

LET'S EXPLORE EXODUS!

INTRODUCTORY SECTION I

LET'S EXPLORE EXODUS!

Consider the greatness of Exodus.

“Nearly all the foundations of which JEWISH life is built—the Ten Commandments, the historic festivals, the leading principles of civil law—are contained in the book of Exodus.”¹

The importance of Exodus is not confined to the Jews alone. CHRISTIANS recognize the events in Exodus as having been written “by way of example” for *our* learning (I Cor. 10:11). The bondage in Egypt illustrates our former bondage in sin. Moses is like unto Jesus Christ in many respects (Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22; 7:37). Israel’s deliverance across the Red Sea was a “baptism unto Moses” and illustrates our “baptism into Christ” (I Cor. 10:2; Gal. 3:27). Israel’s failures in their wilderness journey were recorded that we might not fall into the same example of disobedience (Heb. 4:11). The tabernacle, which is so prominent in Exodus 25-40, was a “figure for the time present” (Heb. 9:9).

The greatness of Exodus radiates benefits and life-changing truth to ALL HUMANKIND. From no other book have men learned so much of the character and work of the LORD God, a “God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth; . . . and that will by no means clear the guilty” (Ex. 34:6, 7). From no other book has mankind learned laws more beneficial, comprehensive, and succinct than the ten commandments in Exodus.

¹J. H. Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs* (London: Soncino, 1969), p. 205.

INTRODUCTORY STUDY II

Themes of Exodus: REDEMPTION AND NATIONHOOD

A. The theme of REDEMPTION sums up much of the history and message of the book of Exodus. Numerous authors (e.g., Pink, Van Dooren) have felt that this term was a good one to express the theme of the book.

1. The theme of REDEMPTION, or redemption followed by God's leading, is stated in the book of Exodus itself:

"I will REDEEM you with an outstretched arm, and with great judgment: and I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God" (Ex. 6:6-7).

"Thou in thy lovingkindness hast LED the people that thou hast REDEEMED" (Ex. 15:13). (This statement strikes us as a key verse in Exodus.)

"He hath sent REDEMPTION unto his people; He hath commanded his covenant for ever: Holy and reverend is his name" (Psalm 111:9).

2. What does REDEMPTION mean?

The Hebrew verb (*ga'al*) translated *redeem* in Ex. 6:16 and 15:13 means to free by avenging or buying back.

The Greek word (*lutroo*) translated *redeem* in 15:13 in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint, or LXX) means to release on receipt of a ransom.

The Greek word (*ruomai*) translated *redeem* in 6:6 means to draw to one's self.

Thus, REDEMPTION basically means a buying back, but its meaning has been broadened to mean releasing or deliverance generally.

3. Christians have REDEMPTION in Christ from God (Eph. 1:7). To understand the way God REDEEMED Israel from Egypt will help us understand the nature of our redemption.

For example, though Israel was redeemed from Egypt with mighty miracles and God's special favor, still out in the wilderness they suffered countless hardships and tests and temptations. Similarly, though we have been wondrously and miraculously redeemed from sin and from

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impossible burdens, still we must face many tribulations, tests, and temptations. We are not promised immediate deliverance from all difficulties.




4. The development of the theme of REDEMPTION in Exodus can be outlined as follows:
 - a. Need for redemption (chs. 1—6)
 - b. Might of the redeemer (chs. 7—11)
 - c. Method of redemption (chs. 12—18)
 - d. Duties of the redeemed (chs. 19—24)
 - e. Provisions for the redeemed (chs. 25—40)(Adapted from Arthur Pink, *Gleanings in Exodus* [Chicago: Moody, n.d.] p. 8.)

B. NATIONHOOD



Various authors have selected the topic of Israel's becoming a nation as the theme of Exodus. They have worded it in various ways.

1. "The Making of a Holy Nation." See Ex. 19:6. We have used this heading on the end sheets of this book (the pictures inside the covers). Israel became God's holy nation when God provided them a leader (Ex. 1—6), liberation (Ex. 7—12), leading (Ex. 13—18), laws (Ex. 19—24), and divine worship (Greek, *latreia*) (Ex. 25—40).
2. "The commencement of Israel as a covenant nation." (G. L. Archer, *A Survey of O.T. Introduction* [Chicago: Moody, 1964] p. 209.)
3. "The beginning of a separate national existence." As Genesis records the beginning of religious life in Israel, so Exodus records the beginning of national life. (John Raven, *Old Testament Introduction* [New York: Revell, 1910], p. 136.)
4. "From a Family to a Nation." When Jacob Israel came into Egypt, he came only as a large family (Ex. 1:15). But in fulfillment of the promise to Abraham (Gen. 12:2), Israel became a *nation*. This transformation was effected by stages: a. Population; b. Liberation; c. Legislation; d. Organization. All of these stages can be observed in Exodus.

EXODUS-CHAPTER TOPICS

GOD'S MAN	PLAGUES	PATHWAY	COVENANT
<p>1</p> <p>NEED FOR GOD'S MAN (Transition)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>THE CONFLICT BEGINS ! <u>(PLAGUE #1)</u></p>	<p>13</p> <p>DEMANDS AND DIRECTION TO THE REDEEMED</p>	<p>19</p> <p>PREPARATIONS TO RECEIVE COVENANT</p>
<p>2</p> <p>PREPARATION OF GOD'S MAN</p>	<p>8</p> <p>PLAGUES 2, 3, 4</p>	<p>14</p> <p>BAPTIZED UNTO MOSES</p>	<p>20</p> 
<p>3</p> <p>CALL OF GOD'S MAN</p> 	<p>9</p> <p>PLAGUES 5, 6, 7</p>	<p>15</p> <p>FROM SONG TO BITTERNESS</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>4</p> <p>HESITANCY OF GOD'S MAN</p>	<p>10</p> <p>PLAGUES 8, 9</p> 	<p>16</p> <p>BREAD FROM HEAVEN</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>5</p> <p>RESISTANCE TO GOD'S MAN</p>	<p>11</p> <p>THE LAST WARNING !</p>	<p>17</p> <p>TWO TESTS: WATER AND WAR</p>	<p>23</p>
<p>6</p> <p>STRENGTHENING OF GOD'S MAN</p>	<p>12</p> <p>PLAGUE 10 OVER AND OUT !</p>	<p>18</p> <p>JETHRO AND JUDGES</p>	<p>24</p> <p>COVENANT RATIFIED</p>

GOD'S COVENANT ORDINANCES

TABERNACLE INSTRUCTIONS	GOLDEN CALF	TABERNACLE CONSTRUCTION	
<p>25</p> <p>TABERNACLE INSTRUCTIONS (Ark, table, lampstand)</p>	<p>32</p> <p>RUPTURE OF COVENANT</p>	<p>35</p> <p>OFFERINGS AND WORKMEN</p>	
<p>26</p> <p>ENCLOSINGS (Curtains, boards, bars, veil, screen)</p>	<p>33</p> <p>GOD AND ISRAEL IN TENSION</p>	<p>36</p> <p>ENCLOSINGS</p>	
<p>27</p> <p>ALTAR AND COURT</p>	<p>34</p> <p>RENEWAL OF COVENANT</p>	<p>37</p> <p>INSIDE FURNITURE</p>	
<p>28</p> <p>PRIESTS GARMENTS</p>		<p>38</p> <p>OUTSIDE FURNITURE</p> <p>----- Total Cost</p>	
<p>29</p> <p>PRIESTS CONSECRATION</p>		<p>39</p> <p>PRIESTS' GARMENTS, FINISHED WORK PRESENTED</p>	
<p>30</p> <p>INCENSE, etc.</p>		<p>40</p>  <p>ALL SET UP GLORY OF LORD</p>	
<p>31</p> <p>CRAFTSMEN, SABBATH</p>			

EXPLORING EXODUS

INTRODUCTORY SECTION III

NAMES and OUTLINE of Exodus

The NAMES of the book of Exodus

1. In the Hebrew Bible it is called *Shemoth*, meaning *names*. This is taken from the opening words of the book, *We'elleh shemoth*, which mean "These are the names."
2. In the Greek Bible (Septuagint, or LXX) it is called *Exodos*, meaning "going out" or "departure." This word actually appears in the Greek of 19:1: "In the third month of the departure (Gr., *exodos*) of the sons of Israel" This name applies more accurately to the first half of the book than to the second half.
3. The Latin Bible used the title *Exodus*, a slightly-changed form of the Greek title. In our English Bibles we have used the Latin title.

OUTLINE(S) OF EXODUS

We can outline the book of Exodus according to the PLACES where the events occurred.

I. ISRAEL IN EGYPT; Chs. 1—13 (1:1—13:16)

1. Population growth and bondage; Ch. 1.
2. Preparation of Moses; Chs. 2—6.
3. Plagues; Chs. 7—11.
4. Passover and departure; Chs. 12—13.

II. ISRAEL FROM EGYPT TO SINAI; Chs. 13—18 (13:17—18:27).

1. Deliverance at the Red Sea; (13:17—15:21).
2. Journey to Sinai; (15:22—Ch. 17).
3. Visit of Jethro; Ch. 18.

III. ISRAEL AT SINAI; Chs. 19—40.

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1. Law (covenant) given; Chs. 19—24.
 2. Tabernacle instructions; Chs. 25—31.
 3. Rebellion and renewal (golden calf); Chs. 32—34.
 4. Tabernacle construction; Chs. 35—40.
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We can outline Exodus according to the EXPERIENCES shared by God's people Israel. Exodus itself emphasizes the theme of God's doings with His PEOPLE. (Note 3:7; 5:1; 6:7; 7:4; 15:13; 19:5, 6.)

- I. GOD'S PEOPLE DELIVERED; Chs. 1—13 (1:1—13:16)
 - II. GOD'S PEOPLE LED; Chs. 13—18 (13:17—18:27)
 - III. GOD'S PEOPLE MADE A COVENANT NATION;
Chs. 19—24.
 - IV. GOD'S PEOPLE RECEIVE TABERNACLE INSTRUCTIONS; Chs. 25—31.
 - V. GOD'S PEOPLE SIN (golden calf); Chs. 32—34.
 - VI. GOD'S PEOPLE CONSTRUCT THE TABERNACLE;
Chs. 35—40.
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Detailed OUTLINE of EXODUS

- I. GOD'S PEOPLE DELIVERED; 1:1—13:16.
 1. Jacob's family in Egypt; 1:1-7.
 2. Afflictions upon the children of Israel; 1:8-22.
 - a. Labor; 1:8-14.
 - b. Genocide; 1:15-22.
 3. Early life of Moses; 2:1-25.
 - a. Birth and adoption; 2:1-10.
 - b. Rejection and flight; 2:11-15.
 - c. Moses in Midian; 2:16-22.
 - d. God's knowledge of Israel; 2:23-25.
 4. Call of Moses; 3:1—4:17.
 - a. The burning bush; 3:1-6.
 - b. God's commission to Moses; 3:7-10.

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- c. Objections by Moses; 3:11—4:17.
 - (1) "Who am I?" 3:11, 12.
 - (2) "What is thy name?" 3:13-22.
 - (3) "They will not believe." 4:1-9.
 - (4) "I am not eloquent." 4:10-12.
 - (5) "Send someone else." 4:13-17.
- 5. Moses' return; 4:18-31.
 - a. Obedience tested during return; 4:18-26.
 - b. First meeting with Israel; 4:27-31.
- 6. Confrontation with Pharaoh; 5:1—11:10.
 - a. Failure of first request; 5:1-5.
 - (1) Pharaoh refuses; 5:1-5.
 - (2) Burdens increased; 5:6-14.
 - (3) Israelites' appeal rejected; 5:15-21.
 - (4) Moses' remonstrance and the Lord's reply; 5:22—6:1.
 - b. Prelude to successful action; 6:27:13.
 - (1) Reassurance for the people; 6:2-9.
 - (2) Command to return to Pharaoh; 6:10-13.
 - (3) Review of fathers' genealogies; 6:14-27.
 - (4) Commission to Moses renewed; 6:28—7:7.
 - (5) Second meeting with Pharaoh (rods to serpents); 7:8-13.
 - c. Plagues; 7:14—11:10.
 - (1) River to blood; 7:14-24.
 - (2) Frogs; 8:1-15.
 - (3) Lice (gnats); 8:16-19.
 - (4) Swarms (flies); 8:20-32.
 - (5) Death of animals; 9:1-7.
 - (6) Boils; 9:8-12.
 - (7) Hail; 9:13-35.
 - (8) Locusts; 10:21-29.
 - (9) Darkness; 10:21-29.
- 7. Passover; 11:1—12:33.
 - a. Warning of the last plague; 11:1-10.
 - b. Instructions for the passover in Egypt; 12:1-13.
 - c. Direction for passover in future; 12:14-20.

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- d. The passover kept; 12:21-28.
 - e. Death of firstborn; 12:29-33.
 - 8. The departure (exodus); 12:34-42.
 - 9. Three final directives; 12:43—13:16.
 - a. Who may eat the Passover; 12:43-50.
 - b. Keep the ordinance of unleavened bread; 13:3-10.
 - c. Sanctify the firstborn; 12:51—13:2, 11-16.
- II. GOD'S PEOPLE LED: 13:17—18:27.
- 1. The route of the journey; 13:17-22.
 - 2. Victory at the Red Sea; 14:1—15:21.
 - a. Encampment by the sea; 14:1-4.
 - b. Pursuit by the Egyptians; 14:5-9.
 - c. Fear and reassurance; 14:10-14.
 - d. The Lord's exhortation; 14:15-18.
 - e. The angel's protection; 14:19, 20.
 - f. Deliverance across the sea; 14:21, 22.
 - g. Destruction of the Egyptians; 14:23-31.
 - h. Song of triumph; 15:1-21.
 - (1) By Moses and Israel; 15:1-19.
 - (2) By Miriam; 15:20, 21.
 - 3. Experiences in the journey; 15:22—18:27.
 - a. Bitter waters (Marah); 15:22-26.
 - b. Springs of Elim; 15:27.
 - c. Food (manna) provided; 16:1-36.
 - (1) Murmuring; 16:1-3.
 - (2) God's promise; 16:4-12.
 - (3) Quails sent; 16:13.
 - (4) Manna given; 16:14-21.
 - (5) Manna and Sabbath; 16:22-30.
 - (6) Memorial of the manna; 16:31-36.
 - d. Waters of Meribah; 17:1-7.
 - e. War with Amalek; 17:8-16.
 - f. Visit of Jethro; 18:1-27.
 - (1) Reunion with family; 18:1-12.
 - (2) Jethro's advice to appoint judges; 18:13-27.

