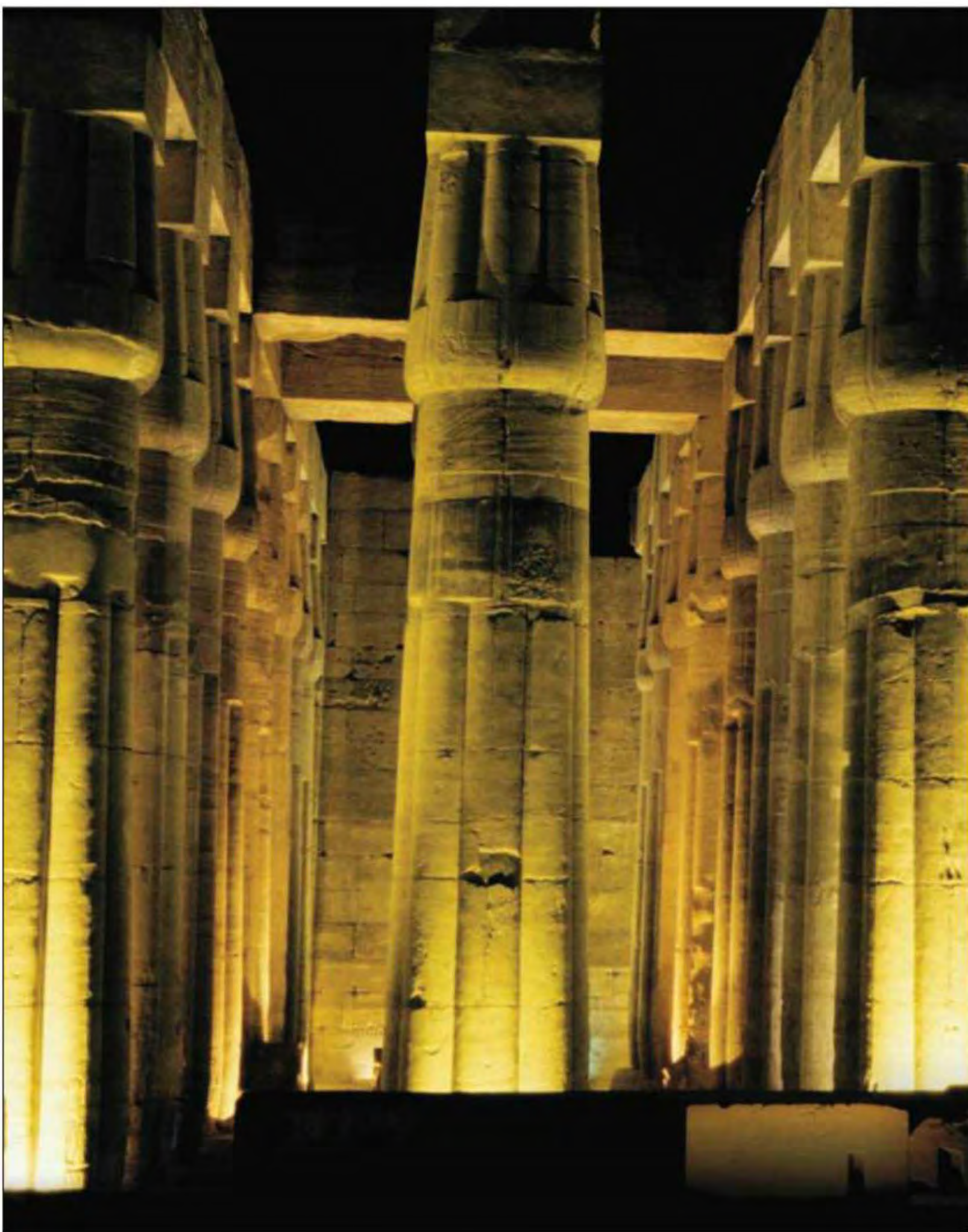


# THE EXODUS



▲ The Temple of Luxor, Egypt, at night.

