

The Route of the Exodus
by
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The first time I read Moses' account of the Exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt I was fascinated. The vivid detail allowed me to imagine myself on the epic journey myself, crossing in the midst of the Red Sea, marching far across the trackless desert, spreading out in the camp on the edge of the wilderness before the rumbling of Mount Sinai. It was marvelous!

Some years later, when I had more time, I undertook for the first time, to re-create the actual route of the Israelites with the help of Bible maps and Bible commentators. I was surprised and disappointed to find that, according to these commentators, my impressions of the Exodus, from reading the story, were very wrong! The children of Israel did not cross through a real sea at all, but hurried through some shallow lake out on the desert when the wind changed and blew the water to the other end of the lake. Neither did they march across a trackless desert, but instead meandered at such a slow pace that an old lady walking her dog for half an hour a day could have outpaced them. They didn't spread out on a plain in front of Mount Sinai either. There wasn't enough room for a tenth of them anywhere near the mountain.

I'm not kidding! This is what I found in the maps and commentaries in evangelical, Bible believing publications. I don't claim to have seen all of them, but I have seen a lot of them. The unstated common thread in all of the interpretations, is that Moses' story is too fantastic. He must have let his imagination go wild.

Since one of my foundational beliefs is that the Bible has absolute veracity and reliability, this was very discouraging. If Moses' account couldn't be relied on whose could? However, by that time I had learned to set my doubts aside and wait for God in His own good time to straighten out the matter for me. At that time I had more pressing issues in my spiritual life.

Recently, however, as I started to reread Exodus, the whole problem, and its solution, just started to open up. As I followed the journey, camp by camp, march by march, location by location, I was astounded how simple and logical it was. As usual, the key is taking the Bible at its word, and looking up everything the Bible has to say about every mountain, desert, location and peoples mentioned in the Moses' account of the journey in the Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

By far, the most important thing to establish in finding the route of the Exodus, was the destination. In other words, where was the Mt. Sinai of the Bible? Having established in my studies that traditional sites tend to be very unreliable, I approached the traditional site of Mt. Sinai on the Jebel Musa in the Sinai peninsula with a healthy skepticism. I concluded that one of the key problems in the study of the route of the Exodus lies in the widespread acceptance of the traditional site. The traditional site was established in the 4th century AD. At that time, the Roman Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor of Rome, wanted to build a monastery on Moses' Mount Sinai. She had the money, so the church needed to decide where it was. One main condition was that the location had to be within the Roman Empire. I have concluded that the church probably knew the site was in Arabia. However, that was outside of the Roman Empire, so they decided they couldn't let all that money go, so they decided to present the Empress with a site chosen by the vision of a mystic who picked a mountain conveniently within the empire, in the peninsula between the upper arms of the Red Sea. This peninsula was undoubtedly close to Moses' actual route so it was at least plausible. The mountain was hence designated as the Biblical Mount Sinai, the monastery (St. Catherine's Monastery) was built, and the peninsula it was on, as a consequence, has since been called the Sinai Peninsula by modern geographers. It has prejudiced Bible scholarship for seventeen centuries. However, I think a more reliable source than a monk with a vision might be found in the Word of God.

I am hardly the first to question the traditional site. According to Zondervan's NIV Atlas of the Bible there have been at least twelve different candidates for Mt. Sinai: five in the southern part of the Sinai peninsula, four in the north, one in the center, one in Edom (southern Transjordan), and another in Midian (Saudi Arabia). I do not have access to the documentation for these claims, so I will deal with what I know.

Where Mt. Sinai wasn't.

The southern, very mountainous, part of the Sinai Peninsula.

There can be no good excuse for locating the Biblical Mt. Sinai in the southern part of the Peninsula. However, that is where Empress Helena's monastery was built, and where a number of other possible locations have been suggested. However, all of them have this difficulty: according to Numbers 1, the people of Israel included 603,550 men over twenty who were able to go to war. This did not include the women and girls, or males under twenty and males unable to fight because of age or disability. This also did not include any of the Levites^a or others who also accompanied them.^b If each male had one wife and just two children, there were at least 2½ to 3 million people. They also had their herds with them. The order of their encampment in front of Mt. Sinai, when they got there, was on the square (Numbers 2:1-33). Three tribes each, north, south, east and west with the tabernacle in the middle. If each person with his belongings and livestock just took up a 15 foot square (225 square feet), it would take almost 25 square miles to handle the encampment. A look at a satellite photo of the area around the recognized Mt. Sinai shows you would have a hard time finding two

^a **Numbers 3:39** The total number of Levites counted at the LORD's command by Moses and Aaron according to their clans, including every male a month old or more, was 22,000.

^b **Exodus 12:37** "The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. 12:38 Many other people went up with them, as well as large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds."

square miles of camping ground much less 25 square miles. Any potential location for Mt. Sinai would have to have room for such a camp. The attached photographs should help make the point that space like that was not available around the mountains of the southern Sinai peninsula.



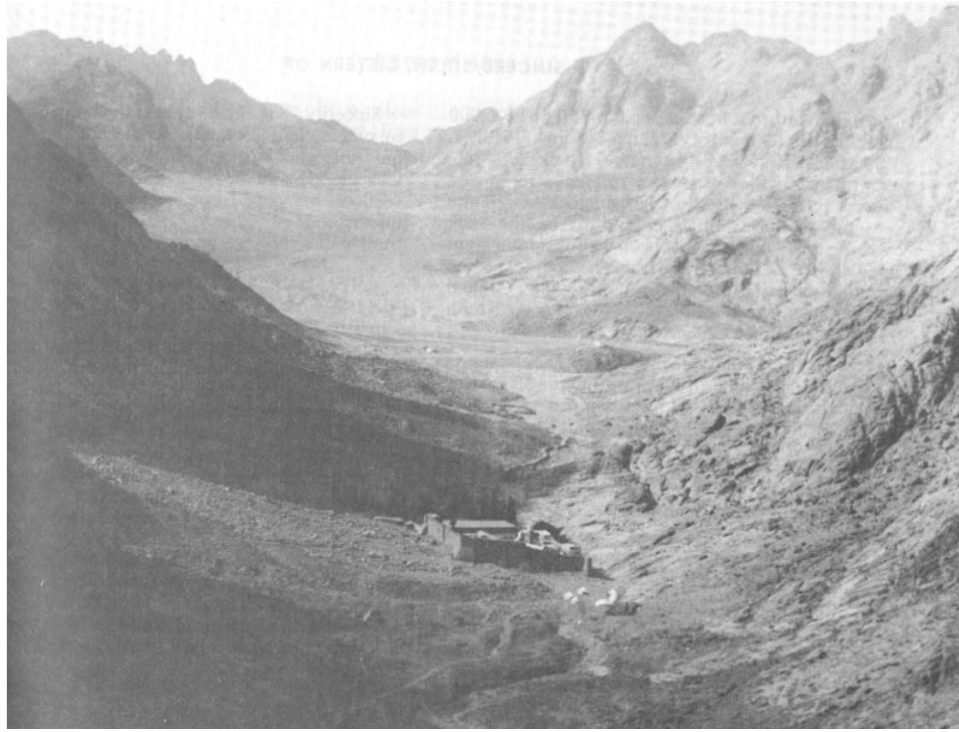
The Traditional Mount Sinai



The Surrounding Mountians



Satellite Photo of the Sinai Peninsula



Valley of Jethro in front of the traditional site of Mount Sinai, with the monastary of St. Catherine in the foreground. At its greatest length 2 miles, at its greatest width 1 mile. This is a total area about 1½ square miles. This is the area that the 3 million peoples of Israel and their herds would have camped for 11 months. Each person would have had about 13 square feet for themselves, their possessions, their livestock. An army cot takes up 15 square feet. At night, perhaps, all 3 million rolled over in unison, but where were their animals? Obviously, either this location is wrong or the Bible is inaccurate as to the numbers of the Israelites. The next nearest valley, to the southeast provides about 2 square miles of campground. This is hardly more plausible and is not at the foot of Sinai. Furthermore, according to Josephus in the first century AD, the real Mt. Sinai was the highest of all the mountains around. Mt. Sinai at St. Catherines is not the highest mountain.

The southern or middle part of the Sinai Peninsula

The middle part of the Sinai peninsula is less mountainous than the southern part and may have had room for a camp around one of its more isolated, rather small, mountains. A mountain on the edge of one of the fairly large deserts on the southeastern or southwestern coasts of the Sinai might have had room as well (see satellite photo on previous page). However, neither location could have been the location of Mt. Sinai if the Bible is true. According to Exodus 13:17-18, when the people marched out, if they had gone down the coast road toward Gaza of the Philistines, it would have been their shortest route to Mt. Sinai. As it was, they took the desert road by the Red Sea, which was the longer route:

Exodus 13:17-18 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on *the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter*. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea.

If Mt. Sinai was in middle or southern part of the Peninsula, there is no way that the Mediterranean coast road would have been a shorter route (see map below). It would have been twice as long.



The northern part of the Sinai peninsula.

If Mt. Sinai was in the northern part of the Sinai Peninsula, the northern road would have been shorter, so that Biblical condition would have been met. However, if the mountain was along that route, close to Philistine territory it would have brought on war with the Philistines when they arrived 60 days later. It is clear from the account in Exodus that after the Israelites encountered the Amalekites at Rephidim about forty days into the journey (Exodus 17), they did not encounter any other threats until they left Mt. Sinai about ten months later. Also, a northern Mt. Sinai location would have meant the journey was only about 100 miles for a 60 day journey. It also would have left them straddling the major trade and invasion routes of the ancient world for forty years, which does not seem like the kind of isolation the Lord was seeking to prepare a people for Himself. The relative closeness to Egypt of any location (north, middle, or south) in the Sinai peninsula is a problem in the same way.

The mountains of Edom

From the accounts of the attitudes of the Edomites toward the Israelites in Numbers 20:14-22 at the end of the Exodus it is not possible to believe that they earlier had calmly acquiesced in the incursion of three million people on their territory. Therefore, it is impossible to believe that Mt. Sinai was in Edom.

Other considerations

The best defense I can find, that is made for a Sinai Peninsula location is based on the following passage:

Exodus 5:1-3 Afterward Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Let my people go, so that they may hold a festival to me in the desert.'" Pharaoh said, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the LORD and I will not let Israel go." Then they said, "The God of the Hebrews has met with us. Now *let us take a three-day journey into the desert* to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God, or he may strike us with plagues or with the sword."

The Sinai peninsula advocates say that this proves that Mount Sinai was three days march from Egypt. First, it should be pointed out that the Lord had already told Moses that Pharaoh would reject this demand. Second, it was never repeated. All subsequent demands were “Let my people go!” Secondly, this does not mention Mount Sinai as a destination. Even so, it should be noted that nearly every proposed Sinai peninsula location is still more than three days march. Unless they were all Army Rangers! In any event, it took the Israelites sixty days to get to the real Mt. Sinai.

Where Mt. Sinai was.

Where then, was Mt. Sinai? Before I continue, I should make clear that Mount Sinai (Sinai means “of the moon”) and Mount Horeb (Horeb means “dry or desert place”) are the same mountain. A comparison of Exodus 19:10 - 20:26 with Deuteronomy 4:10-13 make it abundantly clear that Mount Horeb and Mount Sinai are the same mountain. Both passages are speaking of the same event, the giving of the law, yet the first passage says it happened at Mount Sinai, and the other passage says it happened at Mount Horeb. Clearly the two names describe different aspects of the same mountain. If we find Mount Horeb we find Mount Sinai.

So where is Mount Horeb? We first hear of Mt. Horeb in Exodus in the passage of the burning bush.

Exodus 3:1-5 Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, **and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.** There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up.^a So Moses thought, “I will go over and see this strange sight--why the bush does not burn up.” When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.” “Do not come any closer,” God said. “Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.”

The subsequent verse makes it clear that this was the place that Moses was to bring the people of Israel to worship God:

Exodus 3:12 And God said, “I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: **When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain.**”

I think it is obvious from the first passage that Mount Horeb was on the far side of a desert on the borders of Midian. However, some have argued that just because Jethro was a priest of Midian, it did not mean his clan could not have wandered outside of Midian into the Sinai Peninsula. The following passage seems to rule that out.

Exodus 4:18-19 Then Moses went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said to him, “Let me go back to my own people in Egypt to see if any of them are still alive.” Jethro said, “Go, and I wish you well.” Now the LORD had said to Moses **in Midian**, “Go back to Egypt, for all the men who wanted to kill you are dead.”

It seems clear that Jethro was located in Midian. From the following passage it also seems clear that Mt. Horeb was in a “vast and dreadful desert.”

Deuteronomy 1:19 Then, as the LORD our God commanded us, **we set out from Horeb** and went toward the hill country of the Amorites **through all that vast and dreadful desert** that you have seen, and so we reached Kadesh Barnea.