III. GOD'S PEOPLE MADE A COVENANT NATION;
Chs. 19—24.

1. Preparations for the covenant; 19:1-25.
 - a. Instructions to the people; 19:1-15.
 - b. Coming of the Lord upon Mt. Sinai; 19:16-25.
2. The Ten Words; 20:11-17.
3. The book of the covenant (rules for the covenant people); 20:18—23:33.
 - a. Ritual regulations; 20:18-26.
 - b. The covenant ordinances; 21:1—23:19.
 - (1) The Hebrew slave; 21:1-11.
 - (2) Capital offenses; 21:12-17.
 - (3) Injuries and non-capital offenses; 21:18-32.
 - (4) Property rights; 21:33—22:17.
 - (5) More capital offenses; 22:18-20.
 - (6) Care for the poor and needy; 22:21-27.
 - (7) Reverence to God and rulers; 22:28-31.
 - (8) Justice and goodness to all; 23:1-9.
 - (9) The sacred seasons; 23:10-19.
 - c. Promises about conquering the land; 23:20-33.
4. The covenant ratified; 24:1-18.
 - a. Call to worship; 24:1, 2.
 - b. Covenant sealed with blood; 24:3-8.
 - c. Leaders eat with God; 24:9-11.
 - d. Moses called onto the mount; 24:12-18.

IV. GOD'S PEOPLE RECEIVE TABERNACLE INSTRUCTIONS; Chs. 25—31.

1. An offering to be taken; 25:1-9.
2. Ark and mercy-seat; 25:10-22.
3. Table of showbread; 25:23-30.
4. The menorah (lampstand); 25:31-40.
5. Tabernacle curtains; 26:1-14.
6. Tabernacle boards (26:15-25) and bars (26:26-30).
7. Veil (26:31-35) and screen (26:36, 37).
8. The altar of burnt-offering; 27:1-8.
9. Court; 27:9-19.

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10. Oil for lamp; 27:20, 21.
 11. Garments of priests; 28:1-43.
 - a. First directions; 28:1-5.
 - b. Ephod; 28:6-14.
 - c. Breastplate; 28:15-30.
 - d. Robe of ephod; 28:31-35.
 - e. Golden plate; 28:36-38.
 - f. Coat; 28:39.
 - g. Coats, girdles, turbans; 28:40, 41.
 - h. Linen breeches; 28:42, 43.
 12. Consecration of priests; 29:1-37.
 13. The continual burnt-offering; 29:38-46.
 14. Altar of incense; 20:1-10.
 15. Atonement money with censuses; 30:11-16.
 16. Laver; 30:17-21.
 17. Anointing oil (30:22-33) and incense (30:34-38).
 18. Tabernacle workmen; 31:1-11.
 19. The Sabbath; 31:12-17.
- IV. GOD'S PEOPLE SIN BUT ARE RENEWED; Chs. 32—34.
1. Sin; 31:18—32:29.
 - a. Calf made and worshipped; 31:18—32:6.
 - b. God's anger and Moses' prayer; 32:7-14.
 - c. Moses' anger; 32:15-20.
 - d. Moses and Aaron; 32:21-24.
 - e. Three thousand slain; 32:25-29.
 2. God and Israel in tension; 32:30—33:23.
 - a. Moses' prayer for forgiveness; 32:30-35.
 - b. Jehovah withdraws His presence; 33:1-6.
 - c. Jehovah and Moses; 33:7-11.
 - d. Moses prays; 33:12-17.
 - (1) For God's acceptance of the nation; 33:12-17.
 - (2) To see God's glory; 33:18-23.
 3. Renewal of covenant; 34:1—35:3.
 - a. New tablets; 34:1-4.
 - b. God proclaims Himself; 34:5-9.
 - c. Terms of the covenant; 34:10—35:3.

V. GOD'S PEOPLE CONSTRUCT THE TABERNACLE;
35:4—40:38.

1. Call for offering of materials; 35:4-8.
 2. Call for workmen; 35:10-19.
 3. Abundant offering; 35:20-29.
 4. Workmen commissioned; 35:30—36:7.
 5. Curtains made; 36:8-19.
 6. Boards (36:27-30) and bars (36:31-34) made.
 7. Veil (36:35, 36) and screen (36:37, 38) made.
 8. Ark and mercy-seat made; 37:1-9.
 9. Table made; 37:10-16.
 10. Menorah (lampstand) made; 37:17-23.
 11. Altar of incense made; 37:25-29.
 12. Altar of burnt-offering made; 38:1-7.
 13. Laver made; 38:8.
 14. Court made; 38:9-20.
 15. Sum of materials used; 38:21-31.
 16. Priests' garments made; 39:1-31.
 17. Work finished and presented to Moses; 39:32-43.
 18. Erection of tabernacle; 40:1-33.
 - a. Directions from God; 40:1-15.
 - b. Rearing up the tabernacle; 40:16-33.
 19. Glory cloud fills the tabernacle; 40:34-38.
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WHO WROTE EXODUS?

INTRODUCTORY SECTION IV

WHO WROTE EXODUS?

We believe that Moses was the author of the entire book, except for possibly a few lines that may have been added by Joshua or someone else living shortly after Moses' time. (Note Ex. 16:35.)

I. EVIDENCE THAT MOSES WAS THE AUTHOR OF EXODUS:

A. Testimony in the book itself.

1. Ex. 17:8-16 (the story of the attack by Amalek) is said to have been written by Moses. See 17:14.
2. Ex. 20:22—23:32 (the book of covenant ordinances) is said to have been written by Moses. See 24:4.
3. Ex. 34:10-26 (the ordinances of the renewed covenant) was written by Moses. See 34:27.
4. Numbers 33:2 says that "Moses wrote their (Israel's) going out according to their journeys by the commandment of Jehovah." While this may apply primarily to the brief record in Num. 33, it may also apply to the record of their journey in Ex. 12-19.
5. From these passages, which are the only ones specifically ascribed to Moses in the book, we can project (extrapolate) Mosaic authorship to the entire book, because the book is a unit and tells a continuous story.

B. Testimony in other parts of the Old Testament.

1. Joshua 8:31—"As it is written in the book of the law of Moses," (referring to Ex. 20:25).
2. Joshua 8:32—"He wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses."
3. Joshua 23:6—"Do all that is written in the book of the law of Moses."
4. Judges 3:4—"which he commanded their father by (Heb., by the hand of) Moses."

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5. I Kings 2:3—"Keep his testimonies, as it is *written* in the law of Moses."
 6. I Kings 8:56—"which he promised by (Heb., by the hand of) Moses."
 7. II Chron. 25:4—"As it is written in the law in the books of Moses."
 8. II Chron. 35:6—"According to the word of the Lord by (Heb., by the hand of) Moses" (concerning the Passover).
 9. Ezra 6:18—"As it is written in the book of Moses."
 10. Nehemiah 10:29—"which was given by Moses" (Heb., by the hand of Moses).
 11. Malachi 4:4—"Remember ye the law of Moses my servant."
- C. Testimony of the New Testament.
1. Mark 7:10—"Moses said, Honor thy father and mother."
 2. Mark 12:26—"Have ye not read in the book of Moses?" (referring to Ex. 3:6)
 3. Luke 24:44—"All things . . . which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me." (By these expressions Jesus referred to the entire Old Testament.)
 4. John 1:17—"The law was given through Moses."
 5. John 5:46, 47—"For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me (Jesus); for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"
 6. Compare also these passages, which attribute other parts of the Pentateuch to Moses: Matt. 8:4; 19:7; 22:24; Mark 1:44; Luke 2:22; 16:29; 20:28; John 7:19; Acts 3:22; 26:22; Romans 10:5, 19; I Cor. 9:9.
- D. Testimony of ancient Jewish writers.
1. From the Jewish Talmudic tract *Baba Bathra*, 14b-15a:
"Who wrote the Scriptures? — Moses wrote his own book and the portion of Balaam and Job. Joshua wrote the book which bears his name and [the last]

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eight verses of the Pentateuch." (The Talmud was put into writing in the second and third centuries after Christ.)

2. From the Jewish Talmudic tract *Aboth* (Fathers), chap. I:

"MISHNAH: 1. Moses received the Torah at Sinai and transmitted it to Joshua." The commentary (Gemara) on the term "Torah" says, "Scripture and its complementary Oral Instruction, with special reference to the latter."

3. Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1,8.

(Of our books) "five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death." (Josephus wrote about 80 A.D.)

The view that Moses was author of Exodus was the unanimous view of Bible writers and the ancient Jews. So strong and consistent was this testimony that even those who do not accept Moses as the author of the whole book will credit him as being the author of parts.

There were very few men living in ancient times who had the knowledge, the training, the literary skill, the time, and the motivation to write such a marvelous book as Exodus. As a participant and eye-witness of the events, Moses had the necessary *knowledge*. Having been educated in all the wisdom of Egypt, he had adequate *training* and literary skill. Because he was with Israel for forty years during the wilderness wanderings, he had abundant *time* to write. Being a man fully dedicated to God and to the people of God, he had the *motivation* necessary for the big task of writing this book and also the other books of the Pentateuch. Most important of all, the Spirit of God motivated him and assisted him. How many other men of ancient times (or modern either!) possessed this combination of qualities needed by any author of a book like Exodus?

II. CRITICAL¹ THEORIES ABOUT THE AUTHORSHIP OF EXODUS:

1. Martin Noth expresses the view of the majority of Old Testament "critics" in the following statement:

The intensive work on the Pentateuch which has been carried on by scholars for many generations has shown that the completed Pentateuch, as it now stands in the Old Testament, cannot be explained as the work of one "author" and that the attribution of the Pentateuch to Moses as author, of which we find traces only after the Old Testament period, does not hold true.²

2. Those who reject the Mosaic authorship of Exodus and the rest of the Pentateuch maintain that at first the stories and other parts of these books were stories about real or imaginary people and events, which were transmitted *orally* over a long period.³
3. These oral (word-of-mouth) traditions were "shaped by usage in worship centers throughout the era of conquest and settlement."⁴

Supposedly the oral traditions clustered themselves into collections of traditions at different places—Shechem, Jerusalem, Hebron Gilgal, or other places, so that in time different sections of what we now have in Exodus were chiefly known primarily in specific areas. Thus (according to the theory) there developed a

¹The term "critical" has unfortunately come to have a bad connotation to many people. The term is derived from the Greek word meaning "to judge." All students of the Bible must form some judgments concerning the Biblical text; so in a way all Bible students are "critics." However, so many Biblical "critics" have expressed skeptical, negative, views about the Bible, that the very expression "Bible critic" has become synonymous to many with "destructive critic."

²Martin Noth, *Exodus* (Phila.: Westminster, 1962), p. 12.

³Roy L. Honeycutt, Jr., *Exodus*, in *Broadman Bible Commentary*, Vol. 1 (Nashville: Broadman, 1969), p. 308. (This particular edition of the *Broadman Bible Commentary* was withdrawn from publication and sale by the Southern Baptist Convention because of the "liberalism" expressed by certain of its authors.)

⁴Honeycutt, *ibid.*

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body of traditions at one place about the exodus event; at another place a group of traditions about the wilderness wanderings; at yet another area a collection of traditions about the Sinai events. The sections about the covenant (Ex. 20—23) and the tabernacle (25—31, 35—40) were also independently circulated.⁵

4. The first "author" who wrote some of the traditions down is commonly called "J." "The 'Jahwist,' i.e. the author of this particular narrative stratum in the Pentateuch, is probably to be dated in the time of David or Solomon."⁶ He is thought to have lived in the southern kingdom (Judah). Sections of Exodus attributed to J include 1:8-12; 4:1-16; and many others.
5. The next "author" is called "E," (because he used the Hebrews name '*elohim* for God, rather than Jehovah). He is usually placed after J in time, and located in the northern kingdom. "The question whether J or E is the earlier is disputed; E is usually taken to be the less ancient, but this cannot be proved for certain."⁷
6. Some time near the fall of the northern kingdom the writings of J and E were combined into a single work, often called JE.
7. Skeptical critics assume that the book of Deuteronomy was written during the latter years of the kingdom of Judah. It is often associated with the reformation of Josiah in 621 B.C., although many now date it back to the time of Hezekiah (about 700 B.C.) The "Deuteronomistic" writers supposedly also added many moralistic insertions into other books (Judges, Kings, Exodus, etc.). The initial "D" is often applied to the Deuteronomistic author(s).
8. During or after the Babylonian exile (586-536 B.C.) priestly writers added a great amount of written material

⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 309-311.

⁶Noth, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁷Noth, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

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to the JE and D material that came to them. The priestly writers specialized in ceremonial and ritualistic writings, in statistics, genealogies, and introductory expressions ("these are the generations of . . ."). Most of the book of Leviticus is attributed to P, as is the material about the tabernacle and related matters in Exodus. The priestly writers supposedly rewrote much of the history which they found in JE to promote their own priestly privileges and position.⁸

9. Some time after the Babylonian captivity JE, D, and P were combined into what we now know as the Pentateuch, or Torah. This leaves Moses out of the picture.
10. These separate "sources" only exist in the minds of the critics who believe in them. The oldest Bible manuscripts we have betray no trace of J, E, D, or P.
11. No two critics who dissect the Old Testament into these sources come up with quite the same analysis. They have broad agreement, but when it comes to assigning particular passages to particular sources, every critic has his own analysis.⁹
12. We do not accept the "source" theories about the origin of the Pentateuch. In our commentary we frequently refer to the critics' views of various passages. When these views are weighed, they are found to be unproven speculations based upon an unwillingness to accept the supernatural inspiration of the Bible.

