails to acknowledge the dearth of evidence about the biblical Abraham in Egyptian records before the Late Period. Instead, he affirms the consequent by appealing to the 19th-Century CE Book of Abraham itself as the original ‘older truth’ from which the traditions he alleges stem.⁴² That is, using the Book of Abraham as an already

⁴¹ In his important study, Ritner (1993, 247) convincingly argues that Egyptian magic was the ‘technique’ or ‘mechanics’ of Egyptian religion it was the ‘cultic manipulation’ of the dynamic, divine creative force ‘by recitation, substance, and ritual’.

⁴² For a discussion of this phenomenon, see Ashment 1989, 3.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

historically-True template against which to evaluate his material, Gee recognizes as 'evidence' anything in the Roman-Period magical spells he can make resemble the contents of the Book of Abraham, thus 'proving' that the Book of Abraham must be historically True.⁴³ Attempting to neutralize any criticism of his arguments by implying that it would be based on anti-Mormon bias not scholarship he takes the martyr's view that critics have an agendum to reject the Book of Abraham anyway, so that

"Even if we had a manuscript for the book of Abraham in Egyptian, dating to Abraham's time, the critics still would not accept the book of Abraham. Those who seek to know the truth of the book of Abraham will have to wait upon the Lord (62)."

In other words, in Gee's final analysis, evidence is worthless, for critics will look at it straight in the face and deny its validity. Testimony, on the other hand, is his arbiter of what is True, and believers 'who wait upon the Lord' will have the advantage of having a testimony that the Book of Abraham is historically True-even in the face of no evidence.

To date, believers will have to continue to 'wait upon the Lord' for their conviction of the historicity of the Book of Abraham. It is inappropriate to associate the grape-shaped white stone of PDM 12.6-20 with a Mormon seer stone with the initiate's new name written on it. The Hebrew names in PGM 12.270-321 are disconnected from any biblical context. The lion-couch vignette and its related love spell of PDM 12.147-164 do not depict or refer to any human sacrifice — let alone the sacrifice of an unyielding woman. Neither 'ABRACAM, the pupil of the wedjat eye' of Magical 8 nor the wedjat eye itself refers to hypocaphali (e.g., Facsimile Two of the Book of Abraham). ABRAAM in PGM 36.295-311 is not an authenticating reference for the Book of Abraham; it merely has the value of a potent abracadabra word in Roman Period Egyptian magic. The same is true of BAROUCH ADONAI ELOAI ABRAAM in PGM 5.459-489.

CONCLUSIONS

Although he declares that faith is the 'real proof of scripture', John Gee paradoxically has gone to great lengths in his articles to develop evidence out of Christian Era magical spells from Egypt in an effort to authenticate the historicity of the Book of Abraham. Unfortunately, none of the six authenticating references he has presented is historically rigorous. Gee provides his own dramatic demonstration of that fact when he abandons the extraordinary claim he makes in his first article that he actually has a reference suggesting Abraham lying on a lion-couch altar calling on God, which he boldly declares 'compares closely with Joseph Smith's indication that Facsimile 1 from the Book of

⁴³ For an analysis of similar methodologies regarding Book of Mormon apologetics, see Ashment 1993.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Abraham is an illustration of “Abraham fastened upon an altar” to be sacrificed by idolatrous priests’. After the review of his first piece pointed out that the evidence indicated clearly that the person on the lion-couch was a woman who was the object of a love spell, Gee abandons his remarkable claim and admits in his second article that the person on the lion-couch was a woman and that she was the object of a love spell. Only now he claims that she was to be sacrificed (on the lion couch) if she would not yield to her suitor, ‘according to an old Egyptian formula’. The spell no longer is ‘evidence’ of Abraham on the altar. Now it is ‘evidence’ for three young virgins on the altar. Less dramatic, but no less significant is the fact that Gee has, as the reviews have shown, misquoted and misinterpreted the data and the sources in order to develop his authenticating evidence.