## *The Egyptian Period*

Several hundred years of relative silence separate the end of the story of Joseph (Gen. 37–50) from the beginning of the story told in the Book of Exodus. Joseph’s story indicates that Israel probably entered Egypt in the middle of the illustrious Twelfth Dynasty (ca. 1875–1850 BC). The Hyksos (Egyptian for “rulers of foreign lands”) were an Asiatic people who seized control of Egypt during a time of



◀ Sailboat on the Nile River near Luxor.

political instability, overthrowing native Egyptian dynasties around 1730–1710 BC. The Hyksos established their capital in the Nile River Delta at Avaris and controlled northern Egypt for about 250–260 years. The Hyksos were the people of the king who “knew not Joseph.” The Hyksos did not control all Egypt for much of their sojourn but were leaders of a federation of rulers over various parts of Egypt. With their accession the lot of the Israelites worsened. No longer favored by the

pharaohs, they instead were reduced to servitude. The Hyksos were expelled from Egypt about 1570 BC.

Moses appeared early in the new kingdom era, born about 1526 BC. His parents, Amram and Jochebed, sought to save his life from Pharaoh’s decree, that all male Hebrew infants be killed, by setting him adrift on the Nile in a basket. His basket came to rest at the place where a daughter of Pharaoh bathed. She took the child in and raised him as the grandson of Pharaoh. Educated in the palace of Egypt, Moses received one of the finest educations in the world. Learning a spectrum of languages and a wide variety of subject matter that prepared him well to lead and govern the Israelites after they left Egypt.



▲ View of Giza, Egypt, showing two of three pyramids located here together with the famous Sphinx.



- ▲ Interior chapel of Hatshepsut's festival hall. Hatshepsut was the wife of Thutmose II and the aunt and stepmother of Thutmose III, believed by some to be the pharaoh of the Exodus.

Likely the pharaoh of Moses' infancy was Amenhotep I, and the successor who especially oppressed the Israelites was Thutmose I who reigned 1526–1512 BC. Thutmose II reigned 1512–1504 BC and Thutmose III 1504–1450 BC. Moses' foster mother likely was a powerful woman named Hatshepsut, who effectively controlled Egypt while Thutmose III was still a minor after his accession to the throne. Thutmose III fits best the pharaoh who sought Moses' life when he had killed a prominent Egyptian (at about age 40), and his successor Amenhotep II (reigned 1450–1425 BC) was probably the pharaoh of the exodus, which most likely occurred in 1447 or 1446 BC.

### ***The Exodus from Egypt—ca. 1447 BC***

The exodus from Egypt was a foundational event in the history of Israel. This is graphically confirmed by the fact that some variation of the formula that Yahweh “brought you (Israel) up out of Egypt and the house of bondage” occurs 125 times in the OT.

Some scholars see the exodus as the miraculous deliverance of the people of God from the grip of Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea. Others see it as an escape across a sprawling wilderness and sweltering desert of a small mixed band of border slaves. Some argue that the military language in the account indicates that the event was a military skirmish. Such language may be the language of holy war.

The Bible stresses that the exodus was the work of God. God brought the plagues on Egypt (Exod. 7:1-5). The miracle at the sea was never treated merely as a natural event or as Israel's victory alone. In the earliest recorded response to the event Miriam sang, "Sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted; the horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea" (Exod. 15:21 NASB).

Elements of the wonderful and the ordinary contributed to the greatest OT events. The natural and supernatural combined to produce God's deliverance. The exodus was both miraculous and historical. An air of mystery surrounds this event as all miraculous events. Despite the time reference in 1 Kings 6:1 and Judges 11:26, when the exodus occurred is still a hotly contested issue. Rather than this fifteenth-century date, many scholars place the exodus during the thirteenth century when Ramesses II was Pharaoh. We do not know precisely where it happened since the Hebrew term may have meant the Red Sea as we know it, one of its tributaries, or a "sea of reeds" whose location is unknown. We do not know who or how many may have been involved. The record makes clear that God delivered Israel from bondage because of His covenant with the patriarchs and because He desired to redeem His people (Exod. 6:2-8).



▲ Lake Timsah, possibly the place where the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea.

Israel arrived at Mount Sinai around 1447 BC. Though various locations have been suggested, the best option for the location of Mount Sinai is the traditional site Jebel Musa in the southern end of the Sinai Peninsula. At Sinai Israel entered into covenant with Yahweh, received the Ten Commandments, and began her first experience in self-governance.