Deuteronomy 2:7 The LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He has watched over your journey through **this vast desert.**

Deuteronomy 8:15 He led you through the **vast and dreadful desert**, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions.

Later Moses described the desert of Sinai this way:

Deuteronomy 32:10 In a desert land he found him, in **a barren and howling waste.**

The prophet Jeremiah records this about that desert.

Jeremiah 2:5-6 This is what the LORD says: “What fault did your fathers find in me, that they strayed so far from me? They followed worthless idols and became worthless themselves. They did not ask, ‘Where is the LORD, who brought us up out of Egypt and led us

^a The burning bush is a type of Christ in that it was burned with fire (judgement) and not consumed) and also giving forth a great light. Indeed, according to Easton the word used for bush here (אֶשְׂתָּלֶּשֶׁת-seneh) was a wild acacia which was used in the Ark of the Covenant (acacia overlaid with gold) and stood for the humanity of Christ. **Easton Illustrated Dictionary** – entry **Shittah-tree** “The wild acacia (Mimosa Nilotica), under the name of sunt, everywhere represents the seneh, or senna, of the burning bush. A slightly different form of the tree, equally common under the name of seyal, is the ancient ‘shittah,’ or, as more usually expressed in the plural form, the ‘shittim,’ of which the tabernacle was made.” Stanley’s Sinai

through *the barren wilderness, through a land of deserts and rifts, a land of drought and darkness, a land where no one travels and no one lives?*'

Later, after Moses and the Israelites were camped in front of Horeb, Jethro came to greet him (Exodus 18:1-5). This is further confirmation that Mt. Horeb is close to Midian.

It seemed clear to me that all we should have to do to find Mount Horeb is to find Midian, then find a vast and dreadful desert on its borders, and look for a mountain on its far side.

So where is Midian?

The following verses seem to indicate that Midian lay to the east of the nation of Israel.

Judges 6:3 Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, *the Midianites*, Amalekites and *other eastern peoples* invaded the country.

Judges 6:33 Now all the *Midianites*, Amalekites and *other eastern peoples* joined forces and crossed over the Jordan and camped in the Valley of Jezreel.

Judges 7:12 The *Midianites*, the Amalekites and all the other eastern peoples had settled in the valley, thick as locusts.

The following description seems to indicate that Midian was at the eastern end of a line drawn from Egypt through Paran to Midian, which by any location of Paran puts Midian east of the Sinai Peninsula.

1 Kings 11:17-18 But Hadad, still only a boy, fled to Egypt with some Edomite officials who had served his father. They set out *from Midian* and went *to Paran*. Then taking men from Paran with them, they went *to Egypt*, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave Hadad a house and land and provided him with food.

The following verse in which the Midianites conspire with the Moabites to destroy the Israelites on their Exodus indicates that Midian was the eastern neighbor of Moab.

Numbers 22:4-7 The *Moabites* said to the elders of *Midian*, "This horde is going to lick up everything *around us*, as an ox licks up the grass of the field." So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor, near the River, in his native land. Balak said: "A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled *next to me*. Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the country. For I know that those you bless are blessed, and those you curse are cursed." The elders of Moab and Midian left, taking with them the fee for divination.

Why would the Midianites be active in opposition only at this point if they were not located in the proximity of Moab. And how would they have brought their women to tempt Israel? (Numbers 25:6) How would the Israelites have defeated the Kings of Midian and taken their people captive if they lived far from Moab:

Numbers 31:7-9 They fought against Midian, as the LORD commanded Moses, and killed every man. Among their victims were Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba--the five kings of Midian. They also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword. The Israelites captured the Midianite women and children and took all the Midianite herds, flocks and goods as plunder.

Every Bible scholar I have seen concurs with the idea that Midian is located in the northern Arabian Peninsula east of Moab.

So, Midian was east of Moab. Was there a vast and terrible desert on its border? Here, satellite photography came to my aid. If you look at the satellite photo maps on the next page you will see that to the south of Midian lies a vast desert called the An Nafud (literally in Arabic "the desert"). On its far side a mountain range stands up just where you would expect it to be. I realized that I had actually seen part of the An Nafud many times in one of my all-time favorite films "Lawrence of Arabia." I know for a fact that "Lawrence" was filmed on the actual location of the events, and the An Nafud was featured in the film. It is indeed a terrible desert. The relatively short stretch of it that Lawrence and his men had to cross to reach the Wadi Rum before attacking Aqaba, had to be crossed in one night or all would have perished. I believe this is the western end of the desert between the Wadi Rum and the Biblical Mt. Horeb. I believe that the mountain range indicated on the photos, is the real Mount Horeb /Mount Sinai range. There are other mountains to the southwest of it which could also qualify, but according to Josephus in his Antiquities, Book 2, Chapter 12, Paragraph 1, Mt Sinai is "the highest of all the mountains thereabout, and the best for pasturage, the herbage being there good." The last phrase is also in my mountain's favor, as the attached photos show numerous oasis and relatively abundant herbiage. It is just that which would have lured Moses with Jethro's flocks when he encountered the Lord at the Burning Bush on Mt. Sinai. The Google Earth program where I got most of these photos indicates the mountains raise abruptly about 1500 to 2000 feet from the desert floor where the children of Israel must have encamped. Anyone desiring to look up the location more extensively can use the Google Earth program.

Use latitude 27°39' 09.21" N and longitude 41° 33' 40.85" E. As far as I can tell, that is the highest peak in the region. It is in the region just Northwest of Ha 'il, Saudi Arabia.

This location is also suits the requirements on several other fronts.

The shortest route to the pass into the Arabian Peninsula through which the Jews would have had to travel to my Mount Sinai would have been the Gaza road as stated in Exodus 5:1-3. Just west of Gaza they would have had to turn south to the head of the Gulf of Aqaba.

As close as I can figure the distance by the roundabout route they took would have been about 700 or 800 miles, which is about appropriate for a trek with 3 million people that took 60 days (using the most conservative estimate - see footnote on verse below):

Exodus 19:1-2 In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt--on the very day--they came to the Desert of Sinai. ^a After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

The Nafud ("Desert") was an ideal location for God's purposes. It was far enough away from Egypt to prevent any disenchanted Israelites from going back by themselves or in small groups. As badly as some of them wanted to go back, they knew they could only make it back as a group, not as small groups or individuals (Numbers 14:3-5). It also kept them isolated from the civilizations of the ancient world, so that the Lord could turn them into His "peculiar people." (Deuteronomy 14:2, 26:18 KJV) The location also reinforced their faith, because in that dreadful desert, there was not the means to sustain one person for two days much less three million people for forty years. The Lord provided them shade in the daytime, light at night, food every morning and sources of water. He also provided that neither their shoes or their clothes wore out in all that time (Deuteronomy 29:5). The location, also kept alive among the Gentiles, the story of God's marvelous deliverance and care for Israel. Stories must have come out of the Arabian desert of the three million people who had gone to certain oblivion who were yet thriving and growing in strength.^b

The following verses together seem to indicate that Teman and Paran were related to the journey of Israel from the desert:

Habbakuk 3:3 God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran.

Deuteronomy 33:1-2 This is the blessing that Moses the man of God pronounced on the Israelites before his death. He said: "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran. He came with myriads of holy ones from the south, from his mountain slopes.

^a The RSV has it "on the third New Moon after the Israelites had gone out." This would clearly mean that Israel had been traveling 75 days, since they had left fifteen days before the first New Moon. The second New Moon would have been at 45 days, and the third New Moon would have been at 75 days. Other translations (ASV, KJV, NIV) have it "In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out." This could be interpreted to mean it was the third month of the year, thus the same day of the third month of the year was 60 days after the 15th of the first month of the year when they had gone out. However, the same translation could be interpreted as 90 days as being after 3 full months after they had gone out. I believe the 90 days is the correct understanding. If they traveled just five miles a day that would have carried them 450 miles. The precise location of this spot is the subject of some controversy. The traditional location is only 190 miles from where they were supposed to have started. Four hundred fifty miles could have carried them well into the Arabian peninsula, which is where I tend to believe the real Mount Sinai lies (about 700 to 800 miles), and where I think Israel wandered for forty years. There they would be isolated from the currents of the political currents of the fertile crescent. Furthermore, there is much Biblical evidence that the Midianites, who lived in the region of Mt. Sinai/Horeb (Exodus 3:1), lived to the east of Kadesh Barnea, not the south as would be indicated by the mountain presently recognized as Mt. Sinai/Horeb.

The following scriptures seem to me support the idea that the real Mt. Sinai was in the Arabian peninsula.

The following verse seems to indicate that Midian was in closer proximity to Moab than Edom which lay to the south of Moab, precluding the idea that Midian lay to the south of Edom in Sinai.

Numbers 22:4-7 The Moabites said to the elders of Midian, "This horde is going to lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field." So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor, near the River, in his native land. Balak said: "A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me. Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the country. For I know that those you bless are blessed, and those you curse are cursed." The elders of Moab and Midian left, taking with them the fee for divination.

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The following seems to indicate that Paran was between Sinai and Kadesh Barnea.

Deuteronomy 10:12 Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran.

The following indicates that Paran was west of the Jordan not south of it.

Deuteronomy 1:1-2 These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel in the desert east of the Jordan--that is, in the Arabah--opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazereth and Dizahab. (It takes eleven days to go from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea by the Mount Seir road.)

The following verse indicates that Teman and Paran were related. It is a well established fact that Teman is in the middle of the Arabian peninsula.

Habbakuk 3:3 God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran.

Teman --is mentioned with Dedan and Buz as a remote place. (Jeremiah 25:23) and as an oasis in the desert on the main trade route through Arabia (Isaiah 21:14). Aramaic stelae of the 5th century BC were found in the ruins of Taimae about 400 kilometers north of Medina in NW Arabia. The city is also named in (Babylonian) documents recording its occupation by Nabonidus (the successor of Nebuchadnezzar) during his exile. **Logos Bible Atlas**

^b **Numbers 14:14b** "They have already heard that you, O LORD, are with these people and that you, O LORD, have been seen face to face, that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night."

Although the original Teman was a chief of Edom, there is an ancient town in the desert south of Edom (marked on the map below) on the southern edge of the An Nafud desert as noted by the following quotation from the **Logos Bible Atlas**.

“Teman –is mentioned with Dedan and Buz as a remote place. (Jeremiah 25:23) and as an oasis in the desert on the main trade route through Arabia (Isaiah 21:14). Aramaic stelae of the 5th century BC were found in the ruins of Taimae about 400 kilometers north of Medina in NW Arabia. The city is also named in (Babylonian) documents recording its occupation by Nabonidus (the successor of Nebuchadnezzar) during his exile.” **Logos Bible Atlas**

The following verse from Isaiah establishes that Tema is in Arabia.

Isaiah 21:13-14 An oracle concerning **Arabia**: You caravans of Dedanites, who camp in the thickets of Arabia, bring water for the thirsty; you who live in **Tema**,^a bring food for the fugitives.

Furthermore, the following verse indicates that the Israelites spent at least part of their time in the Arabian Peninsula:

Deuteronomy 2:1 Then we turned back and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea, as the LORD had directed me. For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir.

You can't encompass Mt. Seir without being in Arabia. Perhaps, most importantly, there is the following testimony by the Apostle Paul in the New Testament:

Galatians 4:25 Now Hagar stands for **Mount Sinai in Arabia** and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children.

Some have argued that the Romans were known to speak of Sinai as Arabia, but Paul was first and foremost a Jew, who would never have made that mistake.

The following passage from Josephus, also a Roman Jew, indicates what he understood Arabia to be in the 1st Century AD.

Flavius Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, Book I, Chapter 12, Paragraph 4. These (*descendants of Ishmael*) inhabited **all the country from Euphrates to the Red Sea**, and called it Nabatene. They are an **Arabian nation**, and name their tribes from these, both because of their own virtue, and because of the dignity of Abraham their father.