Gee’s articles are illustrative of one of the two approaches that the Mormon apologetic school uses to deal with the major problem it faces, viz., for the plethora of proclaimed Truths that are to be rooted in history, there is a dearth of evidence.⁴⁴ The first approach, used elsewhere,⁴⁵ involves the denial of contrary evidence on philosophical grounds. It assumes relativistically that evidence that is not faith-promoting exists only in the head of the ‘objectivist’ historian, who would have a hidden agenda, but who would pretend to be empirical. On the other hand, it assumes objectivistically that the apologist would have the sure, ‘objective knowledge’ of proclaimed Truth, with the result that he could be more discretionary with evidence.⁴⁶

The second approach the implicit method of Gee’s articles involves the logical fallacy of ‘affirming the consequent’. Gee appeals to the 19th-century CE Book of Abraham as an already historically-True template to recognize or ignore ‘evidence’ regarding its historicity. In other words, the Book of Abraham would reflect an original revelation (an ‘Uroffenbarung’), of which authenticating bits and pieces survive in various sources.⁴⁷ Something is hailed as ‘evidence’ if it authenticates the template and ignored if it does not. That is why Gee does not inform his readers about the magical nature of the papyri in his first article. That is why he avoids the fact that his occurrences of the name of Abraham in the magical spells have no more meaning than potent abracadabra words. That is why to Gee a white stone with several magical words on it becomes a seer stone as in DC 130:10-11. That is why he freely interprets the lion-couch vignette and the magical spells following it in accordance with Joseph Smith’s interpretation of Facsimile One in his first article, or Abr 1:11-12 in his second. That is why he feels free to connect Magical 8.8 to Book of the Dead chapter 163 to Book of the Dead chapter 162 to the

⁴⁴ See Ashment 1992, 284f.; 1990, 2f., 7f.; 1989, 2ff.

⁴⁵ Recent examples are Midgley 1991, 261-311, and Robinson 1991, 312-318.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of this approach, see Ashment 1992.

⁴⁷ See L’Heureux 1981, 47.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

hypocephalus to Abraham to Joseph Smith's interpretation of Facsimile Two. That is why he omits significant amounts of original material in the last two magical texts he cites to make them appear as strong evidence for the the Book of Abraham.

More than anything, the articles indicate that Gee's scholarly vision is clouded by his anxiety to produce 'faith-promoting evidence'. Readers of apologetics, consequently, must be extremely cautious about accepting such 'faith-promoting' claims. As the above reviews show, apologetics can present 'faithful history' that is not historically rigorous to an unsuspecting audience. Unfortunately, everyone loses: apologists are not taken seriously by their colleagues in the academic world; church members are misinformed; and embarrassment may ultimately come to the church, which prides itself in adhering to the honorable claims of its Thirteenth Article of Faith.

Bibliography

Allen, Thomas George. 1960. *The Egyptian Book of the Dead Documents in the Oriental Institute Museum*. The University of Chicago Oriental Institute Publications, vol. 82. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

— — —. 1974. *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day*. *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations*, no. 37. Chicago: The Oriental Institute.

Ashment, Edward H. 1979. "The Facsimiles of the Book of Abraham: A Reappraisal." *SunStone*, vol. 4, nos. 5-6:33-48.

— — —. 1989. "A Response to David Ellis' Ancient Sources of Masonic Ritual." A Paper Presented at the SunStone West Symposium, 4 March, at Berkeley California.

— — —. 1990. "Aspects of Hugh Nibley's 'Methodological Philosophy.'" A Paper Presented at the SunStone West Symposium, 3 March, at Pasadena California.

— — —. 1990b. "Making the Scriptures 'Indeed One in Our Hands.'" In *The Word of God*, ed. Dan Vogel. Salt Lake City: Signature Books.

— — —. 1992. "Historiography of the Canon." In *Faithful History*, ed. George D. Smith. Salt Lake City: Signature Books.

— — —. 1993. "A Record in the Language of My Father." In *New Approaches to the Book of Mormon: Explorations in Critical Methodology*, ed. Brent Lee Metcalfe. Salt Lake City: Signature Books.

Assmann, Jan. 1992. "Semiosis and Interpretation in Ancient Egypt." In *Interpretation in Religion*, eds. Shlomo Biderman and Ben-Ami Scharfstein. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Baer, Klaus. 1968. "The Breathing Permit of Hor." *Dialogue* 3, no. 3 (Autumn): 109-134.

Baines, John. 1991. "Society, Morality, and Religious Practice." In *Religion in Ancient Egypt: Gods, Myths, and Personal Practice*, ed. Byron E. Shafer. Ithica: Cornell University Press.