For further study of the critical theories, see Edward J. Young, *An Introduction to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963); or Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*

⁸See Noth, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

⁹For examples of way that Exodus is divided up verse by verse (or in larger units) and attributed to J, E, or P, see S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: Meridian, 1958), pp. 22-42; and W. O. E. Oesterly and Theodore H. Robinson, *An Introduction to the Books of the Old Testament* (New York: Meridian, 1958), pp. 36-37.

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(Chicago, Moody, 1964); or Merrill F. Unger, *Introductory Guide to the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1951).

If you desire to check some books favoring the source (documentary) analysis of the Old Testament, see James King West, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), Martin Noth, *Exodus* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962); S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York: Meridian, reprinted 1958).



Head of Thutmose III, king of Egypt 1502-1448 B.C. From his mummy at the Cairo museum. He was probably pharaoh of the oppression. (Ex. 1:15; 2:15).



Head of Amenhotep II,* king of Egypt 1448-1422 B.C. He was probably pharaoh at the time of the exodus.

*From J. H. Breasted, *A History of Egypt* (New York: Scribner's, 1924), p. 326.

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INTRODUCTORY SECTION V

THE DATE OF THE EXODUS

By the date of the "exodus" we are referring to the date of Israel's departure from Egypt, rather than the date of composition of the book of Exodus.

I. THE EARLY DATE FOR THE EXODUS—1446 B.C.

1. The exodus from Egypt occurred 480 years before the start of Solomon's temple, in the fourth year of king Solomon. See I Kings 6:1. The reign of Solomon is dated 970-931 B.C. by Edwin R. Thiele,¹ and 961-922 by Wm. F. Albright.² Using Thiele's dates, Solomon's fourth year would be 966 B.C. Adding 480 years to this gives us 1446 B.C. This figure could be a year or two off, depending on whether a part of a year is to be regarded as a whole year when adding up the totals. But the 1446 B.C. figure should be regarded as extremely close to the date. It is the date adopted in this textbook.
2. According to Judges 11:26, three hundred years (which we accept as a round number) elapsed between Israel's conquest of the land east of Jordan and the time of Judge Jephthah. Between the time of Jephthah and the reign of King David (1010-970 B.C.), several events occurred: the judgeships of Samson, Eli, and Samuel, and the reign of King Saul. The time span of these events is somewhat uncertain, but it probably was sixty to eighty years. If we start at 1010 B.C. (David's reign), and go back sixty (or more) years to Jephthah, and then back 300 years to the conquest of the land east of Jordan, and then back forty more years for the wilderness wanderings, we have a total of 400 years, and are back to 1410 B.C. This is quite close to the statistic in

¹*Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965), p. 55.

²*The Biblical Period from Abraham to Ezra* (New York: Harper, 1963), p. 53.

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I Kings 6:1.

If we date the exodus as late as 1290 B.C. (which many do), there is simply not enough time between 1010 and the exodus for all the events to have occurred, if we take the scriptural statistics literally at all.

3. The 1446 B.C. exodus date allows time for the events in the period of judges. If we add up all the periods whose lengths are given in the book of Judges, we get a total of 410 years! All Bible students admit that there is some overlapping in the periods. The scripture itself indicates this. (See Judges 10:7; 15:20.) If we adopt the early date of the exodus, we find enough time for all of the events in the period of judges, when we have allowed for some overlapping. If we date the exodus as late as 1290, so much overlapping and telescoping of time is required that there is at least a fifty percent adjustment needed!
4. Queen Hatshepsut (1501-1480 B.C.)³ ruled at the correct time to be a possible candidate as the "daughter of Pharaoh" who saved the baby Moses. If the exodus was in 1446 B.C., Moses was born in 1526 B.C., eighty years before. Hatshepsut would then have been a youthful "daughter of Pharaoh," not yet queen. We feel that she was the woman referred to, but there is no way to be certain.
5. Thutmose III (1502-1448 B.C.) fits well as the Pharaoh of the oppression.
 - a. He came to power very near the time when Moses fled to Midian (about 1486 B.C.). Thutmose III was both step-son and son-in-law of Hatshepsut, and was a bitter rival to her during the latter part of her reign. He made seventeen military campaigns into Canaan and Syria.

³Using the dates of Siegfried J. Schwantes, *A Short History of the Ancient Near East* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1965). His dates are used for all the Egyptian kings mentioned in this article.

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- b. His personality (militaristic and bragging) fits well as the "pharaoh of the oppression."
- c. A model and a painting of slaves making bricks comes from the time of his reign.⁴ Compare Ex. 1:14.
- d. He died shortly (one or two years) before Moses returned to Egypt from Midian. See Ex. 4:19; 2:23.
6. Amenhotep II (1448-1422 B.C.) fits well the Pharaoh at the time of the exodus.
 - a. The dates agree. Amenhotep II seems to have been unable to carry out any invasions or extensive military operations after his fifth year.⁵ Perhaps this was caused by the Red Sea disaster.
 - b. His personality fits well. He was strong, athletic, and insufferably boastful.⁶ See pp. 132-133 in this book.
 - c. He was succeeded by a non-firstborn son, Thutmose IV.⁷ All the firstborn of Egypt died at the passover time.
 - d. The chief problem with adopting Amenhotep II as pharaoh of the exodus is that Ex. 14:28, Psalm 136:15, and other passages seem to say that the Pharaoh perished in the sea. This is a problem. See notes on 14:28.
7. The fact that there were eleven generations from Aaron (Israel's first high priest) to Zadok (a priest in the time of king David, about 1000 B.C.) surely places the date of Aaron (and therefore also the death of the exodus) back as far as 1400 B.C. Even in the time available after that date, there would have been hardly forty years available for each generation. See I Chronicles 6:3-8.

⁴Merrill F. Unger, *Archaeology and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1964), p. 122 (picture); D. J. Wiseman, *Illustrations from Biblical Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), pp. 42, 44, 45.

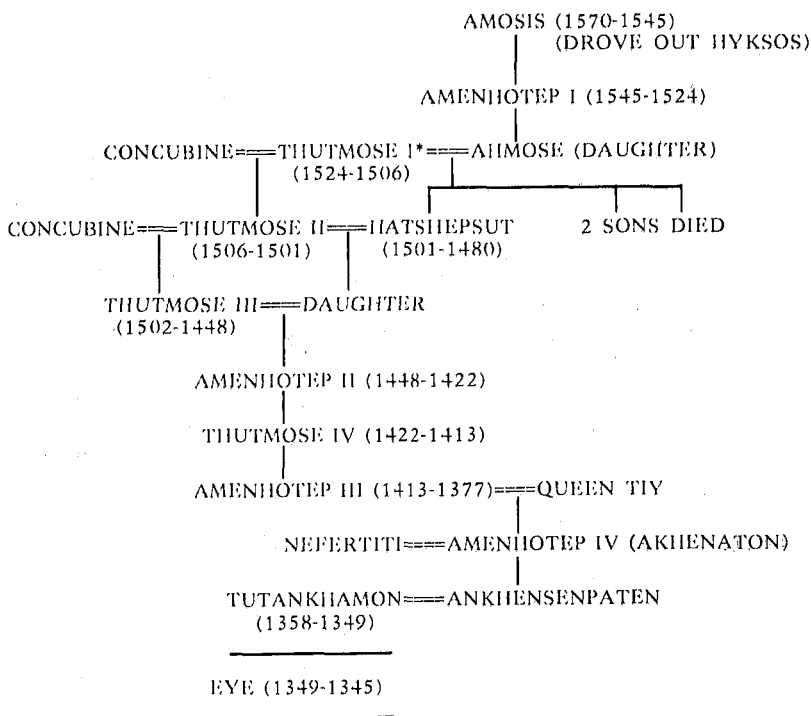
⁵G. L. Archer, Jr., *Survey of Old Testament Intro.* (Chicago: Moody, 1965), pp. 215, 217, 204-207.

⁶*Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1955), p. 244.

⁷Schwantes, *op. cit.*, p. 86. G. L. Robinson, *Bearing of Archaeology on the Old Testament* (New York: American Tract Society, 1944), p. 54.

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CHART OF KINGS OF EGYPTIAN EIGHTEENTH DYNASTY
(Double lines indicate marriage.)



*Observe that neither Thutmose I, nor Thutmose II, nor Thutmose III actually had royal blood, but their wives and daughter did.

8. The fact that Israel could subdue almost all the land east of the Jordan river in only two battles (at Jahaz and Edrei; Num. 21:23, 24) shows that this area was sparsely populated at the time near the exodus. Archaeological surveys have shown that this was the case between 1850-1300 B.C.,⁸ which would include the time forty years after the exodus. After 1300 B.C. it became more heavily populated. (It is incorrect to allege, however, that this area had NO settled population before 1300 B.C. See p. 27.)
9. The Amarna letters (clay tablets sent from kings in Canaan to the Egyptian kings around 1400-1375 B.C.) tell of great alarm in Canaan because they were being invaded. Among the invading peoples, they mention the 'Apiri (also spelled Habiri, Habiru, 'Apiru, Hapiri, Khapiri). This name may very well refer to the Hebrews.⁹ If the 'Apiru invasion was, even in part, the Hebrew invasion, then we would need to date the exodus some forty-five or fifty years before the Amarna letters, which would give us a date quite close to 1446 B.C.

It is remarkable that among all the letters sent to the Egyptian king Akhenaton (at Amarna), there are no letters from Jericho, Shiloh, Mizpah, Gibeon, Hazor, or Shechem. These places had probably either been conquered already by the Habiri (as the Bible indicates), or had already allied themselves with them.¹⁰

One of the Amarna letters from the Egyptian envoy in north Palestine contains this note to the reigning Pharaoh: "Let my lord the king recall what *Hazor* and its king have already had to endure."¹¹ Hazor was one of the cities destroyed by Joshua. (Joshua 11:10-13)

⁸Nelson Glueck, *Rivers in the Desert* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Cudahy, 1959), pp. 10, 11.

⁹Wm. F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity* (Garden City, New York: Anchor, 1957), p. 240, says that the name *Hebrew* may "perfectly well reflect an adjectival form 'Apiru."

¹⁰G. L. Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 58. John Garstang and J. B. E. Garstang, *The Story of Jericho* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1948), p. 126.

¹¹Sir Charles Marston, *The Bible is True* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1937), p. 145.

The king of Megiddo wrote one of the "Amarna letters," saying that he was being attacked by one Lab'ayu, ruler of Shechem. He asks for reinforcements. Lab'ayu also wrote, protesting his innocence. Lab'ayu is said (by his enemies) to have turned Shechem over to the 'Apiru.¹² This may explain how the Israelites could conduct their big mass meeting at Mt. Ebal and Mt. Gerezim without interference from the Canaanites.

The identification of the Habiri of the Amarna letters has caused much controversy. Some say they were the Hebrews. But the Habiri spoken of seem to have been a much more inclusive group of people than just the Hebrews, although the Hebrews were probably regarded as Habiri by the Canaanites. Consult the *Biblical Archaeologist*, Feb. 1960, for a detailed discussion. See also G. E. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology* (Phila.: Westminster, 1962), p. 75.

10. A destruction layer at Hazor in northern Israel is dated about 1400 B.C. (close of the Late Bronze I period). This is probably the debris of the destruction referred to in Joshua 11:11, 13. This would fit very well with the 1446 exodus date.¹³

At Hazor there are three destruction layers on the plateau (or enclosure) below the tell (acropolis). One is the 1400 B.C. destruction. The next above it is from the end of Late Bronze II A, and is probably the destruction by the Egyptian king Seti I, 1318 B.C. The third is LB II B (1300-1260/30 B.C.), and is possibly the destruction debris caused by the battle of Deborah and Barak (Judges 4:2, 24).

¹²Chas. F. Pfeiffer, *Tell El Amarna and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1963), p. 50. *Biblical Archaeologist*, Feb. 1960, p. 19. G. E. Wright, *Shechem* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 18.

¹³*Bibliotheca Sacra* #129 (1972), pp. 42-46; (Reprinted in the *Bulletin of the Near East Archaeological Society*, #2, 1972, pp. 8-17). See Yigael Yadin (and others), *Hazor II* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1960), plate CXVI for many illustrations of LB I pottery from Hazor. See also *Hazor III-IV*, plates CXXL-CCLIII for similar material.

11. The discovery of a jar handle bearing three very ancient Hebrew letters (found at the ruins of Raddana, a site about ten miles north of Jerusalem) has led Dr. Y. Aharoni of Tel Aviv University to date the Hebrew occupation of this site as no later than 1300 B.C.¹⁴ The letters resemble the Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions found in the Mt. Sinai area, and dated approximately 1500 B.C.

If the Hebrews were at Raddana in 1300 B.C., this forces the exodus back to near 1400 (counting the years of wandering, the years of conquest, and the occupation during the period of judges). This is much nearer to the 1446 date we have proposed than it is to other suggested later dates.

The excavators of Raddana, Dr. Joseph Callaway and Dr. Robert E. Cooley, do not concur with Aharoni's conclusion, and maintain that the site of Raddana was first occupied about 1200 B.C., and that it was probably occupied by non-Israelites, who had a sophisticated architecture that was destroyed and later crudely rebuilt by Israelite invaders about 1100 B.C. (Information from personal correspondence with Robert E. Cooley.)

The Biblical information gives a rather definite date for the exodus. The archaeological data, though valuable, seems incomplete, inconclusive, and contradictory.

II. THE LATE DATE FOR THE EXODUS—1290 B.C.

1. Because of some conclusions from archaeology, most scholars do not accept the 1446 B.C. date that we have proposed for the exodus. Most date it around 1290 B.C.¹⁵

¹⁴Y. Aharoni, "Khirbet Raddana and its Inscription," *Israel Exploration Journal* #21, pp. 130-135.

