

## God Never Changes Article

About 4500 years ago, Pharaoh Khafre carved the Sphinx from the limestone bedrock. Since then, this 66-foot statue of a man's head with a lion's body has stood the Egyptian desert. For thousands of years it has remained unchanged. Or has it? Actually, this statue has undergone many changes. Khafre never finished the statue in his lifetime. For about a thousand years it was abandoned to the Egyptian sands. In 1400 BC, Thutmose IV uncovered the statue and painted it blue, yellow and red and erected a statue of his father in front of the Sphinx's chest. Then another great pharaoh, Ramses II, extensively reworked the Sphinx in 1279 BC. After that, the Egyptian sands once again began filling up the gigantic face and body. Wind began to erode what the Pharaohs had done.

As early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD, an Arab historian wrote that the Sphinx's face was disfigured. In 1818, a Genoese sea captain cleared away the debris from the statue's chest and uncovered an ancient chapel in front of it. He also discovered fragments of the Sphinx's stone beard, which are now in a British museum. In the early 1900s, a French engineer cleared the Sphinx down to its base and shored up the weathered headdress with stone. During the 1980s, large slabs were added to try to stop erosion. Still, in 1988, part of the right shoulder fell off.

The Sphinx is eroding even faster today. During the 1990s, repairs are once again being made to the ancient stone statue. The large slabs added in the 1980s are being replaced with more natural looking stone. Many plans for helping save the Sphinx from further deterioration are being suggested. <sup>1</sup>

The real fact about life on earth is "change."

<sup>1</sup> Mark Lehner, "Computer Rebuilds the Ancient Sphinx," *National Geographic*, April 1991, pp 32-39