Barguet, Paul. 1967. *Le Livre des Morts des ancient Egyptiens*. Paris: Les Editions du Cerf.

Beckerath, Jiirgen von. 1975. *Epochenbildung. in Lexikon der Agyptologie* 1:1232- 1235.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics

- Betz, Hans Dieter, ed. 1992. *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation: Including the Demotic Spells*. 2d ed. Vol. 1. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bleeker, C. J. 1975. "The Rainbow: A Collection of Studies in the Science of Religion." *Studies in the History of Religions* (Supplements to Numen), vol. 30. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Bonnet, Hans. 1952. *Reallexikon der ägyptischen Religionsgeschichte*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co.
- Borghouts, J. F. 1978. *Ancient Egyptian Magical Texts*. Leiden: E. J. Brill. Bromiley,
- Geoffrey W. ed. and transl. 1964-1975. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. 9 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company. Buchberger, Hannes. 1986. Wiedergeburt. In *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 6:1246-1261. Budge, E. A. Wallis. 1901. *Egyptian Magic*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Triebner, & Co.
- Cerny, J. 1976. *Coptic Etymological Dictionary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Daniel, Robert W. 1991. *Two Greek Magical Papyri in the National Museum of Antiquities in Leiden: A Photographic Edition of J384 and J 395 (= PGM XII and XIII)*. Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Sonderreihe Papyrologica Coloniensis, vol. 19.
- Erichsen, W. [1954] 1972. *Demotisches Glossar*. Reprint. Milano: Cisalpino-Goliardica.
- Erman, Adolf and Herman Grapow. 1971. *Wörterbuch der ägyptischen Sprache*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- FARMS. See Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies.
- Faulkner, Raymond O. 1985. *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Foundation for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies. 1991. *Insights: An Ancient Window* 5 (September).
— — —. 1992. *Insights: An Ancient Window* 1 (January).
- Frankfort, Henri. 1948. *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society & Nature*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Gee, John. 1991. *Notes on the Sons of Horus*. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research & Mormon Studies.
- Goyon, Jean-Claude. 1972. *Rituels funéraires de l'ancienne Égypte*. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf.
- Griffith, F. Ll. 1909. *The Glosses in the Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden*. *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 46:117-131.
- — — and Herbert Thompson. [1904] 1976. *The Demotic Magical Papyrus of London and Leiden*. 2 vols. Reprint. Milano: Cisalpino-La Goliardica.
- Griffiths, J. Gwyn. 1980. "Interpretatio græca." In *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* 3:167-172.
- Gundry, Robert Horton. 1975. *The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel: With Special Reference to the Messianic Hope*. Supplements to Novum Testamentum, vol. 18. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Harris, J. R., ed. 1971. *The Legacy of Egypt*. 2d ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Helck, Wolfgang and Wolthart Westendorf, eds. 1975-1986. *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*. 6 vols. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Hilton, John L. 1990. *On Verifying Wordprint Studies: Book of Mormon Authorship*. Brigham Young University Studies 30,110. 3 (Summer):89-108.
- Hopfner, Theodor. 1935. *Der religionsgeschichtliche Gehalt des grossen demotischen Zauberpapyrus*. *Archiv Orientální*, ed. Bedrich Hrozný, vol. 7, no. 1-2:89-120.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

Hoskisson, Paul. 1982. *Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Book of Mormon*. F .A.R.M.S. Reprint. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies.

Hughes Studies. Johnson, Janet H. and Edward F. Wentz. 1976. *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes. Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization*, no. 39. Chicago: The Oriental Institute.

Iversen, Erik. 1984. *Egyptian and Hermetic Doctrine*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum Press.

Jacq, C. 1985. *Egyptian Magic*. Trans. Janet M. Davis. Warminster: Aris & Phillips Ltd.

Johnson, Janet H. 1975. *The Demotic Magical Spells of Leiden I 384*. Oudheidkundige Mededelingen uit het Rijksmuseum van Oudheden te Leiden 51:29-64; Pls. 8-13.

— — —. 1976. *The Demotic Verbal System*. *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization*, no. 38. Chicago: The Oriental Institute.