¹⁵Many of the arguments for a late date or against the early date can be read in J. A. Thompson, *The Bible and Archaeology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962), pp. 55-63; Jack Finegan, *Light from the Ancient Past* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1974), pp. 117-121; K. A. Kitchen, *Ancient Orient and the Old Testament* (Chicago: Inter-Varsity, 1966), pp. 52-72. Rebuttals to most of their arguments can be found in Gleason Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody, 1965), pp. 214-223.

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Some, like Joseph Callaway, have proposed dates as low as 1100 B.C.

2. Those dating the exodus late generally regard the great notorious king *Raamses II* (1301-1234) of the Egyptian nineteenth dynasty as the pharaoh of the oppression, and his son *Merneptah* (1234-1220 B.C.) as the pharaoh of the exodus. Others regard *Seti I* (1317-1301 B.C.) as the pharaoh of the oppression and Raamses II as the pharaoh of the exodus.

We feel that the very lack of certainty and unanimity among advocates of the later dates shows the weakness of the view.

Merneptah in his fifth year of reign prepared a stele (an upright inscribed stone monument), which contains boastings about his victories (real or unreal). In this stele he mentions Israel. (It is the only such stele known that actually names Israel. He writes (in part) . . .

Carried off is Ashkelon; seized upon is Gezer;
Yanoam is made as that which does not exist;
Israel is laid waste, his seed is not.¹⁶

If Israel was in its land, and had suffered a raid by Merneptah in his fifth year (1230 B.C.), the exodus could not have been later than about 1280.¹⁷

3. One of the principal arguments for the later date of the exodus is the mention of Raamses in Ex. 1:11. This name of a city is thought to link the exodus to Raamses II, rather than to the XVIII dynasty kings like Thutmose III.¹⁸ Some authors have asserted that the name Raamses

¹⁶From *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (translation by John A. Wilson) (Princeton Univ. Press, 1955), p. 378.

¹⁷Some recent scholars have held that the word on the Merneptah stele usually translated "Israel" may not actually mean Israel, but refers to a town, possibly "Jez-reel." If so, then the Merneptah stele would not by itself prove Israel as a nation was settled in the land by that time. J. H. Hertz, *Pentateuch and Haftorahs* (London: Soncino, 1969), p. 395.

¹⁸Finegan, *op. cit.*, pp. 118, 119.

just does not appear before the nineteenth dynasty of Egypt.

Admitted: We have no definite proof outside the Bible that the city which was called Raamses or Per-Raamses, or any other city in the area, was called by that name before the nineteenth dynasty. It was the royal residence city in the Egyptian delta during the XIX and XX dynasties, when eleven kings wore the name of Raamses.

Nonetheless, we now know that the name *Raamses* was certainly used before the XIX dynasty, and there is no conclusive proof that it was not used as a city name then, as the Bible says it was. Pierre Montet says that the founder of the XIX dynasty, Raamses I, belonged to a family of the eastern delta, where for generations all the men had been called Seti or Raamses.¹⁹ Gleason L. Archer, Jr. documents the appearance of the name Raamses (with the slightly variant spelling Ramose) as the name of a nobleman during the XVIII dynasty (time of Amenhotep III).²⁰ Also Donovan Courville gives the Sothis list of the kings of Egypt, which lists at least six kings that *preceded* the Hyksos who had the name Raamses in various forms.²¹

Genesis 47:11 says that the Israelites settled "in the land of *Rameses*" during the time of Jacob. The use of the name *Rameses* here might be a later name applied to the site before it was actually called that. But it could very possibly indicate that the area was called by that name way back in the time of Jacob, about 1875 B.C.

A problem for those who assume that Ex. 1:11 refers to a city called Raamses existing in the time of Raamses II is that Raamses II did his building right in Wadi Tumilat (Goshen), where the Israelites lived. But the

¹⁹*Lives of the Pharaohs* (Cleveland: World, 1968), p. 164.

²⁰Mimeographed article, Dec. 1973.

²¹*The Exodus Problem*, Vol. I (Loma Linda: Challenge, 1971), pp. 118-122.

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Egyptians and the Israelites were not mixed together.²²

4. Another argument for the late date is the view that there were NO settled habitations east of Jordan in Moab, Ammon, Edom, or Gilead in the fourteenth century. Therefore the exodus could not have occurred near then, because the Bible relates that the Israelites encountered these peoples.²³

As stated in this article (I, 7), there were indeed very few residents east of Jordan in Moses' time. But the discovery of a small temple at Amman, Jordan, and large family tombs at Amman and Naur,²⁴ dated before 1400 B.C., shows that the area did have a population in the time of Moses, as the Bible indicates.

5. An argument against the early (1446 B.C.) date is that the capital of Egypt during the XVIII dynasty was at Thebes, and not up in the delta. Thutmose III did not build buildings in the delta area, where Israel lived, and therefore he could not be the pharaoh of the oppression.²⁵

Rebuttal: Though the capital was indeed at Thebes far to the south, Thutmose III calls himself Lord of Heliopolis (which was in the delta). His son Amenhotep II was born at Memphis, near the delta. Thutmose III erected two granite obelisks at Heliopolis.²⁶ It is hardly conceivable that the densely populated delta region would not be developed by the XVIII kings, since it was the gateway to their conquests in Canaan and Syria.

6. A frequently-used argument for the late exodus date is that the remains of Palestinian cities—Lachish, Debir, Jericho, Hazor, Ai—prove that the conquest

²²Archer, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-219.

²³Nelson Glueck, *River Jordan* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), pp. 41, 101, 102, 104.

²⁴G. Lankaster Harding, *The Antiquities of Jordan* (New York: Crowell, 1959), p. 17. See also *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary*, p. 167.

²⁵Finegan, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

²⁶Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

was later than 1400 B.C., and hence the exodus was later than 1446.²⁷

a. *Lachish* was apparently destroyed about 1230 B.C. But this was not the work of Joshua, who destroyed the inhabitants of Lachish, but not the city itself. (Joshua 10:31, 32; 11:13). The 1230 destruction may be the work of Merneptah.²⁸

b. *Debir*. Tell Beit Mirsim, SW of Hebron, was formerly thought to be the site of Debir. It was destroyed about 1220 B.C. This could have been the result of Merneptah's raid, but was certainly not part of the Israelite conquest referred to in Josh. 10:38, 39 and Judges 1:11-13. No destruction of the site accompanied the Israelite slaughter of the inhabitants.

More recent researches have quite convincingly indicated that Tell Beit Mirsim was not the ancient site of Debir. More likely Debir was the site now known as Tell Rabud, five miles south of Hebron.²⁹

c. *Jericho*. The excavations of John Garstang at Jericho (1930-36) seemingly proved that City IV of Jericho was destroyed about 1400 B.C., which would confirm the Biblical exodus date. Double walls were found fallen, and these were thought to be the walls that fell in Joshua's time. However, subsequent excavations by Kathleen Kenyon indicate that the walls Garstang thought fell in 1400 B.C. were actually from the Early Bronze period five hundred years earlier; and the two walls were themselves not even contemporary.³⁰ There is an obvious destruction and burn layer at Jericho. This layer has usually been dated

²⁷J. A. Thompson, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

²⁸Archer, *op. cit.*, p. 220.

²⁹A. F. Rainey, "The Location and History of Biblical Debir." *Newsletter of the Near East Archaeological Society*, Winter 1974.

³⁰See Charles Pfeiffer, *Biblical World* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1966), pp. 308, 309.

about 1580 B.C., at the end of the Canaanite Middle Bronze II period, and attributed to an Egyptian attack in Palestine following the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt. But the evidence that the Egyptians destroyed Jericho or other Palestinian cities then is very weak. More probably the Middle Bronze culture in Palestine continued until Joshua conquered Canaan about 1400 B.C. The walls of Jericho that Joshua destroyed have probably been visible all along, but the remains have been dated wrongly.³¹

- d. *Hazor*. The excavators of Hazor have maintained that the destruction layer there dated after 1300 was that of the Israelite conquest.³² This is an unnecessary conclusion, because there is at Hazor another destruction layer dated about 1400. (See p. 23.)
- e. *Ai*. Excavations have been made at a large mound named Et-Tell located twelve miles north of Jerusalem since 1933 because this has generally been regarded as the location of Ai. But no remains have been found there that can be dated between 2300 and 1200 B.C.

At any place where people have ever lived in Palestine broken pieces of pottery can be found and dated by their forms. If Et Tell is the location of Ai, why are there no remains there datable to near 1400 B.C., when Joshua destroyed Ai?

The author of this book has been involved in excavations at a small mound named Khirbet Nisya ten miles north of Jerusalem. (The excavation director is Mr. David Livingston.) Khirbet Nisya lies on the east side of a high hill, just as the Bible says Ai did (Gen. 12:8). There pottery from the Canaanite period (Middle Bronze II), Israelite (Iron age), Persian, and other periods has been

³¹ John Bimson, *Redating the Exodus and Conquest* (Sheffield, England: Univ. of Sheffield, 1981), pp. 110-132.

³² Y. Yadin, and others, *Hazor II* (Jerusalem, 1960), p. 165.

³³ *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Sept. 1968, p. 314.

found, the very periods in which the Bible indicates Ai was inhabited. (Note Isa. 10:8; Ezra 2:28). No remains from these periods have been found at Et-Tell. We think Nisya will prove to be the true site of Ai, and the historical precision of the Bible will be demonstrated again.

7. Another objection is that the Habiri who captured(?) Jerusalem about 1400 B.C., and who are named in the Amarna letters, could not have been the Hebrews, since the Hebrews did not capture Jerusalem.³⁵

Rebuttal: Neither the Amarna letters nor the Bible declare that the Habiri/Hebrews captured Jerusalem, but only that they threatened it.³⁶ The fear of the king of Jerusalem, as indicated by Joshua 10:1, 2, is similar to that expressed by Abdi-Khepa, king of Jerusalem in the Amarna letters.

8. Yet another objection to the early date is that Joseph (son of Jacob) does not fit into the Hyksos period by the early dating.³⁷

There is absolutely no proof that Joseph lived during the Hyksos period. Joseph came into Egypt during the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (before the Hyksos), and the later Hyksos kings were probably persecutors of the Israelites, not allies.³⁸

9. Another argument against the 1446 B.C. exodus date is that the 480 years in I Kings 6:1 cannot be regarded as expressing the precisely literal chronology that we Western-world people expect our statistics to express.³⁹

Those holding this view allege that the authors of the

³⁴ *The Exodus Problem*, Vol. 1 (Loma Linda: Challenge, 1971), pp. 70-73, 77.

³⁵ Finegan, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

³⁶ Charles Pfeiffer, *The Biblical World* (Baker, 1966), p. 36.

³⁷ Finegan, *ibid.*

³⁸ Archer *op. cit.*, 215, 204-207.

³⁹ James Moyer, "Date of the Exodus" (Springfield, Mo.: Duplicated notes, 1974).

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Old Testament generally dealt in "round" numbers. For example, the "four hundred" years in Gen. 15:13 refers to the same period described as 430 years in Ex. 12:40. Also the number *forty* occurs seven times in the book of Judges (3:11; 5:31; et al); the number *twenty* appears three times (Judges 4:3; et al); *eighty* appears once (Judges 3:30).

It is further argued that the Israelites did not keep precise statistics up until the time of the monarchy (about 1000 B.C.), and neither did her neighboring nations.

The statistics and "generations" of the Old Testament are said to show "schematization" very often. This term means that in giving statistics and lists of names the authors often gave some approximate number that could be easily remembered or associated with another similar group. Thus in the genealogy of Christ (Matt. 1), the generations are schematized into three groups of fourteen generations, although this required omission of some known names.

By this argument the 480 years of I Kings 6:1 could be interpreted to mean twelve generations (or tribes) of approximately forty years each, but it would not be the precise number.

In reply to these arguments we observe that the ancient Egyptians, as far back as 2500 B.C. were meticulous record keepers. At least seven very long genealogical lists are known, each spanning many generations.⁴⁰ One list covers about 600 years, and another some 1300 years, naming sixty generations of the family and at intervals giving the names of contemporary kings.

Inasmuch as Moses grew up in Egypt and was trained in the ways of the Egyptians, it is reasonable to assume

⁴⁰K. A. Kitchen, "Transmission of Family Records for Long Periods," *Tyndale House Bulletin*, April 1960, pp. 14-18.

that his approach to statistics and family records would be like that of the Egyptians.

As for the use of round numbers, it simply is not true that all Old Testament statistics are round numbers. Very many are obviously specific. For example, Judges 3:8 gives "eight"; Judges 3:14 has "eighteen"; Judges 6:1 reads "seven." Even the multiples of ten may be the actual numbers, and not approximations. We surely agree that the Old Testament gives some round numbers; but it is wrong to assume that all numbers are questionable because some are "round."

Likewise, schematization may have been employed in a few cases. But this is not adequate cause to assume that it was used in every list of names or every statistic. What may appear to us to have been schematized may have been a reality.

For generations scholars had difficulty trying to harmonize the numbers given in the books of Kings concerning the years the various kings reigned. Many gave it up as hopeless. When Edwin R. Thiele began his study of the numbers associated with the Hebrew kings, he began with the assumption that the numbers might be correct when they were understood as the ancient people wrote them.⁴¹ His investigations demonstrated that the numbers were correct. It was our lack of understanding of them that caused the problems. We should look upon the statistics in the scriptures with the same kind of respect that Jesus had for the scriptures generally.

⁴¹ *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, pp. v-vii.

ISRAEL'S ROUTE FROM EGYPT TO SINAI

INTRODUCTORY SECTION VI

ISRAEL'S ROUTE (JOURNEY) FROM EGYPT TO SINAI

SEE NUMBERS 33:5-15; Ex. 12:38—19:1)

I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES guiding us in our attempt to trace Israel's route:

MANY uncertainties confront anyone who tries to trace Israel's route precisely. A check of commentaries and atlases will show how extremely varied are the proposed routes. Several principles have helped us to decide what was their probable journey route.

