

December 19, 2020

Dear family and friends,

Three talks presented by Dr. Douglas Petrovich at a 2017 *Is Genesis History?* conference have recently been posted online. As their individual titles indicate, this collection of presentations highlight various aspects of the author's research into evidence that the house of Israel resided in Egypt during the lifetime of Joseph, the son of Jacob (Israel).

- 1) *"Was Hebrew the First Alphabet? - Doug Petrovich (Conf Lecture)"*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g87AKnEMAKo>  
2017 (posted Sep 7, 2020)
- 2) *"Is There Evidence for Jacob and Joseph? - Dr. Doug Petrovich (Conf Lecture)"*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d7kb81AeXX4>  
2017 (posted Nov 16, 2020)
- 3) *"Is There Evidence for Manasseh and Ephraim in Egypt? - Dr. Doug Petrovich (Conf Lecture)"*  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kWWq-FvnLVU>  
2017 (posted Dec 1, 2020)

A highlight of these talks for me is the connection Dr. Petrovich discovered between the written language of the Hebrews and many Egyptian hieroglyphics. According to the author, this link appears to have been established by Manasseh and Ephraim, Joseph's two oldest sons. While some may find his research controversial, I have found Dr. Petrovich's discoveries refreshing, and I believe his work is well worth investigating in detail for a number of reasons, including the opportunities it opens up for investigating the following key topic areas in greater depth.

According to Dr. Petrovich's research, Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim (listed by birth order), appear to have had a significant role in developing the original form of the written language of the Hebrews. Because of Joseph's position, they were well-educated and trained by the best teachers in Egypt. By contrast, the members of their extended family, the Hebrews, were nomads who apparently were without a written language until they settled in Egypt at the latter end of Jacob's (Israel's) life. As such, Manasseh and Ephraim would have been well-equipped and well-positioned to formulate an early written form of the Hebrew language for their father's herdsman family. Here are some points to ponder in this regard:

- Because Moses was trained in Egypt several centuries after Joseph, he may have written the original five books of the Bible in an Egyptian-based script related to the one initially devised by Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.

- In turn, Moses' use of such a script could be the reason the Jewish records were written in *the Egyptian language* as found on *the plates of brass* – which Nephi and his brothers acquired prior to their family's quick and quiet departure from Jerusalem (see [I Nephi 1:159](#) with [Mosiah 1:6](#)).
- Manasseh's involvement in this process could help explain why Lehi, who was a descendant of Manasseh ([Alma 8:3](#)), was able to read *the plates of brass*, which were written in *the language of the Egyptians* (cf. [Mosiah 1:5,6](#) with [I Nephi 1:158-165](#)).
- Dr. Petrovich's findings may also explain why a remnant of Manasseh's descendants, called the Nephites, were skillful in keeping their records in a variant of this written language, which they referred to as *reformed Egyptian* ([Mormon 4:98](#)).

Dr. Petrovich also summarized how the Hebrews' written language evolved over time, from a pictographic language to a more character-based or abstract form of writing. Here are a few points to ponder in this regard:

- [Starting at the 27 minute mark](#) in the first video linked above, Dr. Petrovich provides an illustration of how the Hebrews modified their language over time. His documentation on this topic may help explain the statement in [Mormon 4:98](#) that the Nephites varied their language according to their need. In so doing, they would have followed the example of their forebearers in modifying their language over time.
- Because the ancient Hebrews varied their language with time, this would mean that the form of language in which a given set of ancient records was written depended upon the time and age in which that particular set of records was written. Earlier records would have been written in the more ancient forms of their written language, thus limiting its readership in later generations.
- Among the rising generations, those who were trained in the ancient scripts or variants of their language, such as Mosiah's sons ([Mosiah 1:5,6](#)), were able to read both the contemporary as well as their ancient records. Being trained in the earlier forms of their language, they could then pass on the message of those earlier writings to their progeny in a more contemporary form of their language throughout their successive generations.
- This observation may also help us understand Moroni's statement that, had their plates been large enough (for record keeping purposes), they would have written in Hebrew. Since the plates were apparently limited in size and number, they used what they called *reformed Egyptian* instead, which apparently was a more compact form of writing. (Note: Moroni's statement does not apply to *the plates of brass*, the records written *in the language of the Egyptians* by other record keepers prior to their departure from Jerusalem.)
- In fine, the Nephite writers recognized the benefit for the earlier form of their script for record keeping purposes. By the time Lehi and his family left Jerusalem (in the days of Jeremiah the prophet), the Hebrew language had apparently evolved from the written form or script reported to have been devised by Manasseh and Ephraim to a less pictographic (more abstract) script that was viewed as uniquely Hebrew.

The timing of Dr. Petrovich's talks and the date his first book was released also struck me as significant. They each came to light in 2017, a jubilee year as identified by Jonathan Cahn in his book *The Oracle*. Here are a few points to ponder given the timing of the public release of Dr. Petrovich's research.