## ***The Wilderness Period—ca. 1447–1407 BC***

About a year later they started for the land of promise but were deterred from entry, first by disobedience and then by God, and did not arrive in Canaan for another 40 years. A remarkable sense of identity and mission emerged during the years in the Sinai wilderness. Also during these years Israel received all the legislation necessary for an



▲ The desolate country of the Wilderness of Sin.

orderly society. Good times and bad characterized Israel's wilderness experience. God supernaturally protected and preserved Israel, but the generation that refused to enter the land at God's command died out except for the two faithful spies, Joshua and Caleb.

## ***The Number Involved in the Exodus***

In our English Bibles Exodus 12:37 says, "Now the sons of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children" (NASB). For various reasons (water/food supply in Sinai, evidence of burials, etc.) current scholarship translates the Hebrew word for "thousand" as "clan or military unit." This view results in drastically reducing the numbers of Israelites in the exodus, as well as in the rest of OT. However, they must admit that this translation cannot be used consistently in this manner throughout the OT for some numbers are more specific. Numbers 1:46 states more specifically that God commanded Moses to take a census in the second year after the exodus from Egypt and the men of war numbered 603,550. It is not unusual for round numbers to be used at times both in the Bible and in the Ancient Near East, but this does not mean the rounded numbers lack historicity, or veracity. Just prior to entering the promised land, in Numbers 26, God commanded Moses to take a census after the plague caused by immorality with the Moabite women. The Israelites numbered 601,730 men of war (Num. 26:51) over the age of twenty (Num. 1:3). The differences in the numbers found in Exod. 12 and Num. 26 may be attributed to the death of the older exodus generation through both divine judgment and natural causes as well as the increase through new births in the first 20 of the 40 years of wandering in the



▲ Jebel Musa, the traditional site of Mount Sinai, in the southern Sinai Peninsula.



◀ View from Jebel Musa (the probable location of Mount Sinai) of the surrounding rugged landscape.

wilderness of Sinai. Some scholars try to get around large numbers which are specific by breaking the number into two parts—the thousands being military units/clans and the hundreds standing for the actual number of men, but this method breaks down when we see in Numbers 1:46 [603,550] 603 military units/clans but a total of only 550 men. If the statistics are correct that males over the age of 20 make up approximately 25 percent of the total population, then the Israelites numbered well over two million people at both the beginning and the end of the wilderness wanderings.

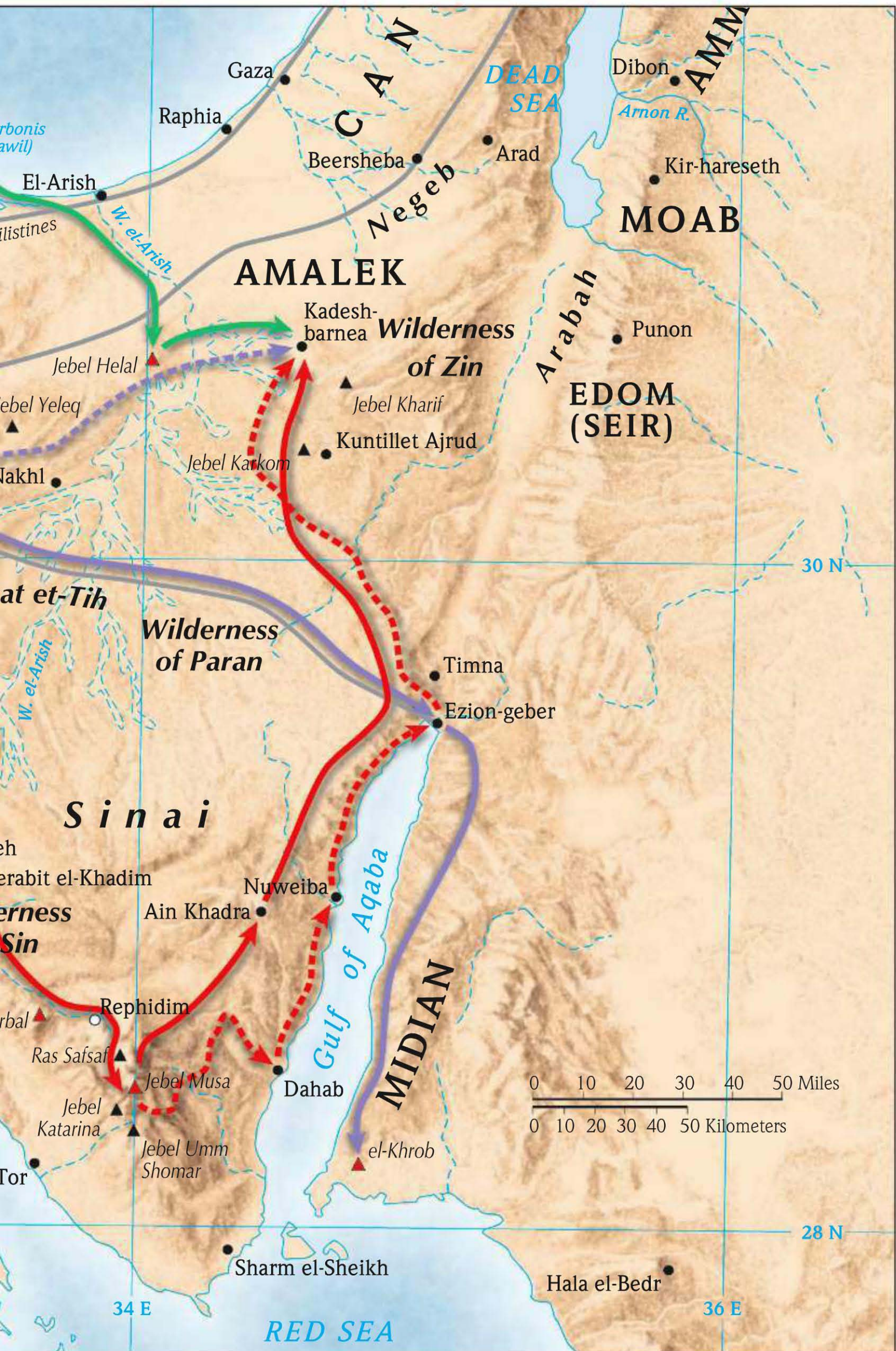
The exodus was the work of God. It was a historical event involving a superpower nation and an oppressed people. God acted redemptively in power, freedom, and love. When the kingdom of God did not come, the later prophets began to look for a second exodus. That expectation was fulfilled spiritually in Christ's redemptive act.