1. All *Scriptural* information about Israel's travels must be accepted as accurate and final authority. Our Lord Jesus said that the scriptures cannot be broken (John 10:35).
2. Israel's journeys had to be through places where they had LOTS of room. With 603,550 men (Num. 2:32) and a probable total population of over two million, their total encampment area would probably cover six miles square (36 square miles).¹ Even in this much area there would be over 50,000 people in every square mile.
3. The natural geographic features of the Red Sea and the Sinai peninsula are presently very similar to those that existed in the time of Moses. The wadies² between the granite mountains of Sinai are in the same places that they were long ago. The traffic routes in Moses' day passed through the same valleys that modern caravans follow.

The Red Sea, or Sea of Reeds, occupied in Moses'

¹J. W. McGarvey, *Lands of the Bible* (Nashville, Tenn.; Gospel Advocate, 1966), pp. 346-347.

²A *wady* is a usually-dry brook-valley. They flow with water during the occasional winter rains.

time almost exactly the same bed it now occupies. There is no indication that any neck of water once connected the Bitter Lakes with the north tip of the Gulf of Suez. Archaeologist Wm. F. Albright tells of finding an archaeological site inhabited in the fifteenth century B.C. (the very time of MOSES!) which lies only a little over a hundred meters from the Red Sea shore, and is less than five meters above the present average Red Sea level.³ Obviously the shore line of the Red Sea is now about where it has been for 3500 years. (See note, p. 43.)

4. We do not regard the encampments named in Num. 33:5-15 as necessarily all being just one day's journey apart. In fact, we are told that it was a three days' trip from Pihahairoth to Marah, although this trip is presented as just one stage (Num. 33:8). Probably the "encampments" are only the more prominent locations they passed through, or their longer stopover points.

II. SITES (or stages) IN ISRAEL'S JOURNEY

1. From *Rameses* to *Succoth* (Num. 33:5).

Most scholars now locate Rameses at Tanis in the northeast Nile delta area.⁴ Another site that has been proposed is at modern Qantir ("bridge"), which is fifteen miles south of Tanis.⁵ We have selected Qantir as the site of Rameses on our map, because it is nearer the Land of Goshen (Wadi Tumilat area), where Israel's main population lived, than Tanis is.

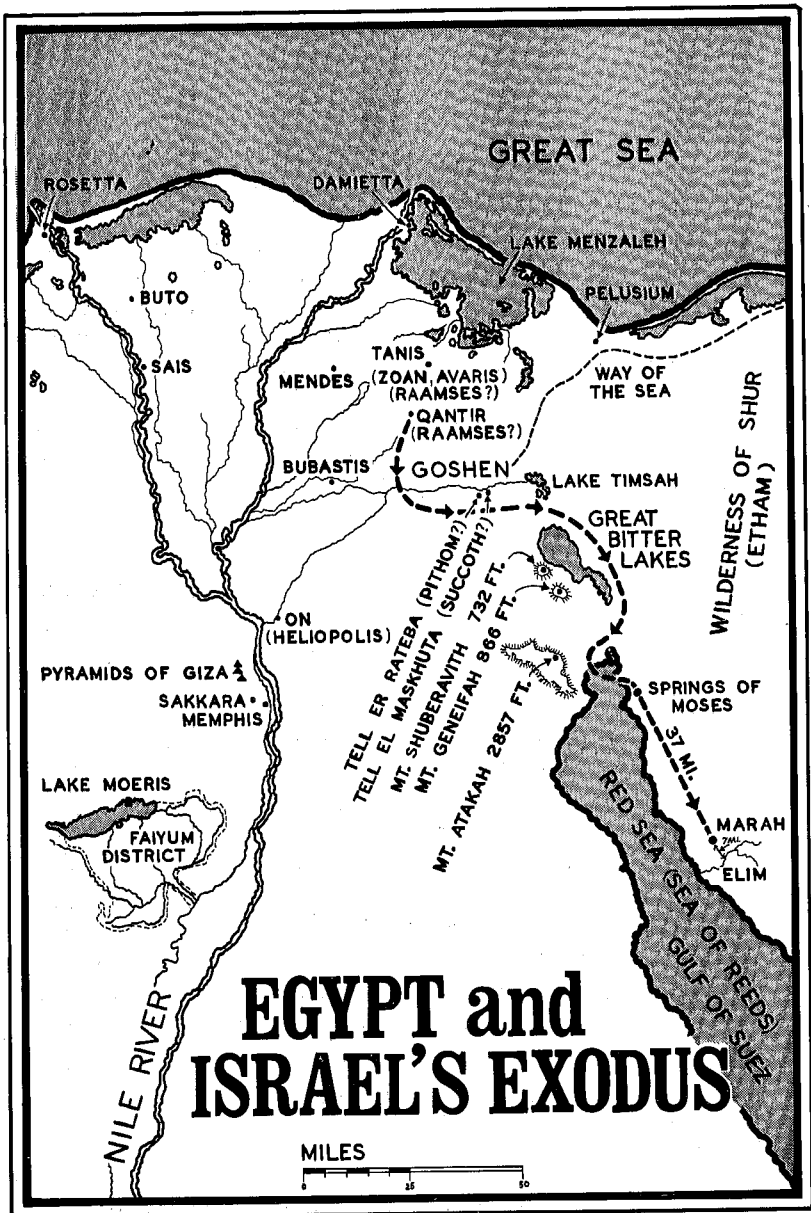
Succoth, meaning booths or temporary dwellings, is probably the hill ruin named Tell Maskhuta⁶ near the eastern end of Goshen, about ten miles west of Lake Timsah.

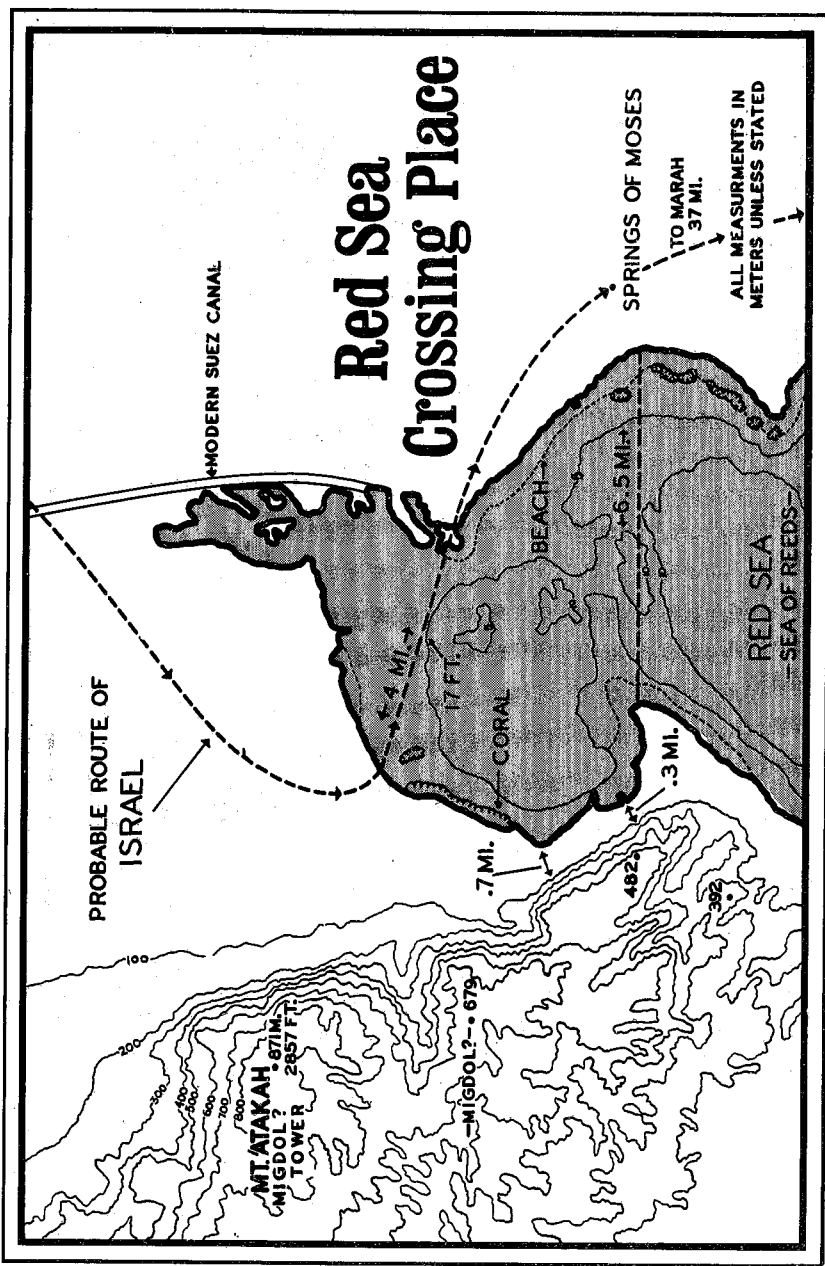
³"Exploring in Sinai with the Univ. of Calif. African Expedition," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, No. 109 (Feb. 1948), p. 15.

⁴"Rameses," *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*.

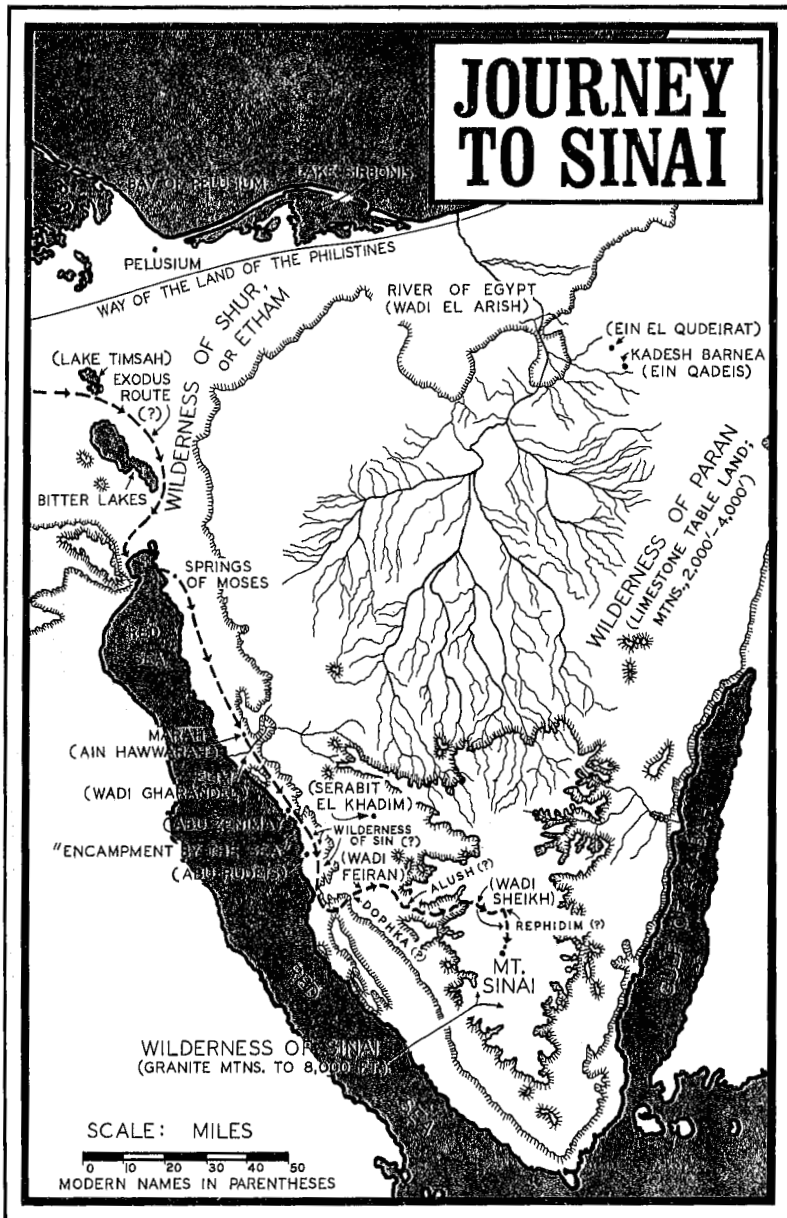
⁵*Ibid.*

⁶G. Ernest Wright, *Biblical Archaeology* (Phila.: Westminster, 1962), p. 61.