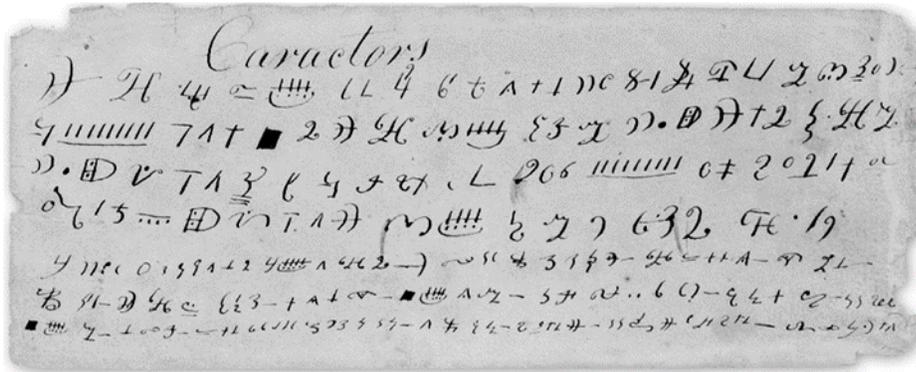
- Dr. Petrovich makes a rather compelling statement at around **the 50:12 minute mark** in the first video linked above. At this point in his talk, the author speaks of how God appears to have hidden this information for roughly 3000 years, but for some reason He is now bringing it to light for His own purposes.
- Could this mean that the release of this information – about the contribution of Joseph's sons to the written Hebrew language – is a Jubilee event, one that God has brought about in preparation of the return of the house of Israel to their ancient covenant lands and to God Himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel)? I believe so.
- Could this release of information also help bring a broader appreciation and acceptance of the Book of Mormon and the purposes for which it was brought forth by God in these latter days? I believe so, and so I am sharing it for this purpose.
- If this is all true, should we not expect to soon see the fulfillment of these purposes for the Book of Mormon in the gathering the house of Israel back to their covenant lands as one nation and one people? Yes! See **Romans 11 & James 5:7** with **Isaiah 11, Jeremiah 31 & Ezekiel 37**; see also **II Nephi 7:12** with **III Nephi 9:85 & III Nephi 13:54**.
- With these scriptures and the forgoing information in mind, please listen once again to what Dr. Petrovich states starting at around **the 50:12 minute mark** in the first presentation linked above.

To me at least, the many observations brought out in this set of videos are consistent with the internal evidences found in the Book of Mormon – i.e. that it is a true record God prepared and preserved through the writings of a remnant of Manasseh for gathering the *whole* house of Israel together in these latter days according to God's covenants with them (**I Nephi 3:184-189 & II Nephi 11:37-48** with **Romans 11**).

Remember, Manasseh is birthright holder for the house of Israel along with his father Joseph and his brother Ephraim (see **I Chronicles 5:1,2** with **Genesis 48:4-26**, esp. vs **48:5**). Therefore, it is lawful for his descendants, which includes all the authors in the Book of Mormon, to be instrumental in bringing the whole house of Israel back into their covenant lands even as Joshua of the tribe of Ephraim was instrumental in bringing the house of Israel into their covenant lands the first time after Moses had led them out of Egypt and through the desert 40 years.

Since Dr. Petrovich does not have any connections with the Restoration or the Book of Mormon as far as I can find, his research findings appear to be an independent verification that the original languages cited in Mormon's abridgment of the sacred records of the Nephites are consistent with and are supported by his research findings along with other recent archeological and linguistic discoveries.

For instance, an important book related to this topic, I believe, was published in 2019 and represents another significant advancement in identifying and understanding the primary written language of the Book of Mormon. In this book, titled *Caractors Unlocked*, authors Mary Jo Jackel and Faye Shaw compare the many characters in the image below to those translated in established sources on ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs.



At the conclusion of their book, the authors provide an interpretation of this short excerpt from the Book of Mormon records that I believe is both compelling and consistent with the sacred records of the Nephites. Here is a link to the publisher's webpage for their book:

<http://bookstore.dorrancepublishing.com/caractors-unlocked/>

The description from this webpage reads as follows:

*Caractors Unlocked* is a verification of the statement made by ancient recorders that the Book of Mormon was written in “reformed Egyptian”. This book provides proof that the “reformed Egyptian” is ancient demotic Egyptian. For 190 years, scholars have attempted to decipher the meaning of the “Caractors”. This book gives breakthrough evidence that it is written in authentic ancient demotic Egyptian language. [It] probably comes from the lost 116 pages that had been entrusted to Martin Harris's keeping by Joseph Smith.

Since I have enjoyed investigating these new resources, I hope to encourage you to take time to look into the videos and the books referenced above. I believe they are timely and worth the effort to review them. Once you do, I'd appreciate hearing your thoughts as well.

God's richest blessings in Jesus Christ,

Dwight