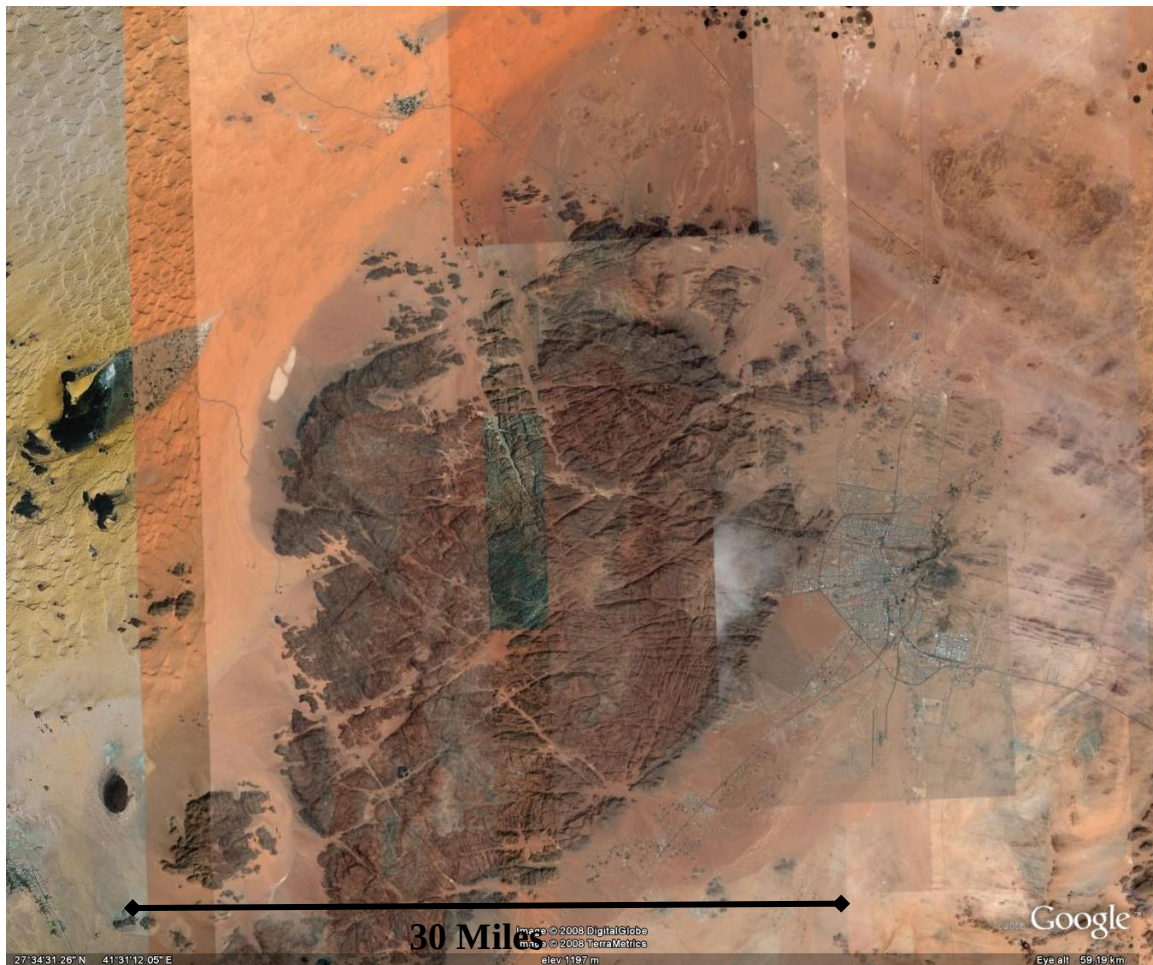
I think all of these things establish that the Biblical Mount Sinai was in the Arabian Peninsula, east of Aqaba, east of Tema/Teman, south of Midian, and on the edge of a vast and terrible desert, where there was grazing available. The only really suitable candidate is the mountain I have indicated.

Having, I hope, sufficiently established the original destination, I will try to re-create, stage by stage, the forty year journey in the desert as revealed by the Bible. I think you will find, that the geography backs up the whole story.



^a A town in North Central Arabia. The place is the same as the modern Teima (Tayma) in N Arabia, a large oasis about halfway between Damascus and Mecca, and between Babylonia and Egypt. It is on the ancient caravan road connecting the Persian Gulf with the Gulf of Aqaba. It is one of the most attractive oases in Arabia and is still one of the most important trade centers in the land.

Satellite Photo of Northern Arabia



Satellite Photo of Sinai Mountain Group



Ground Photo of the Cloud Shrouded Sinai Mountain Group
from 7 -10 Miles Northwest in the Desert Dunes



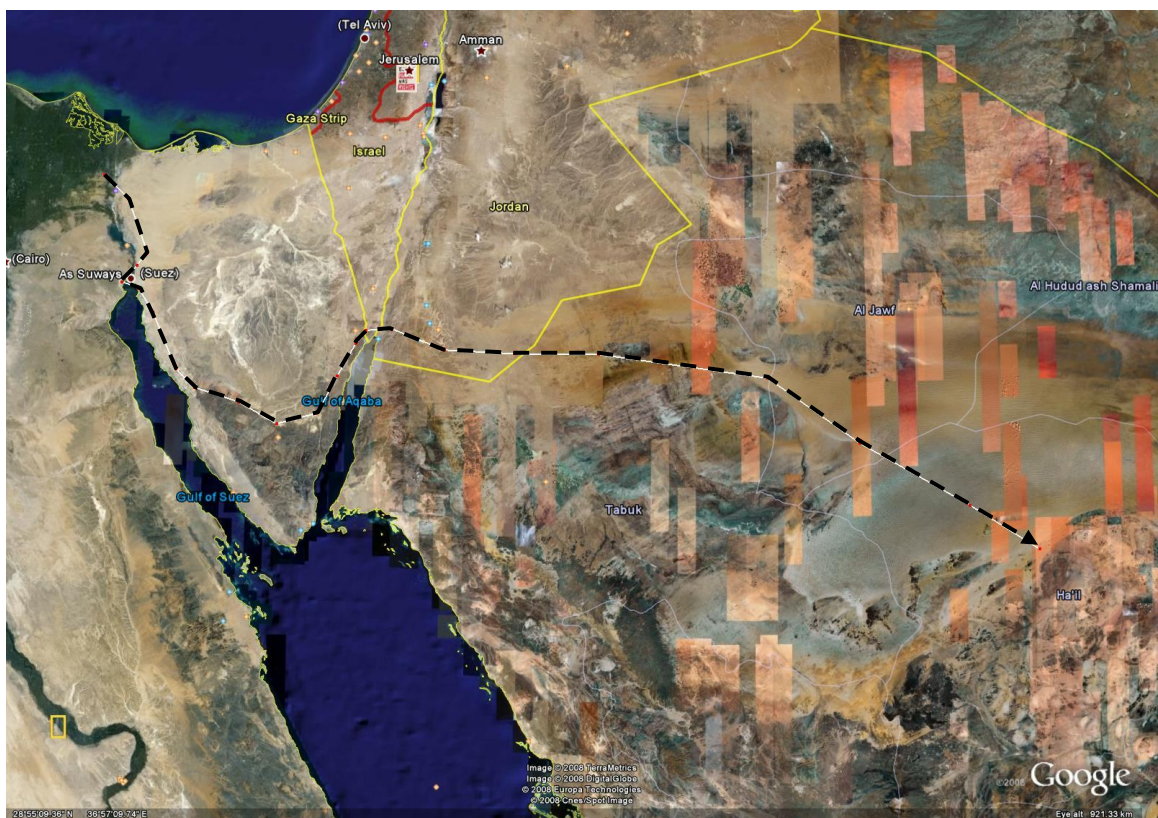
Oasis near Real Mt. Sinai



Location in Central Mountain Group



Oasis in Eastern Sinai Mountain Group looking West



Satellite Photo with Route of the Exodus – 710 Miles

Approaching Mt. Sinai from the North
Site of the Camp of Israel in Front



First Stage – to the Red Sea and Across

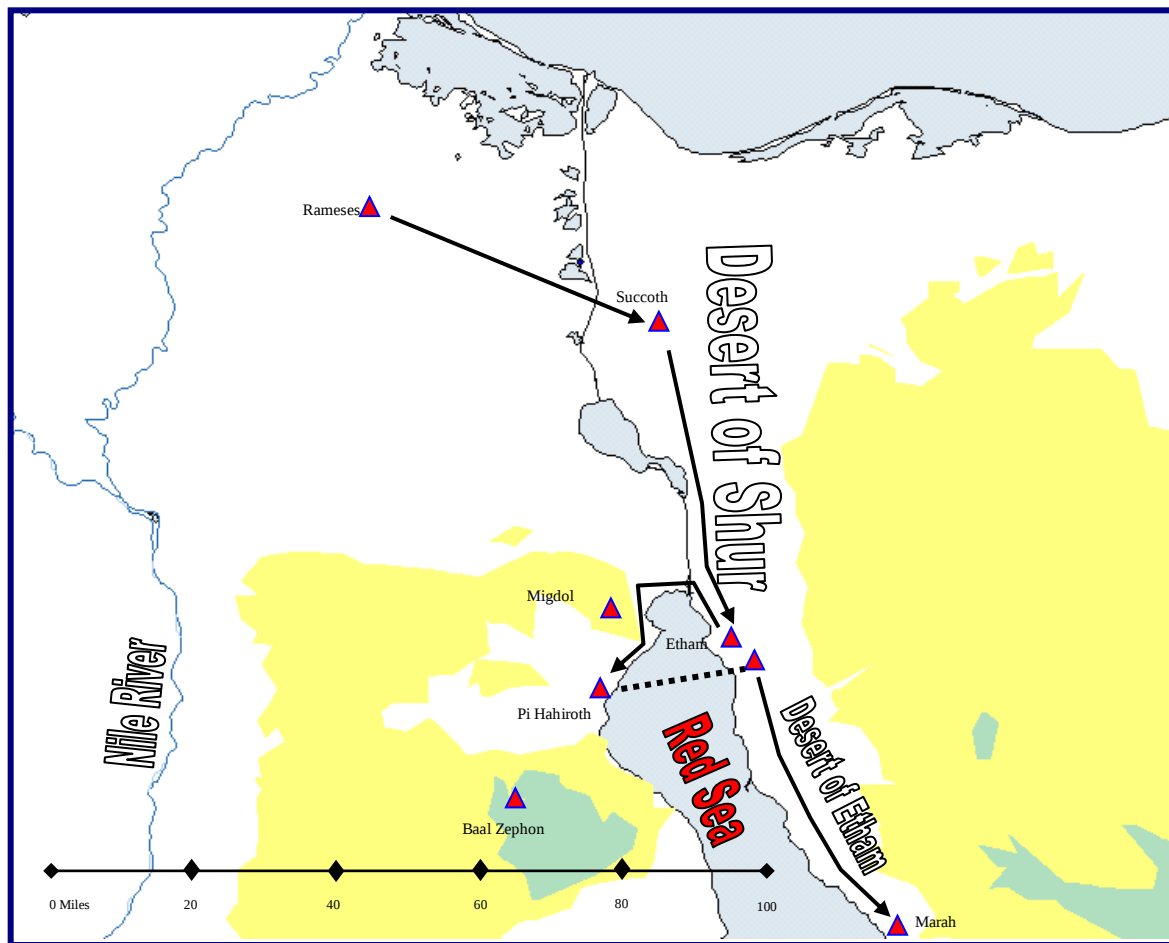
The morning after the Passover the Israelites left from Pharaoh's treasure city, Ramses.

Numbers 33:3-5 The Israelites set out from Ramses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Passover. They marched out boldly in full view of all the Egyptians, who were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had struck down among them; for the LORD had brought judgment on their gods. The Israelites left Ramses and camped at Succoth.

Exodus 12:37-38 The Israelites journeyed from Ramses ^a to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. Many other people went up with them, as well as large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds.

In understanding the Exodus, one of key things to remember is the logistics of moving close to 3 million people and their herds. When they moved, they moved as a column. When they set out on that first morning they could not all have started down the road at once, that would have created a bottleneck of spectacular proportions. They would have had to start a few thousands at a time. During their trip, depending on how broad the plain, road, or valley they were moving on, they would have been stretched out along their route from from ten miles to a over a hundred miles. Their camps were seldom places that all the Israelites were encamped at once. Their major camps served the same purpose as military camps of ancient armies. They were marshalling and supply points. They were places they could fall back to in case of attack where they had set up defensive fortifications and supply depots. More than likely as they moved from camp to camp in the broad deserts, their vanguard was setting up the new camp about fifty or more miles away before the rear guard had left the old camp. When they had to wend their way through the narrow passes of the Sinai peninsula they would have been stretched out almost across the entire peninsula. However, on the first stage, the Lord led them across the desert road to the south. It was probably fairly broad.

Exodus 13:17-18 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on *the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter*. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea.



Map - to the Red Sea and Across

^a Ramses was one of the store cities of Pharaoh. **Exodus 1:11** So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Ramses as store cities for Pharaoh.

The Lord clearly led them away from the Mediterranean coast road toward the south and the Red Sea. Therefore, the southwesterly direction I have indicated for the first march. I do not know precisely how long most of the marches lasted, or how long they stayed in each camp, but based on the distance they traveled in the first thirty days and the number of stages, I would guess about three days was right for most of the stages. We know the march to Marah took three days, but for most of the marches, these things are not spelled out. The Bible does indicate that some of the marches must have been completed by night, by the light of the pillar of fire, as was the second march.

Exodus 13:20-22 After leaving Succoth they camped at Etham^a on the edge of the desert. By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

The second march stage obviously led them to the edge of the desert. One march later, when the people crossed the Red Sea, the Bible says they were in the Desert of Shur, and when they marched south, they entered the Desert of Etham. Because of this I have located Etham just north of where they came out of the Red Sea. I believe that the Desert of Shur stretched down to just below the Red Sea, then, where the lowlands are hemmed in by the mountains of Sinai, the name was changed to the Desert of Etham. Shur means “wall” and it seems to have referred to its function as the eastern wall of the Egyptian empire. I will establish this more completely later in this section. The second camp, Etham, took its name from the Desert or vice versa. The first two camps are about fifty miles apart, and I have located most of the camps about that far apart, and where terrain would have permitted a camp.

