



*Footsteps of Faith: A Biblical Exploration of Egypt*  
**Reading and Movie List From Trip Scholar Madelon Maupin**



*Wall painting from the Tomb of Tutankhamun*

**BOOKS**

- *Everything Ancient Egypt*, Crispin Boyer. Don't laugh – this is a children's book. But good luck in absorbing 3000 years of history in a few months. (Publisher: *National Geographic Kids*)
- *Walking the Bible: A Journey by Land Through the Five Books of Moses*, Bruce Feiler (2001). (Audible as well.)
- *Egypt and Bible History: From Earliest Times to 1000 BC (2020)*, Charles F. Aling.
- *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt*, Toby Wilkinson (2013). Most academic and longest book on list – 650 pages, but the most serious for extensive background. NYT bestseller.
- *Death on the Nile*, Agatha Christie (publ. in 1937) Fun mystery for plane ride
- *Death Comes as the End*, Agatha Christie (set in ancient Egypt, unlike "Nile" book above.)
- *Cleopatra: A Life*, by Stacy Shiff, 2010, also on Audible. Goodreads choice. Author tries to separate the myth from the actual person, yet shows she was a legend in her own time with good reason.
- *Amelia Peabody Emerson, Egyptologist* by Elizabeth Peters – Wrote a series of mysteries around the turn of the century (19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>). She is a Ph.D. An

Egyptologist from U. of Chicago chose this way to communicate her love for Egypt.

- *Empress of the Nile* by Lynne Olson. The true story of French Egyptologist Christiane Desroches-Noblecourt, who spearheaded the movement of the Abu Simbel temples to higher ground when Aswan Dam was built, and Lake Nasser would have flooded it. She was seen as a kind of female Indiana Jones!
- *Desert Queen, Gertrude Bell* – by Janet Wallach. About whole Middle East/Levant and the woman who worked with Churchill and TE Lawrence. Fascinating true story and good for Israel travel as well.
- *The Sisters of Sinai: How Two Lady Adventurers Discovered the Hidden Gospels*, by Janice Soskice. The true story of twin Scottish sisters who thumbed their nose at Victorian custom and headed out to the Sinai to make their significant contribution to Biblical research.
- *River of the Gods*, by Candice Millard – True story of the search for the source of the Nile and considered one of the best books on African exploration.

## MOVIES

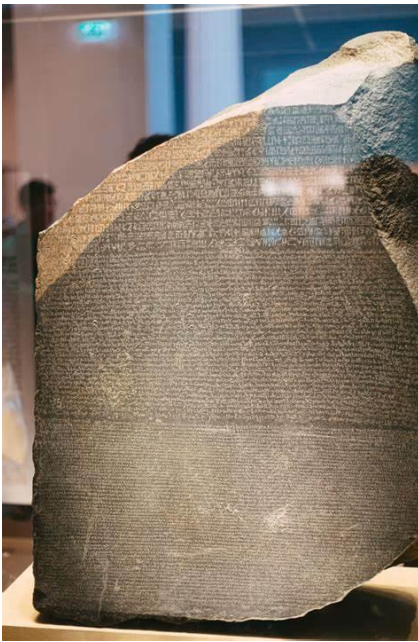
- *Death on the Nile*, 2022, Kenneth Branagh as Hercule Poirot
- *Cleopatra* (1963) – Yes, that one: Liz and Richard. Regardless of what you remember, it is thought to be quite historically accurate.
- *The Ten Commandments* (1956) – Cecil B. DeMille's retake after an earlier version made after WWI. Charlton Heston, Yul Brynner.
- *Cairo Time* (2009) Romantic drama – Patricia Clarkson and Alexander Siddig.
- *Faraon* (1966) – Polish epic film. Pharaoh – in Polish, is Faraon. Based on a historical novel that's a study in power, featuring the story of Ramses XIII. Some of the filming was done in Egypt. Winner of awards at Cannes, etc. and thought to be the most accurate film about Ancient Egypt.
- *Prince of Egypt* – DreamWorks first film (1998) and thought to be remarkably authentic. Film Critic Roger Ebert wrote: "One imagines de Mille had a film like this in his mind before he had to reduce it to reality."
- *Agora* (2009) – About the life of Hypatia, a math genius who was also a scientist, philosopher, astronomer, and teacher -- from the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD who curated the extraordinary library at Alexandria just before it burned. Rachel Weisz stars in the title role.
- *Land of the Pharaohs* (Howard Hawks, 1955). Find through YouTube.

## VIDEOS

- [Brief history Video on Ancient Egypt 101 --](#) (about six minutes)
- [National Geographic Video on Ancient Egypt- Egypt's Lost Wonders --](#)About efforts to recreate the Lighthouse of Alexandria. (About 1 hr)
- [How Pharaohs Project Divine Power -](#) (about 8 minutes) About the Sphinx

## FUN FACTS

1. **The Rosetta Stone** is why Egyptologists today can read hieroglyphics. It's a tax document from an earlier government's efforts to make the citizenry happy. Pharaoh Ptolemy V cut taxes so his citizens would love him and wrote his announcement in both ancient Greek and ancient Hieroglyphics. (Some things don't change!) If you happen to be strolling through the British Museum, don't miss it – right at the entrance. (And of course, the mummies are nearby.)



**Directions – Up is down, and down is up!**

The Nile is not only one of the longest rivers in the world – 4100 miles – but it flows south to north. That's because the northern section of the continent is lower in elevation than the southern. So "Upper" refers to where the Nile originates and includes its southern cities like Luxor and Aswan. "Lower" refers to the Nile as it flows "down" or North and includes cities like Cairo and Alexandria which are in Lower Egypt. (We'll probably get the hang of it about the day we leave!)

## ADDITIONAL ARTICLES

### **Multicultural Elephantine**

Through October 27, 2024

### **National Museums in Berlin**

Berlin, Germany

[smb.museum](http://smb.museum)

Elephantine sits at the historical southern border of ancient Egypt, by the modern city of Aswan. This strategic location made it an important trade and military post. Rich archaeological deposits and textual sources reveal the long and layered history of this island in the Nile, where many different languages, cultures, and religions met early in the history of north-East Africa.

The diverse histories of Elephantine are currently on display in Berlin, in special exhibition titled *Elephantine – An Island of Millennia*. Split between two locations within the National Museums in Berlin, the exhibit explores the coexistence and lively exchange among the different people who come together on this small island. Elephantine was both cosmopolitan and local, forcing people to interact with one another but also letting them preserve their particular values and traditions.

This ethnic mix included an Aramaic-speaking community of Judean mercenaries and their families stationed there by the Persian conquerors of both Judea and Egypt. By the fifth century BCE, this community grew into a sizeable diaspora with its own temple to Yahweh. Documents written in a mix of Aramaic and Egyptian preserve marriage contracts, letters, and various other mundane writings, as well as literary and religious texts.

The first comprehensive exhibit on Elephantine, *An Island of Millennia* brings together artifacts now dispersed through dozens of collections around the world. The visitor experience is enhanced through immersive installations, sounds, smells, and video projections. On display is also this wooden figure of a sitting lion inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs with the name of the Kushite king Aspelta (c. 600–580 BCE). Almost 20 inches tall, it likely belonged to Aspelta's throne, which may have been brought to Elephantine as a spoil of war.



Wooden figure of a sitting lion inscribed in Egyptian hieroglyphs with the name of the Kushite king Aspelta (c.600–580 BCE). *National Museums in Berlin, Egyptian Museum and Papyrus Collection/Andreas Paasch; CC BY-SA 4.0*