Kee, Howard Clark. 1983. *Miracle in the Early Christian World: A Study in Sociohistorical Method*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Kessler, Dieter, 1980. Kopftafel. In *Lexikon der*

Agyptologie 3:693. Lambdin, Thomas O. 1983. *Introduction to Sahidic Coptic*. Macon: Mercer University Press. *Lexikon der Agyptologie*. See Helck, Wolfgang and Wolthart Westendorf.

L'Heureux, Conrad E. 1981. *Searching for the Origins of God*. In *Traditions in Transformation*, ed. Baruch Halpern and Jon D. Levenson, 33-57. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

Lüddeckens, Erich. 1980. *Demotisches Namenbuch*, vol. 1, fasc. 1. Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag.

Mair, Lucy. 1965. *An Introduction to Social Anthropology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

McConkie, Bruce R. 1966. *Mormon Doctrine*. 2d ed. Salt Lake City: Bookcraft.

Midgely, Louis. 1991. "More Revisionist Legerdemain and the Book of Mormon." In *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 3, ed. Daniel C. Peterson and Shirley S. Ricks. Provo: Foundation of Ancient Research and Mormon Studies.

Moller, Georg. 1905. *Hieratische Papyrus aus den königlichen Museen zu Berlin*. Vol. 2. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung.

Mosher, Malcom. 1990. *The Ancient Egyptian Book of the Dead in the Late Period*. Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley.

— — —. 1992. *Theban and Memphite Book of the Dead Traditions in the Late Period*.

JARCE 29:143-172.

Nag Hammadi. The Department of Antiquities of the Arab Republic of Egypt 1974. *The Facsimile Edition of the Nag Hammadi Codices*. Codex II. Leiden: E. J. Brill.

Ostler, Blake. 1987. "The Book of Mormon as a Modern Expansion of an Ancient Source." *Dialogue* 20, no. 1 (Spring):65-123.

Quinn, D. Michael. 1987. *Early Mormonism and the Magic World View*. Salt Lake City: Signature Books.

Ritner, Robert Kriech. 1993. "The Mechanics of Ancient Egyptian Magical Practice." *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization*, No. 54. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

Robinson, Stephen E. 1991. "Review of The Word of God: Essays on Mormon Scripture," ed. Dan Vogel. In *Review of Books on the Book of Mormon*, vol. 3, ed. Daniel C. Peterson and Shirley

S. Ricks. Provo: Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies.

Lion and Lamb Apologetics'

- Rudolph, Kurt. 1983. *Gnosis: The Nature and History of Gnosticism*. Trans. and ed. Robert McLachlan Wilson. San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers.
- Seeber, Christine. 1980. Maske. In *Lexikon der Agyptologie* 3:1196-1199.
- Skousen, Royal. 1992. *Piecing Together the Original Manuscript*. *BYU Today* (May), 18-24.
- Smither, Paul. 1941. "A Ramesside Love Charm." *Journal of Egyptian Archceology*, vol. 17.
- TDNT. See Bromiley, Geoffrey W.
- Thompson, Thomas L. 1974. *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: The Quest for the Historical Abraham*. Beiheft zur Zeitschrift fur die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, ed. Georg Fohrer, vol. 133. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Trigger, B. G., B. J. Kemp, D. O'Connor, and A. B. Lloyd. 1983. *Ancient Egypt: A Social History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Seters, John. 1975. *Abraham in History and Tradition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Vycichl, Werner. 1983. *Dictionnaire etymologique de la langue Copte*. Leuven: Editions Peeters.
- Wb. See Erman, Adolf and Hermann Grapow.
- Westendorf, Wolfhart. 1977. *Koptisches Handwörterbuch*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag.
- Yoyotte, Jean. 1977. "Contribution a l'histoire du chapitre 162 du Livre des Morts." *Revue d'Egyptologie* 29:194-202.

Copyright © 1993 Edward H. Ashment. All rights reserved. Retrieved May 4, 2023.

<https://mit.irr.org/use-of-egyptian-magical-papyri-authenticate-book-of-abraham-part-1>

<https://mit.irr.org/use-of-egyptian-magical-papyri-authenticate-book-of-abraham-part-2>

NOTE: This post is in compliance with the Fair Use clause of the US Copyright Act of 1976 (17 U.S. Code § 107). The US Supreme Court has issued several major decisions clarifying and reaffirming the fair use doctrine since the 1980s, most recently in the 2021 decision *Google LLC v. Oracle America, Inc.*