Exodus 14:1-4 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth,^b between Migdol^c and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea, directly opposite Baal Zephon. Pharaoh will think, ‘The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.’ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.” So the Israelites did this.

The third march called for them to turn back both north and west toward Egypt. They thus would become hemmed in by the Red Sea. They must have looked confused to Pharaoh, who must have thought they should have been headed toward Midian. You can see by the above topographical map that there is a perfect cul-de-sac on the east side of the Red Sea, which is surrounded by the mountains and the sea. There is only a narrow entrance from the north. That must have been where the cloud of the Lord formed a barrier to the Egyptians.

Exodus 14:19-20 ASV The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. So it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night. Thus the one did not come near the other all night.

The location was opposite Baal Zephon, which means Baal of the North. Temples to Baal were typically on mountain tops. Mountains surround this location, but there are no mountains in Egypt north of this location by the Red Sea suitable for a Baal temple. The location was also between Migdol and the sea. Migdol means watchtower. I can think of no better place for a watchtower than a hill or mountain looking south to the sea approaches to Egypt. It is in the valley in between that I put the Israelites third camp. This is where Moses led them into and through the Red Sea.

Exodus 14:21-29 Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land.^d The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea. During the last watch of the night the LORD looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. He made the wheels of their chariots come off so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, “Let’s get away from the Israelites! The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt.” Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen.” Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it, and the LORD swept them into the sea. The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen--the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived. But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

Moses led them out of the Red Sea into the Desert of Shur, at a place which I believe was slightly north of Etham.

Exodus 15:22 Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur.

Where is the Desert of Shur? The following verses gives us some information on that score.

^a Means “fortress.”

^b Pi-hahiroth means “place where the reeds grow.” LXX. and Coptic read “farmstead.”

^c Migdol means “watchtower.” Perhaps an ancient watchtower and/or lighthouse guarding the approaches to the northern end of the Red Sea.

^d The following verse confirms that for Israel the footing was firm and dry. **Isaiah 63:13** who led them through the depths? Like a horse in open country, they did not stumble;

Genesis 20:1 Now Abraham moved on from there into the region of the Negev and lived between Kadesh and Shur.

Genesis 25:18 His (*Ishmael's*) descendants settled in the area from Havilah ^a to Shur, near the border of Egypt

1 Samuel 15:7 Then Saul attacked the Amalekites all the way from Havilah ^b to Shur, to the east of Egypt.

1 Samuel 27:8 Now David and his men went up and raided the Geshurites, the Girzites and the Amalekites. (From ancient times these peoples had lived in the land extending to Shur and Egypt.)

We know that the Negev is the desert in the Sinai Peninsula south of Israel. If Abraham lived in the Negev, with Shur was on one side and Kadesh on the other, then clearly the Desert of Shur was on the eastern border of Egypt on the other side of the Negev. It also places the Biblical definition of the border of Egypt at the line of the Gulf of Suez. Although Egypt may have claimed the Negev, it was clearly dominated by the nomadic raiding tribes like the Amalekites.

One of the popular and somewhat compelling theories being put about by evangelical researchers, places the location of the crossing of the Red Sea at the Gulf of Aqaba. This theory would thus put the Desert of Shur on on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Aqaba rather than the eastern coast of the Gulf of Suez as the passages above indicate it should be.

As long as we are dealing with that theory, I will list some of my other objections. One is that it suggests a pursuit by all the chariots of Egypt across the entire Sinai Peninsula. This means a pursuit of chariots across the rugged terrain of the Sinai Peninsula. A study of ancient military history would suggest chariots are not suited for anything but flat ground. It also means a pursuit of several hundred miles and at least five or six days, on the spur of the moment, on an excursion that would take weeks of planning and complicated logistics to keep the horses watered and fed. Also, that route, although it winds up in Arabia, which I applaud, leaves the Jews about 20 miles to cover in their last 50 days. On the other hand, my suggested route makes the chariot pursuit a one or two day affair, and places the Desert of Shur in the right location.

One of the most maddening concepts that I have seen is seemingly accepted by some evangelicals. It is that when the Israelites crossed "the Red Sea," they were actually crossing one of the shallow lakes along what is now the route of the Suez Canal. There is no excuse for saying that the Israelites didn't cross the Red Sea as we know it, unless you just don't believe in the account of the eyewitnesses or the authority of scripture. However, because the words translated the "Red Sea" is literally, in the original Hebrew, "Sea of Reeds,"^c they say it was not the Red Sea, but in fact a just a shallow lake. However, the same Hebrew words, "Sea of Reeds," are used to describe where the locusts of God's plague on Egypt were blown by a west wind across Egypt (Exodus 10:19). This does not comport with a small lake. It is also said in 1 Kings 9:26 that Solomon built trading vessels in "the Sea of Reeds" for trading with India (Ophir). It is definitely not a small desert lake the Bible is talking about there either. Clearly, whether we call it the "Red Sea," or the "Sea of Reeds," it is the body of water between Arabia and Africa that is being designated. Why the ancient Israelites called the "Red Sea" the "Sea of Reeds" is lost in the mists of time. However geographic names aren't always logical. The ocean Balboa called "Pacific" (peaceful) is the home to some of the worst storms in the world.

The scripture also says the Israelites went through the depths:

Isaiah 63:11b-13a Where is he who set his Holy Spirit among them, who sent his glorious arm of power to be at Moses' right hand, who **divided the waters before them**, to gain for himself everlasting renown, who **led them through the depths**?

The scripture also says the water stood like wall on both sides:

Exodus 14:19-29 Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel's army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light^d to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night^e the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. **The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall^f of water on their right and on their left.** The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea. During the last watch of the night the LORD looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. He made the wheels of their chariots come off so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, "Let's get away from the Israelites! The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt." Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen." Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to

^a Means "the sand region." Usually considered part of Arabia.

^b Means "the sand region." Usually considered part of Arabia.

^c In fact the Hebrew word some translate as "reeds" others say also mean "seaweeds." Furthermore, some have also suggested that since there are no vowels in Hebrew, Yam Suph should be rendered Yam Soph, or Sea of Land's End.

^d A potent figure of the effect of God's revelation on mankind. To those who believe it is light, to those who do not it is deep darkness (Matthew 6:22-23).

^e It has been suggested that this occurred on the 18th of Nisan in figurative anticipation of the Lord's delivering mankind from death by His Resurrection some 1500 years later on that date.

^f Psalms 78:13

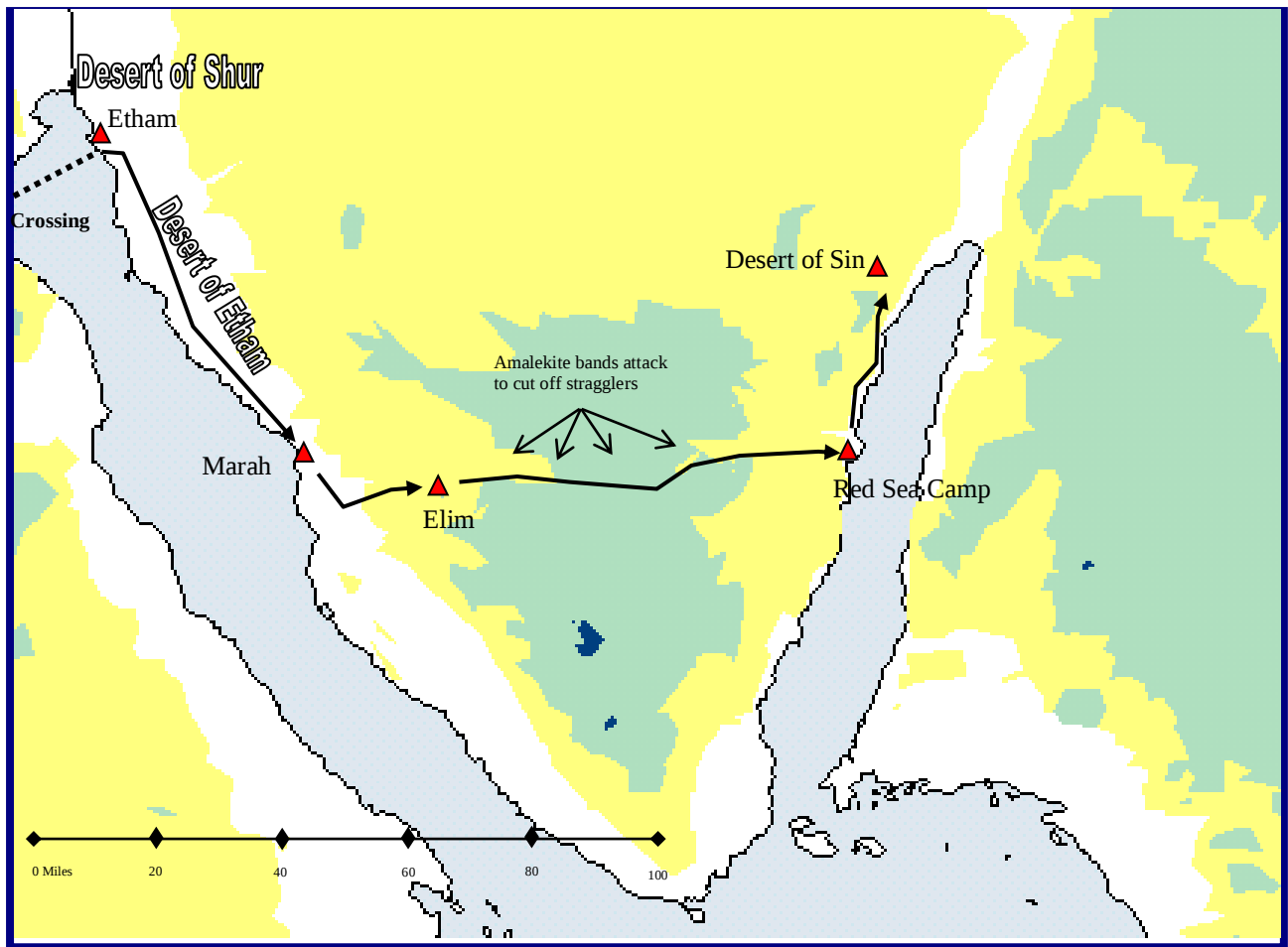
its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it, and the LORD swept them into the sea. The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen--the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived. But ***the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.***

It also says that the water was congealed in the heart of the deep:

Exodus 15:8 By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The surging waters stood firm like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.

This is no shallow lake bed which can be dried out by the force of a strong wind, but clearly a deep body of water. The miracle here is not one that can be explained away as the timely occurrence of natural forces. The Lord certainly is not averse to using those kinds of miracles, but here we have a miracle that is super-natural in the truest sense of the word.

Stage two – from the Red Sea to the Wilderness of Sin



Map from the Red Sea to the Wilderness of Sin

So the Israelites came out of the Red Sea into the Desert of Shur as we have said. There they stopped to celebrate the destruction of the Egyptian Army:

Exodus 14:30 –15:21 That day the LORD saved Israel from the hands of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. And when the Israelites saw the great power the LORD displayed against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and put their trust in him and in Moses his servant. Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: “I will sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea. The LORD is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him. The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name. Pharaoh’s chariots and his army he has hurled into the sea. The best of Pharaoh’s officers are drowned in the Red Sea. The deep waters have covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone. “Your right hand, O LORD, was majestic in power. Your right hand, O LORD, shattered the enemy. In the greatness of your majesty you threw down those who opposed you. You unleashed your burning anger; it consumed them like stubble. By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The surging waters stood firm like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea. “The enemy boasted, ‘I will pursue, I will overtake them. I will divide the spoils; I will gorge myself on them. I will draw my sword and my hand will destroy them.’ But you blew with your breath, and the sea covered them. They sank like lead in the mighty waters. “Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you-- majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders? You stretched out your right hand and the earth swallowed them. “In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling. The nations will hear and tremble; anguish will grip the people of Philistia. The chiefs of Edom will be terrified, the leaders of Moab will be seized with trembling, the people of Canaan will melt away; terror and dread will fall upon them. By the power of your arm they will be as still as a stone-- until your people pass by, O LORD, until the people you bought pass by. You will bring them in and plant them on the mountain of your inheritance-- the place, O LORD, you made for your dwelling, the sanctuary, O Lord, your hands established.^a The LORD will reign for ever and ever.” When Pharaoh’s horses, chariots and horsemen went into the sea, the LORD brought the waters of the sea back over them, but the Israelites walked through the sea on dry ground. Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron’s sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women

^a This is speaking of Mount Zion where the Lord was crucified, where He built His own temple with His own hands.

followed her, with tambourines and dancing. Miriam sang to them: “Sing to the LORD, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea.”