32 THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS



*Exodus 14:21-22*

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The LORD drove the sea back with a powerful east wind all that night and turned the sea into dry land. So the waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with the waters like a wall to them on their right and their left.



*Exodus 14:29-31*

But the Israelites had walked through the sea on dry ground, with the waters like a wall to them on their right and their left. That day the LORD saved Israel from the power of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. When Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and believed in Him and in His servant Moses.



### 33 THE TEN PLAGUES OF EGYPT

PLAGUE	SCRIPTURE
1. WATER TO BLOOD—The waters of the Nile turned to blood.	Exod. 7:14-25
2. FROGS—Frogs infested the land of Egypt.	Exod. 8:1-15
3. GNATS (Mosquitoes)—Small stinging insects infested the land of Egypt.	Exod. 8:16-19
4. FLIES—Swarms of flies, possibly a biting variety, infested the land of Egypt.	Exod. 8:20-32
5. PLAGUE ON THE CATTLE—A serious disease, possibly anthrax, infested the cattle belonging to Egyptians.	Exod. 9:1-7
6. BOILS—A skin disease infected the Egyptians.	Exod. 9:8-12
7. HAIL—A storm that destroyed the grain fields of Egypt but spared the land of Goshen inhabited by the Israelites.	Exod. 9:13-35
8. LOCUSTS—An infestation of locusts stripped the land of Egypt of plant life.	Exod. 10:1-20
9. DARKNESS—A deep darkness covered the land of Egypt for three days.	Exod. 10:21-29
10. DEATH OF THE FIRSTBORN—The firstborn of every Egyptian family died.	Exod. 11:1–12:30