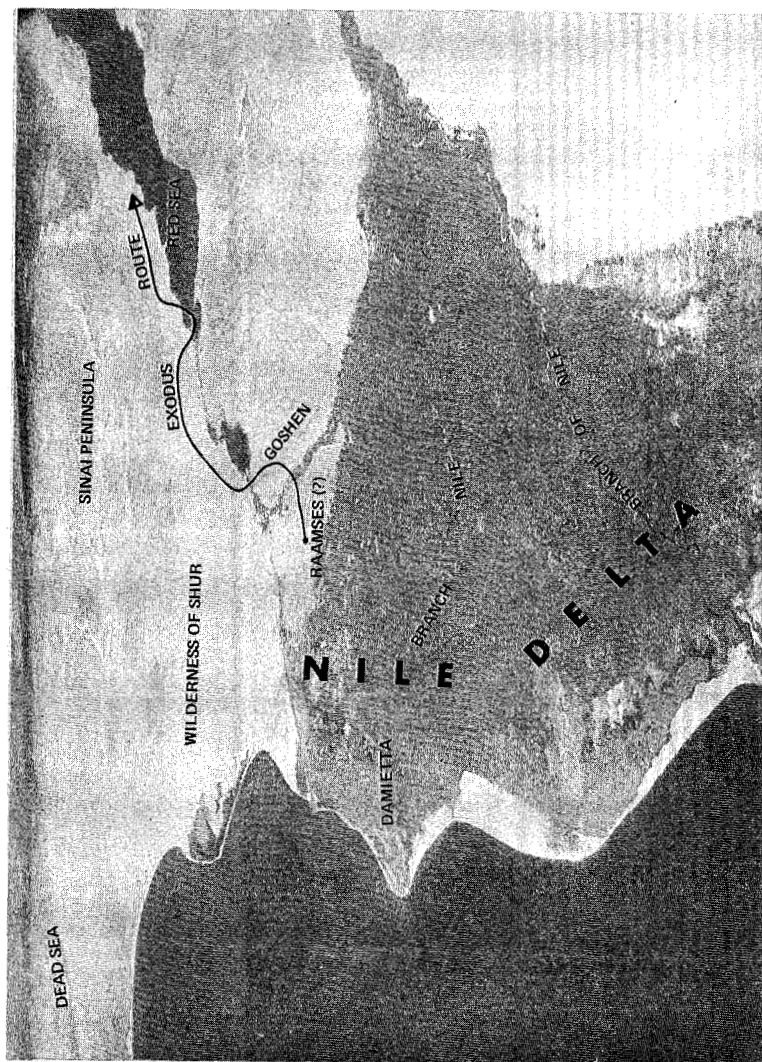




JOURNEY TO SINAI



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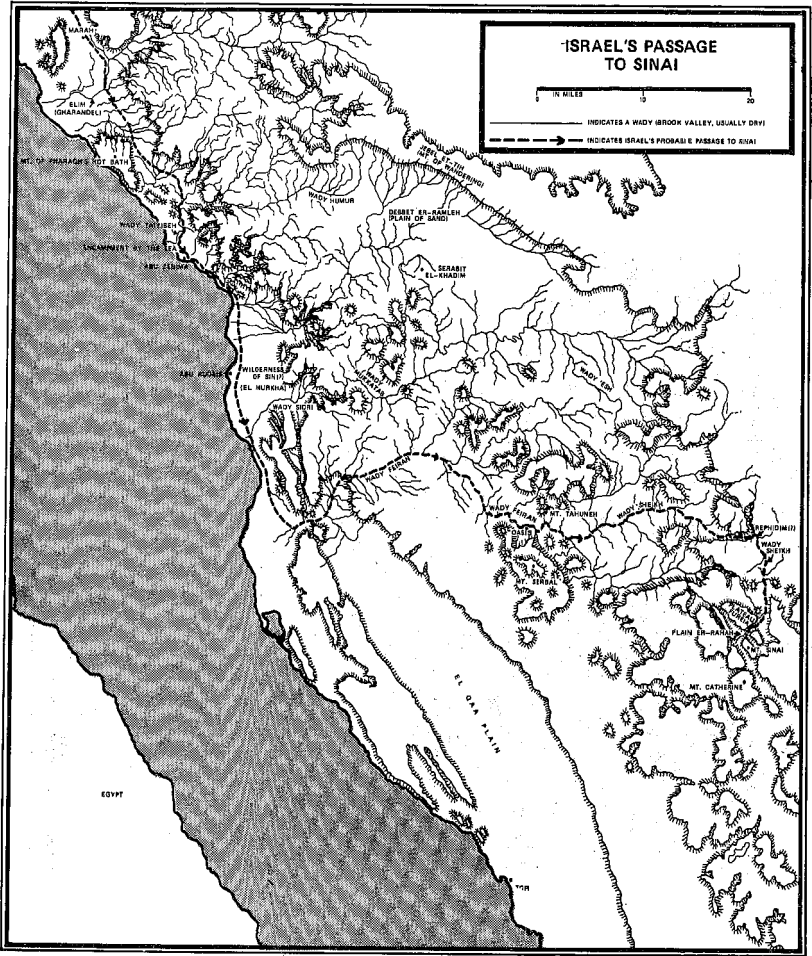


SINAI PENINSULA

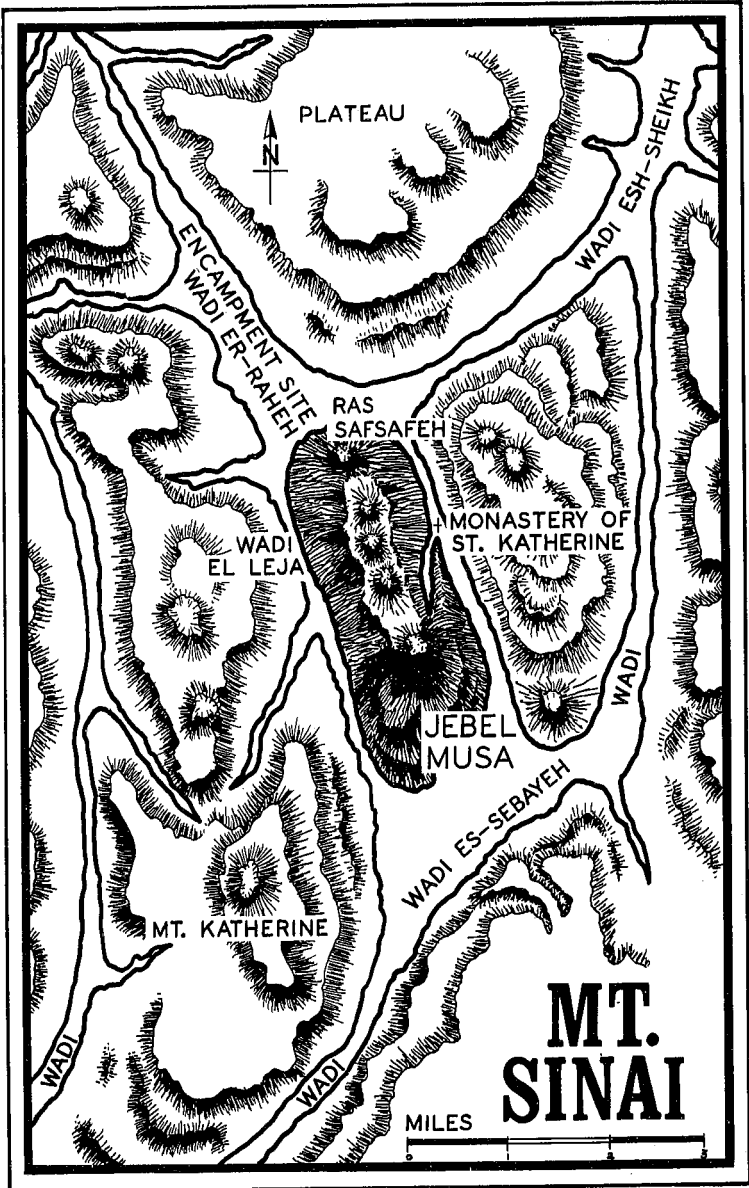


Sinai Peninsula (satellite view). (Picture courtesy NASA)

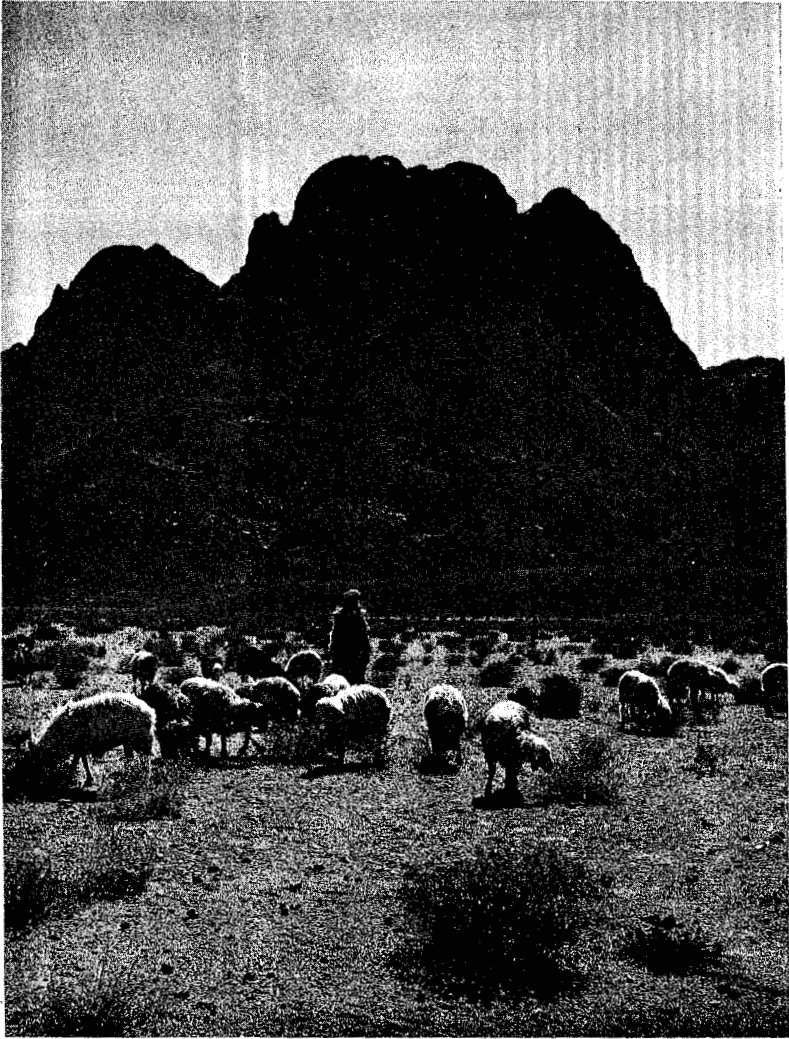
EXPLORING EXODUS



MT. SINAI



EXPLORING EXODUS



Shepherd before Mt. Sinai. (Matson photo)

ISRAEL'S ROUTE FROM EGYPT TO SINAI

2. From *Succoth* to *Etham* (Num. 33:6).

The site of Etham is not yet identified. Num. 33:6 says it is "in the edge of the *wilderness*." We therefore feel that to reach Etham, Israel must have travelled on eastward a few miles beyond Lake Timsah (probably passing just south of Timsah), going into the Sinai peninsula just east of the present Suez canal. The fact the Wilderness of *Etham* is the same area that is also called the Wilderness of *Shur* (Num. 33:8; Ex. 15:22), and that we know that Shur lay just east of the delta of Egypt in the Sinai wilderness, confirms our belief that Etham was somewhere southeast of Lake Timsah.

3. From *Etham* to *Pihahairoth* (Num. 33:7).

To reach Pihahairoth Israel had to "turn back." (The Hebrew verb may simply mean *turn*, as well as *turn back*.) Many interpreters seem to overlook this command about turning.⁷

We feel that Israel travelled southward after they entered into the Sinai desert, travelling along the east side of the Bitter Lakes, toward the Gulf of Suez. There is hardly room along the west side of the Bitter Lakes for a mass of people as great as Israel to have passed through, because mount Shuberavith and mount Ginefah lie only about three miles from the west shore of the Bitter Lakes.

Having gone on south of the Bitter Lakes, Israel was then instructed to "turn back and encamp before *Pihahairoth*" (Ex. 14:2). Since *back* to the Hebrews often meant *west*, a turn to the west would fulfill this command. A westward turn would bring them to the

⁷Wright, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62, presents a map suggesting that Israel turned to the north, and there crossed the southern tip of Lake Menzaleh, which he identifies as the Reed Sea (Red Sea). This is much too far north for Israel to have reached Marah in three days (Ex. 15:22-23). Wright identifies Marah with 'Ain Hawwarah, as we do also. Wright's map of Israel's proposed travel route shows Israel travelling along the *east* side of the Bitter Lakes, as does ours.

northwest side of the Gulf of Suez tip.

Pihahairoth is said to have been between *Migdol* and the sea, and before (east of?) *Baal-zephon* (Ex. 14:2). The name *Migdol* means *tower*. We suggest that the tower may have been on one of the summits of Mt. Atakah, just west of the Gulf of Suez tip only four or five miles.⁸

Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible says that Pihahairoth cannot now be identified with any known town or city in the east *delta* region (emphasis ours). It seems to us that the obvious reason for this is that Pihahairoth was NOT in the Delta area, but at the north tip of the Suez Gulf. The meaning of *Pihahairoth* is not certain, but the Egyptologist A. H. Gardiner said that it may mean the "house of Hathor." Hathor was the Egyptain cow-goddess, the "mother" principle of deity, who provided nourishment for the soul in the other-world.

Baal-zephon means *Lord-of-the-North*. The name seems to refer to a Canaanite idol in Egypt, or one of the places which bore its name. The location of Baal-zephon is not known.⁹ G. E. Wright¹⁰ tells of a Phoenician letter which associates a place called Baal-zephon with Tahpanes (Jer. 43:7-9), also called Daphnae. This is located between Lake Menzaleh and Lake Timsah. Possibly one place called Baal-zephon was that far north of the Gulf of Suez, but the Biblical Baal-zephon seems to have been near the north tip of the Gulf of Suez, only three days' journey from Marah. See notes on 14:1, 2.

4. From *Pihahairoth* (Hahairoth) across the *sea* (Num. 33:8).

⁸*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. III, p. 2936, says, "Migdol must be *Ras 'Atakah*, or some other high point. . . ." We agree.

⁹Baal-zephon is placed by Josephus (*Antiquities* II, xv, 1) on the Red Sea. We do not know what his authority was for doing this, but we feel he was correct.

¹⁰*Op. cit.*, p. 62.

ISRAEL'S ROUTE FROM EGYPT TO SINAI

We are persuaded that Israel crossed the Red Sea, or Sea of Reeds (Weeds), near the north tip of the Gulf of Suez. See map. The distance across the sea there would be about four miles, and the greatest water depth about twenty feet. God may have blown the path dry across the sea a mile wide, or even wider. Concerning the problem of what sea is meant by the Red Sea, or Reed Sea, see the following Introductory Section VII. We feel that these are two names for the same body of water.