There was no camp established there by the Red Sea. It would seem that the major function of the camps was defensive. This was the pattern in the ancient world in military movements, and seems to have been the main function here. The threat to the Israelites at this point was the Egyptian army, and it had just been reduced to flotsam and jetsam. So they formed no camp. They turned south into the Desert of Etham (Numbers 33:8), probably passing close by their camp of a few days before at Etham. They traveled for three days before they set up camp again. They needed a rest and they were coming into the territory of the Amalekites who controlled the trade routes of the southern Sinai. Indeed, for about the next month the Amalekites were at their throats.

They established camp at Marah and had to deal with a water shortage:

Exodus 15:22-26 Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur.^a For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah,^b they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What are we to drink?” Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the LORD made a decree and a law for them, and there he tested them. He said, “If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.”

From Marah they traveled to Elim. A march of the expected length of about fifty miles would have put them somewhere in the Wadi Ahdar on the only road through the mountains of the southern Sinai peninsula. This series of valleys provide the main western drainage of the mountains of Sinai, so it would have been natural for wells and palms to be found there:

Exodus 15:27 Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water.

This was the last camp before they plunged into the high mountains of the Sinai. It was to be a trek of almost a hundred miles through Amalekite territory without any chance of a camp. The valleys were too narrow for a camp. Undoubtedly, when the Israelites crossed they were strung out across the entire peninsula. There is little doubt that it was this passage and the consequent Amalekites predations to which Moses referred in the following passage:

Deuteronomy 25:17-18 Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and cut off all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God.

If my progression is right, the next camp the Israelites could establish was all the way across the peninsula by the Red Sea on the Gulf of Aqaba, one of the few geographical names on the trip of which we can be sure:

Numbers 33:10 They left Elim and camped by the Red Sea.

This short verse is not only important in helping to establishing my theory, but in destroying some of the other theories. Why? If the Red Sea/Sea of Reeds was just a desert lake, what were the children of Israel doing back at it two weeks later. It also makes a strong argument that the Israelites crossed all the way across the Peninsula, past the traditional Mt. Sinai. Of course one could argue that this was just another camp in the desert by the Red Sea, and they just didn't have a name for it, but I believe it was so remembered and called, because it marked the fact that they had at last escaped the narrow defiles of the mountains where their numbers were no protection against the Amalekites. Also, the theory I referred to earlier that the Israelites crossed the Red Sea at the Gulf of Aqaba, where this camp was located makes no sense in light of this passage. If they had crossed here and landed on the eastern bank on their way to Mt. Sinai, how did they come to the Red Sea again? This camp is not even mentioned in the Exodus account, possibly because they were not really secure until they found a more open space to camp. Probably, the Israelites only used it as a rest station. They all stayed there for a couple of days before moving on, but the whole group took so long to make it through the narrow defiles of the mountains that only a part of them were ever in the camp at one time.

It certainly is worth noting that, although the Lord was leading them, He allowed the Amalekites to harass them. Just as He let hunger and thirst become a problem before He fixed it, so he let security become a problem before he fixed it. It seems clear that some of the Israelites, at very least, lost some of their possessions at the hands of the Amalekites. It seems a pity that we can't learn to appreciate what the Lord gives us, unless He threatens to take it away.

Evidently, they stayed here only long enough to reorganize and then pushed on to the Desert of Sin, which I located at the next piece of ground along the ancient trade route which would have offered them space to organize a camp. It is also at about the right distance for a march.

^a Shur means “wall.”

^b Marah means “bitterness” in Hebrew.

Numbers 33:11 They left the Red Sea and camped in the Desert of Sin.

Exodus 16:1b and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt.

At this point the Israelites had come almost 400 miles, almost half of the way to Mt. Sinai in Arabia, in 30 days, but about the last 15 days had been very rugged. It was to be the roughest part. They would cover the rest of the way in the next 30 days over easier terrain. No doubt many of their food supplies were beginning to run low. They probably thought they saw Amalekites lurking behind every rock. They grumbled at the Lord:

Exodus 16:2-4b In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you.

He provided them with one last regular meal of quail, and started the daily provision of manna which was to last 40 years until they were in the land. I suspect they stayed there for at least four or five days.

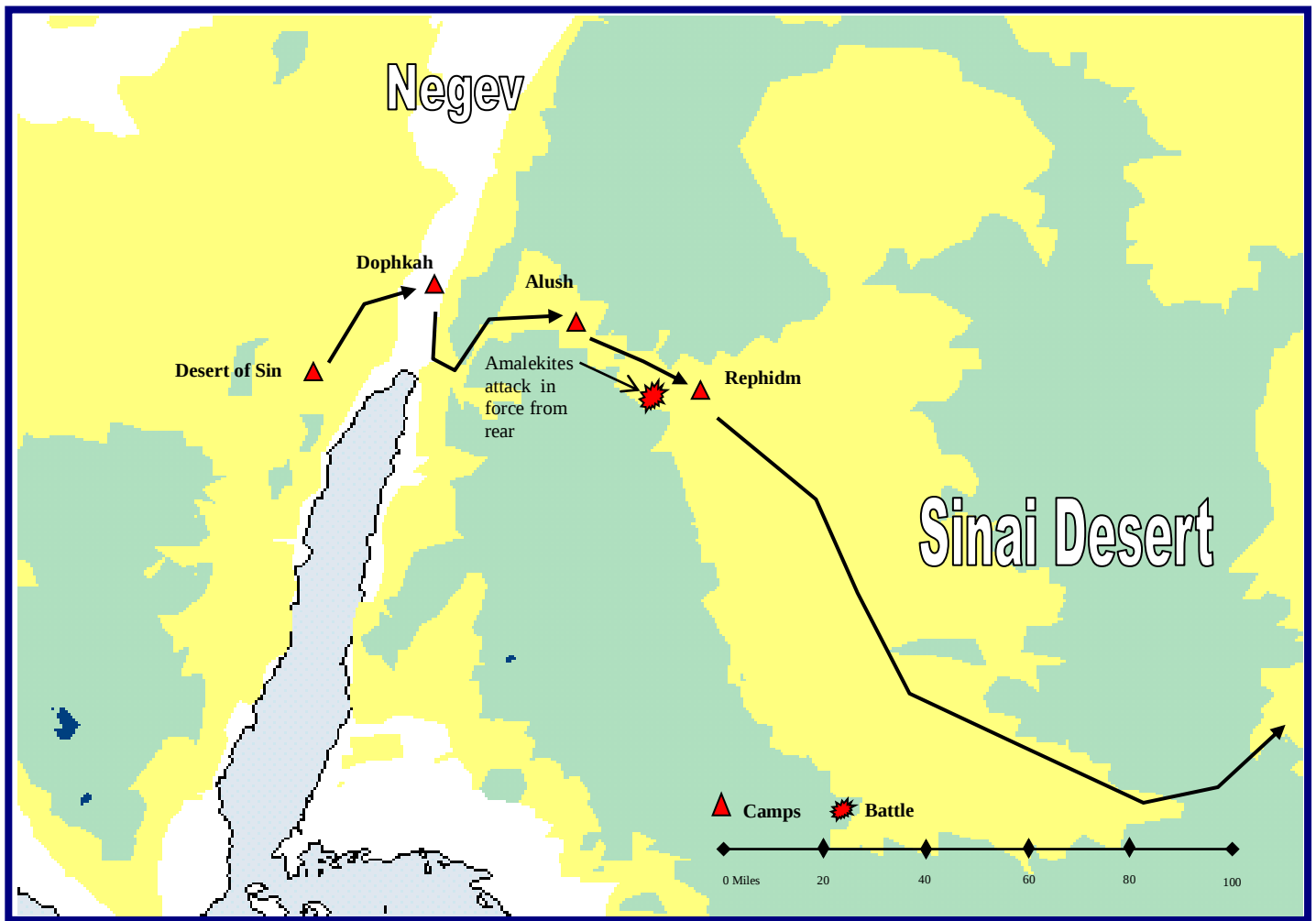
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Stage three – from the Desert of Sin to Desert of Sinai



Map from the Desert of Sin to Rephidim

Departure from the Wilderness of Sin

After the Desert of Sin there were two camps before Rephidim; Dophkah and Alush. Nothing else is mentioned about these camps other than their names. Their names do not appear to be particularly significant. Dophkah means “knocking” and Alush means “mingling together.” I have set the campgrounds at the next open ground on their line of march, which seemed to be at the usual distance, i.e. 40 or fifty miles. The site at Dophkah would also have served the purpose of making the Amalekites think they were coming up into the Negev, and thus sent all their forces to the north for an expected attack. The site at Alush again is on relatively open ground about 40 or 50 miles away. However it is in the Wadi Rum and might have caused the crowding implied by the name (Alush = mingling).

At Rephidim, evidently the people came out of the valley face to face with the most remorseless desert in a country full of deserts. They panicked! How could they possibly get water in that desert? They were a desert people, but this was worse than anything they had ever seen before. So, the Lord had Moses walk out to a rock in the desert toward Horeb (Horeb means dry) and he struck it with his staff and water gushed out. That may have supplied them with enough water to cross to Mt. Sinai (about eight days for a regular traveller). They would need more water for the next ten months in the Desert of Sinai, but this was testimony that the Lord could supply water for His people even in that desert. And he did. It was undoubtedly not the only time the Lord supplied water miraculously during the next forty years, but like the manna they thereafter took it for granted. Evidently most of the time the Lord provided water from rain:

Psalms 68:7-9 When you went out before your people, O God, when you marched through the wasteland, Selah the earth shook, the heavens poured down rain, before God, the One of Sinai, before God, the God of Israel. You gave abundant showers, O God; you refreshed your weary inheritance.

This is probably the place to point out, that as the Israelites struck out into that horribly hot desert, the Lord evidently protected them from the extremes of heat. The entire column of the people was given perpetual shade from the sun for the entire Exodus. Without it they could not have survived in the summer, even with water and food

Psalms 105:39 He spread out a cloud as a covering, and a fire to give light at night.

It was at Rephidim that the Amalekites were able at last to strike in force. It had taken a while to organize all the clans in the Sinai and Negev. Then they probably had been taken by surprise when the Israelites changed direction at Alush, and instead went down the way to the An Nafud. As a result, all they were able to do was attack the Israelites from behind, on the way out of Wadi Rum into that wilderness. There Joshua led the Armies of Israel in defeating them. There is no doubt that the Lord made clear to each individual, that they had a choice. They could press forward into the desert in faith, or turn back to be slaughtered by the Amalekites still lurking in the pass which was the only way back. After the Israelites left Rephidim, until they reached Mount Sinai, the Israelites never pitched another camp. The reason is simple. They didn't need another camp. One purpose of the camps was defensive. They concentrated the people within a defensible perimeter. When the Israelites marched into that desert there was no need for defensive concerns since no enemy would go out into that wasteland unless they had a death wish. Also, if anyone should enemy should try to approach the Israelites they could be seen coming 30 miles away. The second purpose of the camps was to provide supply points. This was no longer necessary, since, after the Desert of Sin, the Lord had started providing manna every morning, at every tent.

Finally 30 days after they had reached the Desert of Sin, they reached Mount Sinai. Depending on how long they spent at the desert of Sin and Rephidim, they could have spent anywhere from 8 days to 15 days on the march. There were a number of events that happened at the Desert of Sin and Rephidim that may indicate a longer stay in those camps than normal. The distance was about 300 miles, which could have been covered in 8 days or less. In fact, the scripture later says it was 11 days from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea, which would have been consistent with covering it in 8 days.

