



The Book of Abraham

Shortly after our trip to Egypt with Everett and Corinne Young in 2009, I attended a lecture by Professor C. Wilfred Griggs at the BYU, Salt Lake Center. Professor Griggs, who was in charge of BYU's dig at Selila Fayum, had attended an international conference for archaeologists during which one of them came to him and said, "We like your Book of Abraham."

Interesting that some world class scholars recognize Abraham's story in the Pearl of Great Price as primary source material. We had knowledgeable guides in Egypt including Hussein Ahmed, our Egyptologist, whose father is a general. However, upon returning home I followed Corinne's suggestion and re-read the Book of Abraham and in so doing, added depth and understanding to my knowledge of ancient Egypt.

The Book of Abraham, as translated by Joseph Smith from papyrus, provided detail found in Chapter 1, verses 23, 24, 25 and found nowhere else: *"The land of Egypt being first discovered by a woman, who was the daughter of Ham, and the daughter of Egyptus, which in the Chaldean signifies Egypt, which signifies that which is forbidden. When this woman discovered the land, it was under water, who afterward settled her sons in it; and thus, from Ham, sprang that race which preserved the curse in the land. Now the first government of Egypt was established by Pharaoh, the eldest son of Egyptus, the daughter of Ham, and it was after the manner of the government of Ham, which was patriarchal."* Abraham describes how later the Egyptians became idol worshipers and began offering their children up unto "dumb idols," as human sacrifices.

While Tom and I were reading the Pearl of Great Price recently, it dawned on me what a blessing it is to have these records. I particularly value them as they are primary sources. i.e. Book of Moses, 6: 11-18

“Adam lived to be 930 years old, Seth 912 and Enos lived to be 905 years old. . .” It strengthens my testimony to realize that an uneducated farm boy, living in the mid 1800’s, translated some papyrus that has proven useful to contemporary archaeologists. Too often we Mormons have a tendency to take these sacred accounts for granite.



The Holie of Holies



Two different scholars. Two different world views: C. Wilfred Griggs, (left) was educated at BYU and Stanford University and received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley. Griggs currently holds the University Professorship of Ancient Studies at BYU. In addition to being a scholar of early Christian and Latter-day Saint history he is also an archeologist. In 1975–1976 he was part of a team doing excavations at the Nag Hammadi site in Egypt for UC Berkeley. In January–March 1981 he was the field director of the joint BYU and UC Berkeley excavation at Selila, Fayum, Egypt. He has been the head of BYU's Fayum excavation since 1982. Hussein Ahmed, (right) our Egyptian guide is pictured standing in front of the Egyptian National Museum in Cairo.