An alternate spot on the Gulf of Suez where Israel may have crossed lies about five miles south of our proposed crossing point. Here they would enter the sea from the sandy cape *Adabiya*. This is just south of the "hump" on the west coast of the Gulf of Suez' tip. This cape has features that would make it an ideal crossing place. The sea is about six and a half miles across at this point, and has a gently sloping sand bottom both into it and out of it on the east side. The greatest water depth there is about thirty feet.¹¹

However, it seems to us that the corridor to reach this cape is too narrow for all the Israelites to have passed through without requiring too much time and trouble. There is less than one-half mile between the sea and the steep slopes of *Mt. Atakah* to the west. This very narrow level passage between sea and mountain would really be a bottle-neck for Israel.

Near the place of Israel's exit on the east side of the sea are the '*Ayun Musa*, the Springs of Moses. This name was given long after Bible times to seven rather insignificant springs. A few palms grow near the water, which is brackish.¹² The scripture does not mention these springs.

5. From the sea to *Marah* (Num. 33:8).

¹¹This is the crossing-place proposed by J. W. McGarvey, *op. cit.*, p. 441ff.

¹²*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Vol. V., p. 3066.

The way from the Springs of Moses to Marah is over hard compacted sand, sprinkled with gravel and small boulders. It took Israel three days to go from the Red Sea to Marah (Ex. 15:22), through the Wilderness of Shur (also called Etham). It is about thirty-seven miles from the Springs of Moses to Marah, which is generally considered to be *'Ain Hawwarah*, a spring now completely buried in sand. Only a cluster of date palms and a damp spot nearby tell of its existence.¹³ The water is still bitter. The spring Marah must have been much greater in Moses' time. (See notes on Ex. 15:23.)

If the Red Sea crossing place were farther north than the north end of the Gulf of Suez, it would have required more than three days travel to reach Marah, assuming that Israel could travel about twelve miles a day. John J. Davis admits this difficulty,¹⁴ even though he places the crossing of the sea at the south end of the Bitter Lakes.

6. From *Marah* to *Elim* (Num. 33:9)

Elim is generally considered to be the *Wady Gharandel*. It is about seven miles from Marah. It is a small brook fed by springs of water better than that of Marah.¹⁵ (See notes on Ex. 15:27.)

7. From *Elim* to the encampment by the *Red Sea* (Num. 33:10).

Mountains right up against the east shore of the Gulf of Suez separate the road south from Elim from the shore. (One of these mountains is now called *Jebel Hamman Far'aun*, the mountain of Pharaoh's Hot Bath.) But after going about twenty miles southeast from Elim, the shoreside mountains end and the roadway comes to the Red Sea shore, near modern Abu Zenima, near the mouth of the Wady et-Taiyibeh. It is

¹³Beno Rothenberg, *God's Wilderness* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1961), p. 94.

¹⁴*Moses and the Gods of Egypt* (Grand Rapids: Baker 1971), p. 117. We recommend Davis' book very highly.

¹⁵*Inter. Stand. Bib. Ency.*, Vol. V, p. 3066.

ISRAEL'S ROUTE FROM EGYPT TO SINAI

a comparatively long march of eight hours from Elim to this sea-side encampment.

8. From the Red Sea shore to the *Wilderness of Sin* (Num. 33:11)

The exact location of the Wilderness of Sin is uncertain. About six miles south of the sea-side encampment a large sandy plain begins. It is five miles wide and thirteen miles long (on its north-south axis), with the Red Sea shore on its west. Modern Abu Rudeis is in this area. This place seems to correspond well to the scriptural location of the Wilderness of Sin, which was the place where Israel first received the manna. (In this dry place manna surely could not have grown on trees or bushes!) The Arabs call this plain El Murkha.

9. From the Wilderness of Sin to *Dophka* (Num. 33:12).

We think that Israel travelled south out of the Wilderness of Sin about ten miles, traveling alongside mountains near the coast. Then they turned east up into the valley of *Wady Feiran*. We think that *Dophka* was an oasis on the Wady Feiran (there are several).

The Wady Feiran is one of the largest and most famous wadies in Sinai. It is a little over eighty miles long, and starts in the region of Mt. Sinai, where it is called the Wadi Esh-Sheikh.¹⁶ The Wady Esh-Sheikh is the upper (or northern) branch of the Wady Feiran.

E. H. Palmer in the *Desert of the Exodus* (1872)¹⁷ wrote:

From this plain [the Wilderness of Sin] it was necessary for Israel to ascend through the rugged granite mountains to the elevated plain in front of Sinai; and there is only one pass through and up by which it is practicable for such a caravan to make the ascent. This is Wady Feiran, . . . This wady is wide and smooth, washed in winter by a stream of

¹⁶Rothenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 135, 167.

¹⁷Quoted in McGarvey, *op. cit.*, p. 447.

water, and possessing several beautiful oases very pleasant to a traveler who is wearied with the almost uninterrupted barrenness of the desert. It leads to a narrow and short pass, by which is reached the plain immediately in front of [N.W. of] Mt. Sinai, called by the Arabs Er-Rahah. Instead of reaching this plain by this pass, the Israelites might have gone a little farther east [via Wady Esh-Sheikh] and compassed the mountain on the left of the pass; but this is the only divergence that they can have made from the route which we have followed.

The name *Dophka* is thought by some to mean "smeltery," and to refer therefore to nearby copper smelting operations. But this is not certain. Some authorities (ISBE; Gesenius' *Hebrew Lexicon*) say *Dophka* means "overdriving of flocks" or "drovers."

Many modern writers have felt that *Dophka* is to be identified with *Serabit el-Khadim*, a site northeast of the plain which we have identified as the Wilderness of Sin. At *Serabit el-Khadim* are the ruins of an Egyptian temple to Hathor, ancient turquoise mines, and numerous inscriptions, some in an extremely ancient Hebrew-like alphabet.¹⁸

We feel that it is extremely unlikely that *Serabit el-Khadim* is the site of *Dophka*. Why should the Israelites travel toward a center of Egyptian idolatry? Egyptian troops were stationed at *Serabit* at various times before and after Moses' time. The wady leading to *Serabit* is a more difficult passage than the Wady Feiran, and is a somewhat longer route to Sinai. Even if the name *Dophka* does mean smeltery (and indeed there are remains of smelting works around *Serabit*), there are other copper-mining locations in the wilderness of Sinai besides those near *Serabit*.

¹⁸"*Serabit el-Khadim*," *Biblical World*, Chas. Pfeiffer, ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1966), p. 517.

ISRAEL'S ROUTE FROM EGYPT TO SINAI

10. From *Dophka* to *Alush* (Num. 33:13).

Alush has not been identified. *Inter. Stan. Bible Ency.* says that according to the rabbis *Alush* means *crowding*, thus indicating the difficulties of the march. Our map positions *Alush* at one oasis in the Wady Feiran.

As Israel journeyed up the Wady Feiran, they would certainly get "strung-out." The wadies are narrow and often hemmed in by steep-sided mountains. The very large number of Israelites would form a long column in these wadies, perhaps ten to fifteen miles long. This explains how the Amalekites could readily attack the "hindmost" part of Israel's column without the rest of people being available to help them readily (Deut. 25:17-18).

11. From *Alush* to *Rephidim* (Num. 33:14).

Rephidim is an oasis of date palms with a running stream,¹⁹ located about eighteen miles from the plain Er-Rahah on the north side of Mt. Sinai. There seems to have been no water at this site in Moses' time, until he struck the rock (Ex. 17:1). Rephidim was the place where the Amalekites attacked Israel, and where Jethro was reunited with Moses.

12. From *Rephidim* to *Mt. Sinai* (Num. 33:15).

The Wady Esh-Sheikh goes around Rephidim on the north side, and then turns abruptly southward toward Mt. Sinai, and enters into the plain of Er-Rahah from the NE side of the plain. The Wadi Esh-Sheikh is the easiest approach to Er-Rahah, and is the one usually taken by baggage camels. We feel that it was probably Israel's approach route.

The plain of Er-Rahah is large enough to have accommodated the Israelite horde (1½ by 4 mi.). At the south side of this plain the impressive peak of *Ras Safsafeh* rises abruptly out of the level area, and towers 6739 feet

¹⁹*International Stand. Bib. Ency.*, p. 3067.

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above sea level. We feel that Ras Safsafeh is the peak which (as part of Mt. Sinai) was the mountain from which God spoke the ten commandments to Israel.

Ras Safsafeh is the northern summit of a steep-sided rocky ridge about four miles long, running generally NW to SE. On the southern tip of this ridge is its second summit, a peak called *Jebel Musa* (a name meaning Mt. of Moses), connected to Ras Safsafeh by a saddle. *Jebel Musa* is 7519 feet high. Christian tradition has generally identified Mt. Sinai with *Jebel Musa* as Mt. Sinai, although to us it seems that Ras Safsafeh is by far the more probable choice.

Narrow steep-sided valleys go along both the east and west sides of the ridge, which has Ras Safsafeh on its north end and *Jebel Musa* on the south. In the valley along its east side is the famous monastery of St. Katherine, named after a martyred Christian maiden of Alexandria who died in A.D. 307. At this monastery the famous Sinaitic manuscript of the Bible was found.

By the south end of this ridge is a small plain commonly called Wadi Sebaiyeh, or the Site of (Israel's) Encampment, having *Jebel Musa* on its north. To reach this southern plain Israel would have needed to skirt along through the narrow valleys east or west of the Mt. Sinai ridge. This south plain is neither as large as Er-Rahah on the north, nor is it as accessible. It only covers 145 acres, and is very rocky.²⁰ We doubt that it was the true site of Israel's encampment.

III. DISTANCES IN ISRAEL'S JOURNEYS

(All distances approximate)

1. From Rameses (Qantir) to Succoth (Tell el Maskhuta) 38 mi.

²⁰S. C. Bartlett, *From Egypt to Palestine* (New York: Harpers, 1879), pp. 270, 272.

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2. From Succoth, travelling along east side of Bitter Lakes, Bitter Lakes, to north end of Gulf of Suez	55 mi.
3. North end of Gulf of Suez, across Red Sea, to Springs of Moses	20 mi.
4. Springs of Moses to Marah ('Ain Hawwarah) . . .	37 mi.
5. Marah to Elim (Wadi Gharandel)	7 mi.
6. Elim to encampment by the sea (near Abu Zenima)	20 mi.
7. Encampment by the sea to the Wilderness of Sin (near Abu Rudeis)	12 mi.
8. Wilderness of Sin, via Wadi Feiran and Wadi Sheikh, to Mt. Sinai	<u>85 mi.</u>
Total: Approx.	275 mi.

These statistics reveal two interesting facts:

(1) The first part of Israel's journey, from Egypt to the crossing of the Red Sea, was a surprisingly large part of the total journey to Sinai, being about 113 miles of their 275 mile trip. This would have required ten or twelve days of travel. Many people have the impression that Pharaoh began to pursue Israel almost the next day after their departure. But the scripture nowhere states exactly how much time elapsed between Israel's departure and Pharaoh's pursuit. During that time the Egyptians embalmed and buried their firstborn (Num. 33:4). Surely a few days of mourning and shock followed these mass burials.

(2) Assuming that Israel's journey from Egypt to Sinai took approximately fifty days, they would need only to have averaged a bit more than five miles a day of travel to have covered the 275 miles in that time.

Between the Bitter Lakes and the Red Sea, just south of the Bitter Lakes, lies an elevated area called the Heights of Chalooof. This rises for a short distance twenty feet or more above sea level. These heights are of the same geological character as Mt. Gineifah west of the Bitter Lakes. This geological feature makes it almost impossible for the Red Sea to have ever been joined to the Bitter Lakes. See S. C. Bartlett, *From Egypt to Palestine*, pp. 158-162.

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INTRODUCTORY SECTION VII

RED SEA or REED SEA?

(Ex. 13:18; 15:4, 22)

What sea was it that the Israelites triumphantly crossed when they departed from Egypt? The name given in almost all English translations is *Red Sea*. The *Jerusalem Bible* (1966) calls it the *Sea of Reeds*. When we hear the words *Red Sea*, we at once think of that extension of the Indian Ocean lying between Arabia and east Africa, having a V-shaped northern tip, formed by the Gulfs of Suez and Akabah. We feel that THIS was the sea that the Israelites crossed, crossing it at the northern tip of the Gulf of Suez. See the preceding Introductory Section VI.

Older writers almost unanimously held this view. Modern writers have almost unanimously (but wrongly, it seems to us) taken another view. They assert that the sea which the Israelites crossed should not be called the Red Sea, but the SEA OF REEDS (or weeds). Furthermore, they affirm that this Sea of Reeds is not the Red Sea, but is another body of water somewhere between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, possibly the Bitter Lakes, or Lake Timsah, or Lake Balah (now disappeared since the digging of the Suez Canal), or Lake Menzaleh, or even Lake Sirbonis on the Mediterranean coast. There is no certainty or general agreement as to what body of water is referred to by the name Sea of Reeds.

We have no objection to the fact that the Hebrew words *Yam Suph* (usually translated *Red Sea*) actually mean *Sea of Reeds*, or *Weeds*. The word *suph* is translated *weeds* in Jonah 2:5, where it refers to seaweeds; and it is translated *flags* in Ex. 2:3, 5 and Isa. 19:6. (A *flag* is a water plant like a cattail.)

When the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek (about 275 B.C.), the translators rendered the Hebrew *Yam Suph* as *Eruthre Thalassa*, which is Greek for *Red Sea*. These translators did their work in Egypt, and would probably be familiar with Egypt's geography.

In classical Greek usage, the term *Red Sea* was applied to the

RED SEA OR REED SEA?

entire Indian Ocean,¹ including what we call the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf, and the adjoining ocean areas. In the *Histories* by Herodotus (about 450 B.C.) we read that the Persian king "Cyrus on his way to Babylon came to the bank of the river Gyndes, a stream which . . . empties into the river Tigris. The Tigris, . . . discharges its waters into the *Erythraean* [Red] Sea."² This would refer to the Persian Gulf.