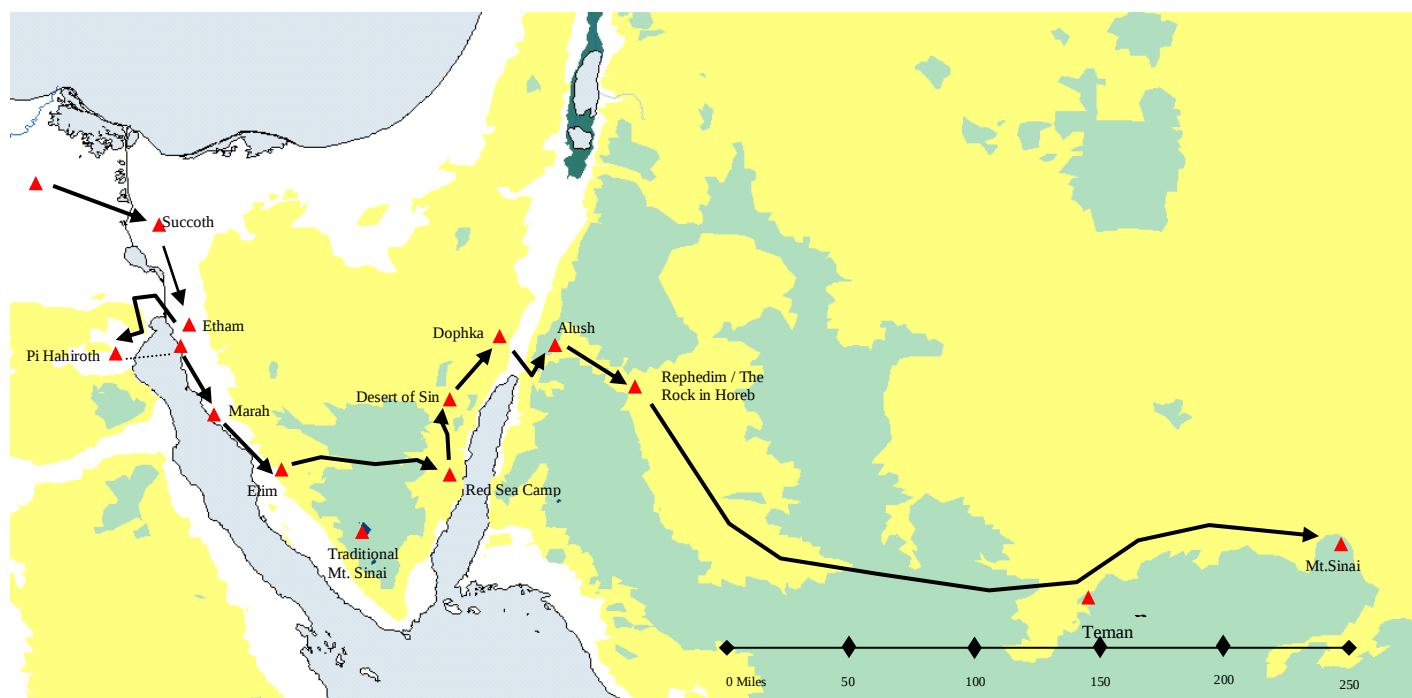
Deuteronomy 1:2 (It takes eleven days to go from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea by the Mount Seir ^a road.)

The calculation of the total trip being 60 days is based on the following verse.

Exodus 19:1-2 In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt--on the very day--they came to the Desert of Sinai. After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

I interpret this to mean that on the 15th day of the third month, the very day of the month they set out for Egypt, they arrived at the Desert of Sinai. Since they left on the 15th day of the first month, that would make 60 days altogether. There is the possibility that it took some time to get to Mt. Sinai after they entered the Desert of Sinai, and it is probable that the rearguard arrived several days after the vanguard, so the whole trip *could* have taken five or six days longer. There are interpretations which are equally valid which interpret Exodus 19:1-2 as 75 days or 90 days (see footnote on page 8).

Below then is the proposed map for the entire trip from Egypt to Mt. Sinai.



^a Mt. Seir is in Edom.

Summary of the Sojourn in front of Mount Sinai

As soon as they arrived at Mt. Sinai the Lord spoke to Moses:

Exodus 19:3-6 Then Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant,^a then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.”

Moses spoke these words to the elders and the peoples and they said:

Exodus 19:8 The people all responded together, “***We will do everything the LORD has said.***”

Then the Lord told Moses to gather the people at the foot of Mt. Sinai on the third day when the Lord would come down on Mt. Sinai in the sight of all the people.^b At that time He spoke the Ten Commandments, evidently in the hearing of the Israelites:

Exodus 20:18-22 When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die.” Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.” The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was. Then the LORD said to Moses, “Tell the Israelites this: ‘***You have seen for yourselves that I have spoken to you from heaven:***

The Lord further explained the Law to Moses and He returned to the people:

Exodus 24:3-4a When Moses went and told the people all the LORD’s words and laws, they responded with one voice, “***Everything the LORD has said we will do.***” Moses then wrote down everything the LORD had said.

Moses then went up to the Mountain with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel and after six days was called by the Lord into the midst of the cloud of God’s presence to receive more of God’s Law and was not heard from for forty days. The children of Israel built an idol and worshipped it and broke every other one of the Ten Commandments in an orgy of lust and drunkenness. Moses came down and broke the tables of the Law. God offered to start over with just Moses and his family. Moses pleaded for the people of Israel. God relented and proposed to send the people up immediately without His presence, but with an angel to guide them. Moses interceded for the people:

Exodus 33:13-17 If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people.” The LORD replied, “My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” Then Moses said to him, “If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?” And the LORD said to Moses, “I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name.”

Then Moses went back up on the Mountain for forty more days and took two tables of stone, on which the Lord wrote the Ten Commandments again. Moses came down and delivered God’s commandments to the Israelites and they commenced making the Tabernacle that God had instructed Moses to build. The Tabernacle was completed by the first day of the first month of the second year:

Exodus 40:1-2 Then the LORD said to Moses: “Set up the tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, on the first day of the first month.

Exodus 40:16-17 Moses did everything just as the LORD commanded him. So the tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month in the second year.

This was in time to celebrate the second passover at twilight of the fourteenth day of the first month. A little more than a month later they left for the promised land.

^a Israel failed utterly, that is why Jesus became the one to fulfill this command for them. That is why Israel will be God’s treasured possession.

^b There is evidently a Jewish tradition that the Lord came down on the top of Mt. Sinai to give the Law on the day that was later to be recognized as the Feast of Pentecost. This is contradicted by Exodus 19:1-2 which states plainly that they only arrived at the desert in front of the Mountain at the 60th day. Jewish traditions can be useful in the absence of scripture, but when they contradict scripture they should be ignored.

From Sinai to Kadesh Barnea and Back

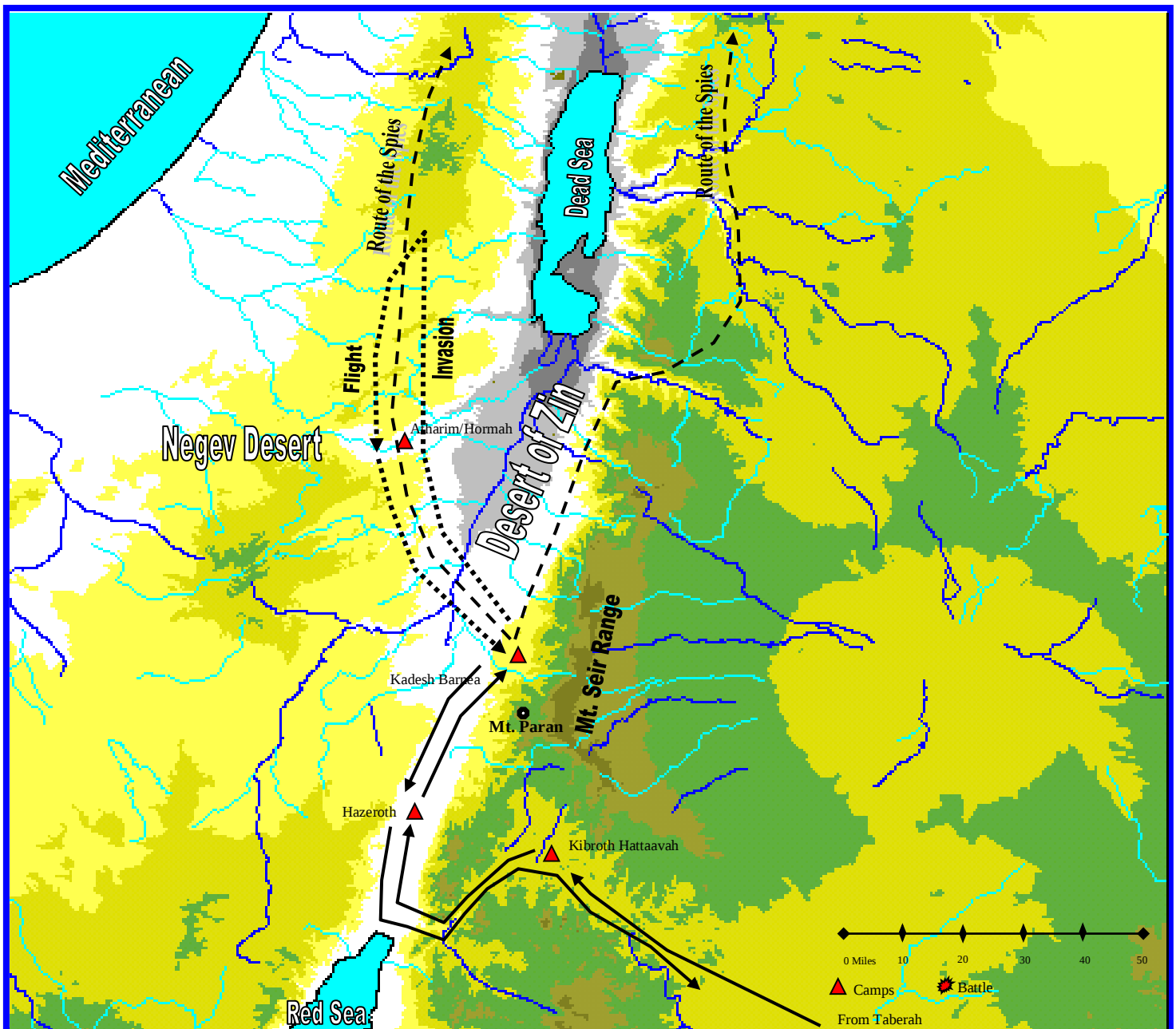
After staying in the Desert of Sinai for eleven months and five days, they set out again.

Numbers 10:11-12 On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle of the Testimony. Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place to place.

Their first camp was three days out at a place called Taberah.^a There they complained about their hardships before the Lord and were judged with fire:

Numbers 10:33-36 So they set out from the mountain of the LORD and traveled for three days. The ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them during those three days to find them a place to rest.

Numbers 11:1-3 Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. When the people cried out to Moses, he prayed to the LORD and the fire died down. So that place was called Taberah, because fire from the LORD had burned



among them.

^a Teberah means “burning.”

Map of Trip from Sinai to Kadesh Barnea and back to the Desert

Their next camp was called Kibroth Hattaavah.^a I expect it was in the Wadi Rum. At any rate, it seemed to have been close to the sea. It was almost a year to the day since the Lord had brought quail on their camp close by on the other side of the Gulf of Aqaba. Being early spring, the annual migration of birds^b that come through that area on their way north from Africa to Central Asia was in progress:

Numbers 11:31-35 Now a wind went out from the LORD and drove quail in from the sea. It brought them down all around the camp to about three feet above the ground,^c as far as a day's walk in any direction. All that day and night and all the next day the people went out and gathered quail. No one gathered less than ten homers. Then they spread them out all around the camp. But while the meat was still between their teeth and before it could be consumed, the anger of the LORD burned against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague. Therefore the place was named Kibroth Hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had craved other food. From Kibroth Hattaavah the people traveled to Hazeroth and stayed there.

Their next camp was called Hazeroth.^d It was here that Aaron and Miriam talked against Moses because of his Cushite wife. Miriam had to stay outside the camp for seven days. That indicates they were there at least seven days. Their next camp was Kadesh Barnea in the Desert of Paran which had been their overall destination from the beginning.

Numbers 10:11-12 On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle of the Testimony. Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran.

Where is the Desert of Paran? The Desert of Paran was evidently the southern extremity of the Desert of Zin next to Mount Paran which was one of the mountains of the Mt. Seir range on the western border of Edom. This is proved by the following verses.

Genesis 14:5-7 In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him went out and defeated the Rephaites in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emmites in Shaveh Kiriathaim and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El **Paran** near the desert. Then they turned back and went to En Mishpat (that is, **Kadesh**), and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon Tamar.

El Paran means oak of Paran. From this, evidently El Paran is located in a grove on the slopes of the Seir range, southwest of Kadesh, overlooking the Desert of Paran.

Deuteronomy 33:1-2 This is the blessing that Moses the man of God pronounced on the Israelites before his death. He said: "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran.

From this we deduce that Mt. Paran is a mountain of the Mt. Seir range, probably above El Paran, and from which the desert gets its name.^e

It had taken 11 days to make the journey.

Deuteronomy 1:2 (It takes eleven days to go from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea by the Mount Seir ^a road.)