**34** THE SACRIFICIAL SYSTEM

NAME	REFERENCE	ELEMENTS	SIGNIFICANCE
Burnt Offering	Lev. 1; 6:8-13	Bull, ram, male goat, male dove, or young pigeon without blemish. (Always male animals, but species of animal varied according to individual's economic status.)	Voluntary. Signifies propitiation for sin and complete surrender, devotion, and commitment to God.
Grain Offering Also called Meal, or Tribute, Offering	Lev. 2; 6:14-23	Flour, bread, or grain made with olive oil and salt (always unleavened); or incense.	Voluntary. Signifies thanksgiving for firstfruits.
Fellowship Offering Also called Peace Offering: includes (1) Thank Offering, (2) Vow Offering, and (3) Freewill Offering	(1) Lev. 3; 7:11-36; 22:17-30; 27	Any animal without blemish. (Species of animal varied according to individual's economic status.) (1) Can be grain offering.	Voluntary. Symbolizes fellowship with God. (1) Signifies thankfulness for a specific blessing; (2) offers a ritual expression of a vow; and (3) symbolizes general thankfulness (to be brought to one of three required religious services).
Sin Offering	Lev. 4:1-5:13; 6:24-30; 12:6-8	Male or female animal without blemish—as follows: bull for high priest on congregation; male goat for king; female goat or lamb for common person; dove or pigeon for slightly poor; tenth of an ephah of flour for the very poor.	Mandatory. Made by one who had sinned unintentionally or was unclean in order to attain purification.
Guilt Offering	Lev. 5:14-6:7; 7:1-6; 14:12-18	Ram or lamb without blemish.	Mandatory. Made by a person who had either deprived another of his rights or had desecrated something holy. Made by lepers for purification.

**35 THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

COMMANDMENT	PASSAGE	RELATED OLD TESTAMENT PASSAGES
You shall have no other gods before me.	Exod. 20:3; Deut. 5:7	Exod. 34:14; Deut. 6:4,13-14; 2 Kings 17:35; Ps. 81:9; Jer. 25:6; 35:15
You shall not make for yourself an idol.	Exod. 20:4-6; Deut. 5:8-10	Exod. 20:23; 32:8; 34:17; Lev. 19:4; 26:1; Deut. 4:15-20; 7:25; 32:21; Ps. 115:4-7; Isa. 44:12-20
You shall not misuse the name of the Lord.	Exod. 20:7; Deut. 5:11	Exod. 22:28; Lev. 18:21; 19:12; 22:2; 24:16; Ezek. 39:7
Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.	Exod. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15	Gen. 2:3; Exod. 16:23-30; 31:13-16; 35:2-3; Lev. 19:30; Isa. 56:2; Jer. 17:21-27
Honor your father and your mother.	Exod. 20:12; Deut. 5:16	Exod. 21:17; Lev. 19:3; Deut. 21:18-21; 27:16; Prov. 6:20
You shall not murder.	Exod. 20:13; Deut. 5:17	Gen. 9:6; Lev. 24:17; Num. 35:33
You shall not commit adultery.	Exod. 20:14; Deut. 5:18	Lev. 18:20; 20:10; Deut. 22:22; Num. 5:12-31; Prov. 6:29,32
You shall not steal.	Exod. 20:15; Deut. 5:19	Lev. 19:11,13; Ezek. 18:7
You shall not give false testimony.	Exod. 20:16; Deut. 5:20	Exod. 23:1, 7; Lev. 19:11; Pss. 15:2; 101:5; Prov. 10:18; Jer. 9:3-5; Zech. 8:16
You shall not covet.	Exod. 20:17; Deut. 5:21	Deut. 7:25; Job 31:24-28; Ps. 62:10

RELATED NEW TESTAMENT PASSAGES	JESUS' TEACHINGS
Acts 5:29	Matt. 4:10; 6:33; 22:37-40
Acts 17:29; 1 Cor. 8:4-6, 10-14; 1 John 5:21	Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13
Rom. 2:23-24; James 5:12	Matt. 5:33-37; 6:9; 23:16-22
Acts 20:7; Heb. 10:25	Matt. 12:1-13; Mark 2:23-27; 3:1-6; Luke 6:1-11; John 5:1-18
Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20	Matt. 15:4-6; 19:19; Mark 7:9-13; Luke 2:51; 18:20; John 19:26-27
Rom. 13:9-10; 1 Pet. 4:15	Matt. 5:21-24; 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20
Rom. 13:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9; Heb. 13:4; James 2:11	Matt. 5:27-30; 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20; John 8:1-11
Rom. 13:9-10; Eph. 4:28; James 5:4	Matt. 19:18; Mark 10:19; 12:40; Luke 18:20
Eph. 4:25,31; Col. 3:9; Titus 3:2	Matt. 5:37; 19:18; Mark 10:19; Luke 18:20
Rom. 7:7; 13:9; Eph. 5:3-5; Heb. 13:5; James 4:1-2	Luke 12:15-34