Why did the *Red Sea* come to be called by that name? No one really knows. Some have guessed that it is derived from the name *Edom*, which means red. The mountains of Edom that lie along part of the east side of the Red Sea have a reddish color in part. Classical writers say that the name came from that of Erythras, a king who ruled in western Asia Minor.³ Others say it is derived from the red coral which lines its shores and covers the floor of the sea.

But the big question is this: Can the Hebrew *Yam Suph* actually refer to the sea we know as the Red Sea? We think it can and does, though many modern writers deny this. They argue that there are no reeds in the Red Sea, and that it cannot therefore be the Sea of Reeds. They affirm further that for Israel to have reached even the most northerly tip of the Gulf of Suez, they would have had to cross a long tract of desert to reach it. [It would be approximately 65 miles.] And that this would have been impossible for them to accomplish before the pursuing Egyptian chariots would have been upon them.⁴ Also it is argued that one of the two bodies of water said in Egyptian writings to be near the city of Rameses (which was far north of the Red Sea) was called "Papyrus Lake." Papyrus in Egyptian was called *thuf*, a word similar to the Hebrew *suph*.

These arguments sound impressive, but we feel they have some weaknesses.

¹Liddell & Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon* (abridged), Definition of *ERUTHROS*,

²I, 189. Translated by George Rawlinson. (London: Dent, 1964), Vol. I, p. 96.

³*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 4 (New York: Abingdon, 1962), pp. 19-20.

⁴*Ibid.*

For example, we need not seek a shallow reedy lake as the place that corresponds to the name SEA OF REEDS. The word *reeds* also may be translated *WEEDS*, as in Jonah 2:5, where it refers to *seaweeds* in the Mediterranean Sea, not to cattails or swamp weeds. The Red Sea has seaweeds in it, like other seas. Because of this the name *Yam Suph* could refer to the Red Sea.

Furthermore, if we assume (as many modern writers do) that Israel travelled *northward* from Succoth (lying west of Lake Timsah) to the southern tip of Lake Menzaleh⁵ (which is thought by many to be the Sea of Reeds), Israel would have been much closer to Egypt and far more exposed to the pursuing Egyptian chariots than they were in going by our proposed route. A journey from Succoth to Lake Menzaleh would be about fifty miles, a four-days' journey.

Yet further, the term *Sea of Reeds* (*Yam Suph*) is actually applied in several scriptures to the sea which we call the Red Sea. Thus in Numbers 21:4 it refers to a place on the north end of the Gulf of Akabah, near Elath and Ezion-Geber. In Numbers 33:10 there is a reference to an encampment on the shores of the *Yam Suph*, which almost certainly refers to a place on the shores of the Gulf of Suez. In I Kings 9:26 the term *Yam Suph* refers to the place where king Solomon had his fleet of ships at Ezion-Geber, which was on the north tip of the Red Sea Gulf of Akabah.

If the term *Yam Suph* means the Red Sea in these passages, why does it not refer to the same body of water in Ex. 13:18 and 15:4? Where is there any hint that the term refers to a different body of water in Ex. 15:4 than it refers to elsewhere?

Finally, we are told in Ex. 15:22 and Num. 33:8 that Israel travelled *three days'* journey from their place of crossing the sea to Marah. This is a distance of thirty-seven miles (assuming, as we do, that Marah is to be identified with 'Ain Hawwarah. This identification is widely accepted.⁶). If the Sea of Reeds were

⁵G. E. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1957), p. 61. *Broadman Bible Commentary*, Vol. 1 (Nashville: Broadman, 1969), p. 380.

⁶Wright, *Ibid.*, suggests on his map that this is the "probable" location of Marah.

RED SEA OR REED SEA?

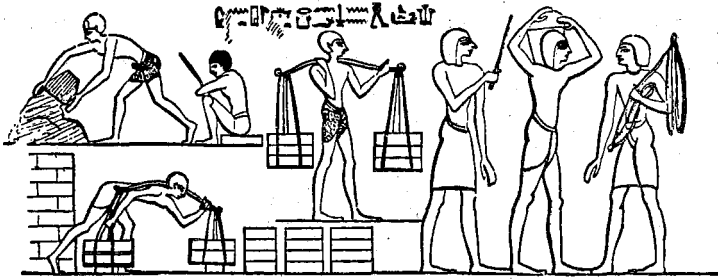
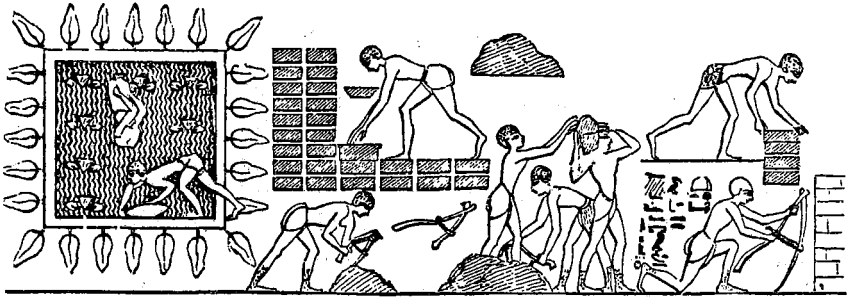
some body of water north of the tip of the Gulf of Suez, it would be too far north for the Israelite horde to have made the trip to Marah in three days. From Bitter Lakes to Marah is at least sixty miles. From Lake Timsah to Marah is over eighty miles. From Lake Menzaleh (where Wright locates the Sea of Reeds) it is almost 150 miles! Even the thirty-seven mile trip from the Springs of Moses (just east of Gulf of Suez tip) to Marah required the Israelites to travel twelve miles a day. This is about as far as a large group could travel each day.

We have the uncomfortable feeling that the reason for locating the Sea of Reeds elsewhere than the Red Sea is the desire (deliberate or unconscious) to downgrade the great miracle of crossing the Red Sea into puny near-miracle of blowing a dry path across a shallow swamp area.



The Papyrus reed. The papyrus plant has an angular stem from 3 to 6 feet high, though occasionally it grows to a height of 14 feet. The basket for the baby Moses was made of papyrus stems.

EXPLORING EXODUS



Egyptian Brickmakers and Brickmaking.

The drawing* shown above was made from a wall painting on the tomb of Rekh-mire at Thebes, from the time of Thutmose III (probable pharaoh of the oppression), about 1450 B.C.

At the upper left two slaves fetch water from a pool surrounded by trees. The water-softened Nile clay is lifted with mattocks, and placed in baskets borne on workmen's shoulders. The man in the center top is pressing the mud into a wooden frame to form bricks. In the lower drawing three piles of bricks dry in the sun. The dry bricks are carried by slaves using poles over their shoulders. Two overseers with sticks urge the workers on. Part of the inscription quotes the overseer: "The rod is in my hand; be not idle." The Israelites were involved in work like this.

*From E. A. Wallis Budge. *The Dwellers on the Nile* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1888), p. 91.

ONE HUNDRED FACTS ABOUT GOD

INTRODUCTORY SECTION VIII

ONE HUNDRED FACTS ABOUT GOD THAT ARE MADE KNOWN IN EXODUS

One of the great purposes for God's works that are recorded in the book of Exodus was that men might KNOW HIM. For us this is one of the great purposes of the book itself.

Ex. 6:7: "I will take you to me for a people, . . . and ye shall KNOW that I am Jehovah your God."

Ex. 7:5: "The Egyptians shall KNOW that I am Jehovah, when I stretch forth my hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them."

Many other verses in the book assert that it is God's purpose to make himself KNOWN to all men. Note Ex. 7:17; 8:10, 22; 9:14, 29; 10:2; 14:4, 18; 16:6, 12; 29:46; 31:13.

God is eternally the same. He changes not. "I, Jehovah, change not." (Malachi 3:6) If we learn the facts about God's nature as revealed in Exodus, we shall gain a broad understanding of God, for Exodus says very much about God.

In the following statements about God we list many of the qualities and works of God that are revealed in Exodus. Generally we have listed them in the order in which they are presented in the Biblical text.

1. God is a *personal* God, not an abstract force.
2. God knows our names. He knows us personally. (1:1-4)
3. God allows His children to suffer. (1:11, 13)
4. God rewards those who protect His people. (1:21)
5. God is the unseen controller of all history. (1:20, 21)
6. God directs the activities of people so that they may be present to do His will when necessity requires. (2:5)
7. God permits His servants to suffer rejection. (2:14; 5:2, 9, 21, 22)
8. God seems in no hurry, if judged by men's views of time. (2:23; Acts 7:30)
9. God hears His people's cries. (2:23, 24)
10. God remembers His covenants of old. (2:24)

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11. God sees and God knows. (2:25)
12. God is a miracle-worker. (3:2)
13. God *speaks* to men. (3:4; 25:22)
14. God is *holy*. His presence is holy and must be revered. (3:5; 20:12-15)
15. God is still the God of His people even after they are long dead. (3:6; Matt. 22:31, 32)
16. God is a *deliverer*. (3:8)
17. God *sends men* to accomplish His will. (3:10)
18. God is *with us*. (3:12)
19. God is the eternal I AM. (3:14)
20. God knows the outcome of events before they occur. (3:19-21; 8:2, 21)
21. God will not permit His will to be thwarted. (3:20)
22. God *makes spoil* of those who resist Him. (3:21)
23. God *desires faith* in His people. (4:5)
24. God becomes *angry* when His servants are unwilling to obey. (4:14)
25. God lets others share the glory of serving Him if those first chosen are hesitant. (4:14, 15)
26. God *smites* His servants to teach them full obedience. (4:24)
27. God wants His NAME to be known, and to be associated with His acts of deliverance. (6:7)
28. God *redeems* (rescues) His people. (6:6; 15:13)
29. God desires to take His people unto Him and be their God. (6:7)
30. God *pushes* and *pushes* to force an issue. (6:11)
31. God *hardens* the hearts of those who oppose Him. (7:3; 9:12; 10:20; 14:4)
32. God works great judgments upon opposers. (7:4)
33. God has *power* to overcome men's magic. (7:11, 12; 8:18)
34. God makes His works obvious and undeniable. (7:20; 8:19; 17:5, 6)
35. God *hears* His servant's *prayers*. (8:12, 31; 9:33)
36. God makes distinction between His people and others. (9:4, 7, 26)

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37. God permits some wicked men to live because He can show His power through them. (9:15, 16)
38. God gives repeated deliverances, even to those who have opposed Him. (10:18, 19)
39. God gives favor to His people in the sight of their enemies. (11:3)
40. God *gives* sinners *warning* of coming doom. (11:4, 5)
41. God saves His people by the *blood*. (12:6, 7, 13; 24:8)
42. God desires that His acts of deliverance be remembered by appropriate ceremonies. (12:14, 24; 20:11)
43. God's judgments on evil men are utter and total. (12:29)
44. God fulfills His promises. (12:33-36; 13:19)
45. God takes note of numbers and years. (12:37, 41)
46. God claims His redeemed ones as His. (13:2, 12; 34:19, 20)
47. God wants His deeds to be remembered. (13:14; 12:26, 27; 16:34)
48. God *directs* His people. (13:17; 15:13)
49. God gives light and guidance. (13:21, 22)
50. God does GREAT works. (14:31; 15:11)
51. God is our strength, song, and salvation. (15:2)
52. God is a man of war. (15:3; 17:16)
53. God is "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises." (15:11)
54. God *proves* (tests) His people. (15:25; 16:4; 20:20)
55. God is our healer. (15:26)
56. God hears our murmurings. (16:12)
57. God is our "banner" under whom we fight victoriously. (17:15)
58. God blots out even the remembrance of evil men. (17:14, 16)
59. God likes efficient government. (18:23)
60. God *deals* with men *through covenants*. (19:5; 24:8; 34:10)
61. God accepts His people upon the condition of *obedience*. (19:5, 6)
62. God shows His presence in clouds, lightning, etc. (19:16, 18)
63. God works in history. (20:2)
64. God is a *jealous* God. (20:5; 34:14)

EXPLORING EXODUS

65. God heaps up punishments for many generations of sinners upon later generations that walk in the sins. (20:5)
66. God is a God of *lovingkindness*. (20:6)
67. God is *creator* of all. (20:11)
68. God retains final authority over life and death. (20:13; 21:12-17)
69. God is concerned about our hearts and their desires. He knows our hearts. (20:17)
70. God respects property rights. (21:33-36; 20:15)
71. God requires truth. (20:16; 22:11)
72. God cares about men's freedom. (21:2)
73. God protects the weak and afflicted. (22:22-27)
74. God is gracious. (22:27)
75. God *requires worship* from His people. (23:14-17)
76. God's appearance is glorious. (24:9, 10, 17)
77. God asks voluntary offerings from His people. (25:2; 35:5)
78. God desires to dwell among His people. (25:8)
79. God requires conformity to His directions. (25:9, 40; 26:30)
80. God gives detailed instructions about many things. (26:1ff)
81. God is associated with *light*. (27:20, 21)
82. God selects the men who perform His service. (28:1)
83. God desires glory and beauty. (28:2)
84. God is a revealer of secrets. (28:30)
85. God desires *modesty* in His servants. (28:42; 20:26)
86. God must be approached through sacrifices. (29:14, 18, 25)
87. God provides the material needs of His servants. (29:28; 16:4)
88. God *meets* with His people. (29:42, 43)
89. God does not forget our need of atonement (covering). (30:16)
90. God's ministers must minister in cleanliness. (30:19, 20)
91. God fills men with His Spirit for various services. (31:3-8)
92. God *sanctifies* us (makes us holy). (31:13)
93. God has wrath against idolatry. (32:10, 35)

ONE HUNDRED FACTS ABOUT GOD

94. God *repents* of "evil" threats when His servants pray. (32:14)
 95. God places distance between Himself and transgressors. (33:2, 5)
 96. God is *too glorious* for men to see and live. (33:20)
 97. God is merciful, gracious, and slow to anger. (34:6, 7)
 98. God will make all people to see His works. (34:10)
 99. God commands destruction of reprobate peoples. (34:11)
 100. God makes His presence obvious and dominant. (40:34, 38)
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