^a Kibroth-hattaavah means "the graves of the longing or of lust,"

^b This annual migratory pattern is confirmed by the Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible:

QUAIL (☞ , quail all Eng. VSS). Although the origin of the name is uncertain (possibly the bird's liquid note, repeated several times, is reflected in the 'L' of the name), there is full agreement about this tr., and no other bird fits the Biblical narrative (Exod 16:13; Num 11:31, 32; Ps 105:40). This requires (a) a clean bird and (b) one that passed in great numbers. This miraculous supply to the traveling Israelites is mentioned on two specific occasions; first in the Wilderness of Sin, in the SW of the Sinai Peninsula, some six weeks after leaving Egypt; second at Kibroth-hattaavah, not far away, a year later. This is another example of natural resources being used by God, the miraculous element being in the precise timing of the supply. Although such concentrated flocks may have been exceptional, the quail must have passed across the Sinai area twice a year, and it is reasonable to assume that they were taken and eaten more or less regularly. Quail are almost the smallest game birds and the only ones that truly migrate. The best known is the Common Quail (*Coturnix coturnix*) of Europe and Asia. It is only seven inches long, mottled brown and much like a miniature partridge. Like many of its relatives, it is more often heard than seen, the call being made as much by night as by day. These birds breed over most of Europe and in W Asia. In autumn they migrate toward N Africa, many of them crossing the route of the Exodus, and do so again on their return journey in spring. There is some difficulty about the tr. of Numbers 11:31-KJV, "two cubits high upon the face of the earth" implies that they were piled to that height, whereas RSV "about two cubits above the face of the earth" suggests that they were flying a few ft. from the ground, which is preferred. The Douay VS trs. "they flew in the air two cubits high above the ground." Although strong fliers over short distances, quails need help from the wind for long migration flights and the narrative says that they came in with the wind. An unfavorable change of wind can bring them to the ground and make them easy prey for man. Various estimates have been made about the numbers taken in these incidents, and one researcher has suggested that the Israelites killed some nine million. This could be a gross over-estimate, but there is recent evidence that such a figure is not entirely fanciful. Heavy exploitation of migratory quail took place throughout the 19th and well into the 20th centuries. For many years, Egypt exported over two million a year; in 1920, a peak of three million was reached. This was far more than the quail population could stand and mass migration soon ceased. BIBLIOGRAPHY. A. Parmelee, All the Birds of the Bible (1959), 76; O. L. Austin, Birds of the World (1961), 95. G. S. CANSDALE

^c This is probably to be interpreted that they were so exhausted they could not get above three feet above the ground. Being surrounded by mountains, the quail were trapped and concentrated, since they were so exhausted they could not fly higher than three feet.

^d Easton Bible Encyclopedia says that "Hazeroth" are fenced enclosures consisting of "a low wall of stones in which thick bundles of thorny acacia are inserted, the tangled branches and long needle-like spikes forming a perfectly impenetrable hedge around the encampment"

^e Genesis 14:5-7 and Genesis 21:21 also comport with this location as in the plain between Edom and the Negev.

Moses had sent out twelve spies to explore the land.

Numbers 13:21-22 So they went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin^b as far as Rehob,^c toward Lebo Hamath.^d They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, lived.

Since this seems to indicate two routes, one east of the Jordan and one west of the Jordan, with the Negev being in the western route, the conclusion is that the Desert of Zin is east of the Negev. Also, Moses' instructions for the boundaries of the land give us some information.

Numbers 34:3-4 “Your southern side will include some of the Desert of Zin along the border of Edom. On the east, your southern boundary will start from the end of the Salt Sea, cross south of Scorpion Pass, continue on to Zin and go south of Kadesh Barnea. Then it will go to Hazar Addar and over to Azmon, where it will turn, join the Wadi of Egypt and end at the Sea.

Clearly, Kadesh Barnea was on the western border of Edom in the southern part of the Desert of Zin, which itself was on the western border of Edom. That is where I located it on the map.

From Kadesh Moses sent the spies out to report on the land:

Numbers 13:1-3 The LORD said to Moses, “Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders.” So at the LORD's command Moses sent them out from the Desert of Paran. All of them were leaders of the Israelites.

When the spies came back the people rebelled against God:

Numbers 14:1-4 That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

The Lord threatened to destroy them all right there, but Moses interceded and He relented. However He delayed their inheritance for 40 years:

Numbers 14:20-23 The LORD replied, “I have forgiven them, as you asked. Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth, not one of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times-- not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it.

The Israelites repented too late. They decided they would take it upon themselves and conquer the land, with disastrous results.

Numbers 14:40-45 Early the next morning they went up toward the high hill country. “We have sinned,” they said. “We will go up to the place the LORD promised.” But Moses said, “Why are you disobeying the LORD's command? This will not succeed! Do not go up, because the LORD is not with you. You will be defeated by your enemies, for the Amalekites and Canaanites will face you there. Because you have turned away from the LORD, he will not be with you and you will fall by the sword.” Nevertheless, in their presumption they went up toward the high hill country, though neither Moses nor the ark of the LORD's covenant moved from the camp. Then the Amalekites and Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and attacked them and beat them down all the way to Hormah.^e

Deuteronomy 1:41-44 Then you replied, “We have sinned against the LORD. We will go up and fight, as the LORD our God commanded us.” So every one of you put on his weapons, thinking it easy to go up into the hill country. But the LORD said to me, “Tell them, ‘Do not go up and fight, because I will not be with you. You will be defeated by your enemies.’” So I told you, but you would not listen. You rebelled against the LORD's command and in your arrogance you marched up into the hill country. The Amorites who lived in those hills came out against you; they chased you like a swarm of bees and beat you down from Seir all the way to Hormah.

Then the Israelites stayed at Kadesh for a while licking their wounds and burying their dead.

^a Mt. Seir is in Edom.

^b The spies evidently split into two groups. This one went up the east side of the Jordan.

^c Part of the inheritance of Asher in for Northwestern Israel.

^d Lebo Hamath was a place in near Mt. Hermon that later formed part of the northeastern border of Israel.

^e Hormah means “devoted.” The place name came from the incidents of Numbers 21:3 some 38 years later.

Deuteronomy 1:45-46 You came back and wept before the LORD, but he paid no attention to your weeping and turned a deaf ear to you. And so you stayed in Kadesh many days--all the time you spent there.

Finally, Moses led the Israelites back to the desert from which they had come, the An Nafud, literally “the Desert.”

Deuteronomy 2:1 Then we turned back and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea, as the LORD had directed me.

This was according to his original instructions because they were still in danger from the Amalekites and Canaanites.

Numbers 14:25 Since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea.”

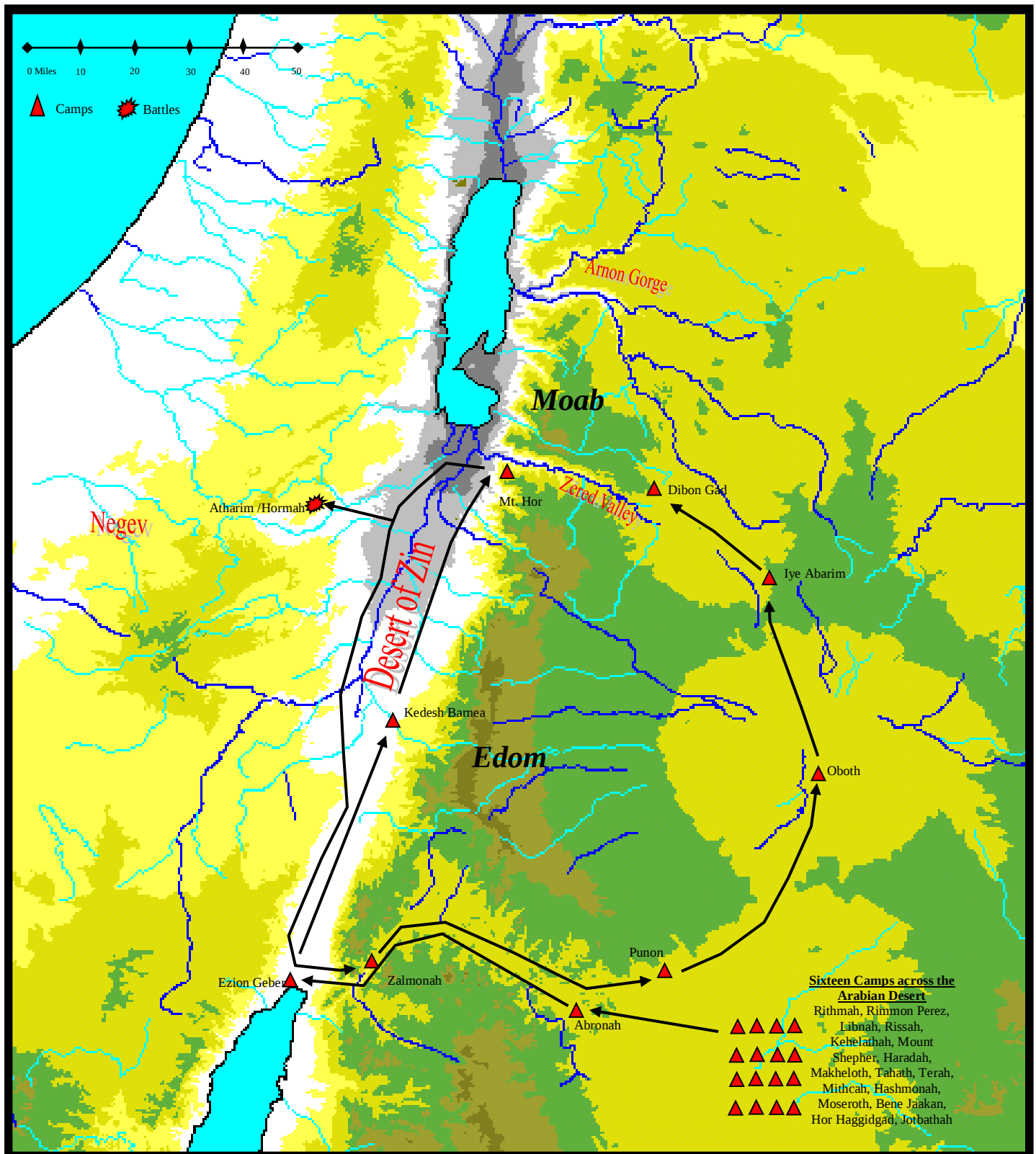
Deuteronomy 1:40 But as for you, turn around and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea.”

Nevertheless, the Lord had given them a promise. Their children would come out after forty years.

Numbers 14:33-34 Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the desert. For forty years--one year for each of the forty days you explored the land--you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you.’

From Ezion Geber to Moab.

The Israelites spent 38 years in “the desert” in at least seventeen different camps, Rithmah, Rimmon Perez, Libnah, Rissah, Kehelathah, Mount Shepher, Haradah, Makheloth, Tahath, Terah, Mithcah, Hashmonah, Moseroth, Bene Jaakan, Hor Haggidgad, Jotbathah, and Abronah. Abronah was the last camp as they crossed out of the great desert. Abronah means “crossing.”



Map of Trip from Ezion Geber to Moab

After that they camped at Ezion Geber. This is a well known Biblical location at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba. There is absolutely no doubt about its physical location based on the following passages:

^{1 Kings 9:26} King Solomon also built ships at Ezion Geber, which is near Elath in Edom, on the shore of the Red Sea.

^{1 Kings 22:48} Now Jehoshaphat built a fleet of trading ships to go to Ophir for gold, but they never set sail--they were wrecked at Ezion Geber.

^{2 Chronicles 8:17-18} Then Solomon went to Ezion Geber and Elath on the coast of Edom. And Hiram sent him ships commanded by his own officers, men who knew the sea. These, with Solomon's men, sailed to Ophir and brought back four hundred and fifty talents of gold, which they delivered to King Solomon.

Then the Israelites returned to Kadesh. It was the first month of the 40th year, just one year before the time of God's promise to bring them into the land. The site of Kadesh has previously been established in this paper, and is about forty miles from Ezion Geber. At Kadesh the Jews quarreled with Moses when there was no water.

^{Numbers 20:1-3} In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried. Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. They quarreled with Moses and said, "If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the LORD!

In a supreme irony, Moses' failure here at Kadesh kept him out of the land, just as 38 years before, the failure of the men of the census had kept them out of the land. He struck the rock instead of speaking to it. He also took credit for himself and Aaron.

^{Numbers 20:7-12} The LORD said to Moses, "Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink." So Moses took the staff from the LORD's presence, just as he commanded him. He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, "Listen, you rebels, must *we* bring you water out of this rock?" Then Moses raised his arm and ***struck the rock twice with his staff***. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank. But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them."

Then the Israelites marched to Mt. Hor.^a

^{Numbers 20:22-29} The whole Israelite community set out from Kadesh and came to Mount Hor. At ***Mount Hor, near the border of Edom***, the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Aaron will be gathered to his people. He will not enter the land I give the Israelites, because both of you rebelled against my command at the waters of Meribah. Get Aaron and his son Eleazar and take them up Mount Hor. Remove Aaron's garments and put them on his son Eleazar, for Aaron will be gathered to his people; he will die there." Moses did as the LORD commanded: They went up Mount Hor in the sight of the whole community. Moses removed Aaron's garments and put them on his son Eleazar. And Aaron died there on top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain, and when the whole community learned that Aaron had died, the entire house of Israel mourned for him thirty days.

