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*Statue of Queen Ankhnes-meryre II and Her Son, Pepy II*

**Edna Russmann:** King Pepy II reigned over Egypt near the end of the Old Kingdom, from about 2300 B.C. He was a small child when he came to the throne. And according to the Egyptian records, Pepy II reigned for ninety-six years. If that is indeed accurate, it is, to my knowledge, the longest reign of any king known in all time or all over the world.

Since he was very young when his father died and he became king, his mother, Queen Ankhnes-meryre II, ruled Egypt on his behalf. The statue we're looking at here is an image of their relationship, both personal and political. In a sense it's really the queen's statue. She is the larger figure, which seems natural enough to us since she's the mother and he's a child. But look at his figure and you'll see that he's really a miniature adult, because he has to be shown as king, and so he's wearing the royal headdress and the royal kilt. He's sitting on her lap. She has her left arm holding him steady around his back, and her right hand is resting on his legs. He in turn—and I think this is quite a touching gesture—is touching her hand, so there is a sense of relationship between them that we don't get anywhere else in the statue.

It really has been designed and made as if it were two separate statues. Both figures look straight ahead, at right angles to each other, and Pepy has his own base to hold his little feet and keep them from dangling on the ground.