Where is Mt. Hor? It says in the previous passage that Mount Hor was near the border of Edom. Since they had been marching up the western border of Edom already, I assume Moses made this designation because he meant it was near the border of Edom with Moab. Mount Hor is clearly a mountain of the Mount Seir Range bordering the Desert of Zin. The location I picked on the map has two justifications. First, it was about the distance of a usual march north of Kadesh. Second, from that location, Aaron could have seen, to the north and across the rift, the mountains of the promised land just as Moses did^b from Mount Nebo before his death ten months later.^c

Then the Israelites started back toward the Red Sea. Evidently they went back south on the side of the Arabah toward the Negev, on the road that went past Abarim. This was the place where the Canaanites and Amalekites had quit chasing them 38 years before. The king of Canaanites in that region came out and ambushed them on the road, whereupon the Israelites attacked the city and destroyed it.

^{Numbers 21:1-4} When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming along the road to Atharim, he attacked the Israelites and captured some of them. Then Israel made this vow to the LORD: "If you will deliver these people into our hands, we will totally destroy their cities." The LORD listened to Israel's plea and gave the Canaanites over to them. They completely destroyed them and their towns; so the place was named Hormah.^d They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom.

^a Hor means "mountain." In the Hebrew Mount Hor is literally Mount the Mountain (הָר הָהוּר הָהוּר). Perhaps this means it was the most prominent mountain in the range. There is another mountain called Mount Hor in the Bible (Numbers 34:7) which evidently is referring to Mt. Hermon, which is definitely the prominent mountain of its range.

^b **Numbers 27:12-13** Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go up this mountain in the Abarim range and see the land I have given the Israelites. After you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your people, **as your brother Aaron was**.

^c The site named by the Arabs as Jabal Harun, and which has a Moslem shrine on it which is supposed to be the last resting place of Aaron is about 40 miles to the south of my proposed location, and is about 2 miles WSW of Petra. The problem is that it is nowhere near what is generally considered the Biblical border between Edom and Moab as Numbers 20:23 indicates it should be.

^d Hormah means "devoted," evidently so called because the Israelites had dedicated the city to total destruction. It was the site of the end of the rout the Israelites had suffered some 38 years earlier (Numbers 14:45).

It is clear they were travelling south toward the Red Sea, to go around Edom. This would take them back through the Wadi Rum for the fifth time in their wanderings. Their next camp was Zalmonah, which means “shady.” From this I conjecture they must have camped in the canyon, where mountains to the east and west would have given them early shade in the morning and the evening. I have placed the camp accordingly. I am speculating that they made a rather long forced march from their conquest of the king of Arad to avoid any confrontation with the other Canaanites or Amalekites. No doubt, they left a rearguard to protect their line of march.

Also, evidently, from the account in Judges, about the time they had reached Kadesh, the Israelites had requested permission to pass through Edom, probably up what is called today the Wadi Dana which would lead them through the middle of Edom. They also asked to pass through Edom, possibly up the valley of the Brook Zered which was the border between Edom and Moab. They had been refused on both counts, and the Lord took them around ^a as is explicitly explained:

Judges 11:15-18 “This is what Jephthah says: Israel did not take the land of Moab or the land of the Ammonites. But when they came up out of Egypt, Israel went through the desert to the Red Sea and on to Kadesh. Then Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, ‘Give us permission to go through your country,’ but the king of Edom would not listen. They sent also to the king of Moab, and he refused. So Israel stayed at Kadesh. “Next they traveled through the desert, skirted the lands of Edom and Moab, passed along the eastern side of the country of Moab, and camped on the other side of the Arnon. They did not enter the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was its border.

After Zalmonah, their next camp was called Punon. Punon was the name of one of the chiefs of Edom, so I conjecture that this camp was on the southeastern skirts of Edom. It was here that the Lord told Moses to turn north from the old caravan road they had come up from Ezion Geber and which travelled east across the desert toward Tema and Central Arabia. They were to turn north and travel toward Moab up the backside of Edom on the desert road of Edom.

Deuteronomy 2:2-4 Then the LORD said to me, “You have made your way around this hill country long enough; now turn north. Give the people these orders: ‘You are about to pass through the territory of your brothers the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. They will be afraid of you, but be very careful.

Deuteronomy 2:8 So we went on past our brothers the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. We turned from the plains road, which comes up from Elath and Ezion Geber, and traveled along the desert road of Moab.

It was here, after they had turned north, that the Israelites rebelled again:

Numbers 21:4a –10 But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!” Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. The LORD said to Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived. The Israelites moved on and camped at Oboth.

The next camp was called Oboth. Oboth means bottles. It could have been a watering place. I placed it in the middle of the depression just east of Edom, close to the water sources.

Numbers 21:10 The Israelites moved on and camped at Oboth.

From Oboth they moved on to the margin of Iye Abarim, the desert east of Moab.

Numbers 21:11 Then they set out from Oboth and camped in Iye Abarim, in the desert that faces Moab toward the sunrise.

I have placed the camp on the margin of the desert, because the distance is about right, and the next camp is in the Zereth Valley not that many miles to the north. The next camp was Dibon Gad in the Zered Valley.

Numbers 21:12 From there they moved on and camped in the Zered Valley.

Numbers 33:45 They left Iyim^b and camped at Dibon Gad.^c

I have placed Dibon Gad on the northern side of the valley on the edge of the plateau of Moab because of the verse in Jeremiah which seems to place Dibon on the plateau.

^a This would have given the Moabites the time they needed to send twice to get Balaam from the Euphrates.

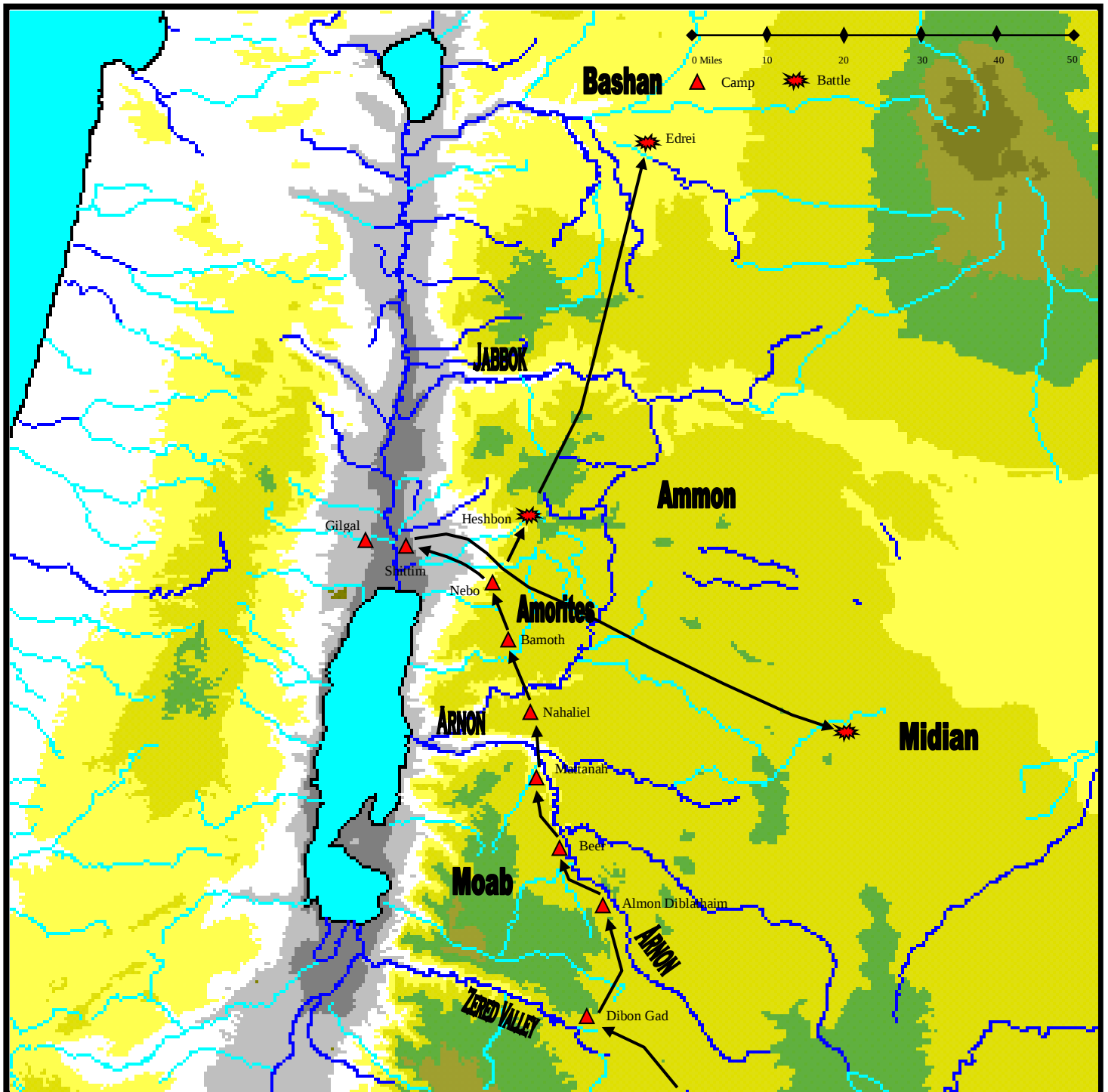
^b Evidently a shortened form of Iye Abarim.

^c Dibon means “pining, wasting.” A city in Moab (Numbers 21:30); called also Dibon Gad because it was settled by Gad after the conquest. See note below.

Jeremiah 48:21 “Judgment has come to the plateau-- to Dibon, Nebo and Beth Diblathaim.”

From this point on the Israelites began to have serious opposition, and they began to have some serious military campaigns, so their camps were much closer together for defensive reasons.

From Moab into the Land



After the Israelites established contact with the Moabites they made camp about every 15 miles as they moved toward the Jordan Valley north of the Dead Sea. The first three camps they followed the Arnon Gorge until they crossed it and crossed the plateau of northern Moab. First they camped at Almon Diblathaim alongside the Arnon.

Numbers 21:13 They set out from there and camped alongside the Arnon, which is in the desert extending into Amorite territory. The Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites.

Then they camped at Beer where the Lord brought water miraculously from a well dug by the elders.

Numbers 21:16-18 From there they continued on to Beer, the well where the LORD said to Moses, “Gather the people together and I will give them water.” Then Israel sang this song: “Spring up, O well! Sing about it, about the well that the princes dug, that the nobles of the people sank-- the nobles with scepters and staffs.” Then they went from the desert to Mattanah,

Then they camped at Matanah at the Arnon or just across it in the highlands.

Numbers 21:18b Then they went from the desert to Mattanah,

Then they moved on to Nahaliel.

Numbers 21:19a from Mattanah to Nahaliel.

Then they moved on to Bamoth.

Numbers 21:19b from Nahaliel to Bamoth.

Then they moved on to the area close to Mt. Nebo in the Mount Pisgah range.

Numbers 21:20 and from Bamoth to the valley in Moab where the top of Pisgah overlooks the wasteland.

Numbers 33:47 They left Almon Diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim, near Nebo. *(This verse obviously sums up the entire move across the area – 5 camps – in one statement)*

At this point they launched their attacks on Sihon, king of the Amorites and Og, king of Bashan and conquered the entire eastern bank of the Jordan below the Sea of Galilee.

Numbers 21:21-35 Israel sent messengers to say to Sihon king of the Amorites: “Let us pass through your country. We will not turn aside into any field or vineyard, or drink water from any well. We will travel along the king’s highway until we have passed through your territory.” But Sihon would not let Israel pass through his territory. He mustered his entire army and marched out into the desert against Israel. When he reached Jahaz, he fought with Israel. Israel, however, put him to the sword and took over his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, but only as far as the Ammonites, because their border was fortified. Israel captured all the cities of the Amorites and occupied them, including Heshbon and all its surrounding settlements. Heshbon was the city of Sihon king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and had taken from him all his land as far as the Arnon. That is why the poets say: “Come to Heshbon and let it be rebuilt; let Sihon’s city be restored. “Fire went out from Heshbon, a blaze from the city of Sihon. It consumed Ar of Moab, the citizens of Arnon’s heights. Woe to you, O Moab! You are destroyed, O people of Chemosh! He has given up his sons as fugitives and his daughters as captives to Sihon king of the Amorites. “But we have overthrown them; Heshbon is destroyed all the way to Dibon. We have demolished them as far as Nophah, which extends to Medeba.” So Israel settled in the land of the Amorites. After Moses had sent spies to Jazer, the Israelites captured its surrounding settlements and drove out the Amorites who were there. Then they turned and went up along the road toward Bashan, and Og king of Bashan and his whole army marched out to meet them in battle at Edrei. The LORD said to Moses, “Do not be afraid of him, for I have handed him over to you, with his whole army and his land. Do to him what you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon.” So they struck him down, together with his sons and his whole army, leaving them no survivors. And they took possession of his land.

Then they moved on down into the Jordan River Valley.

Numbers 22:1 Then the Israelites traveled to the plains of Moab^a and camped along the Jordan across from Jericho.

It was while they were here that Balaam prophesied about the Israelites from the mountains overlooking the Arabah (Numbers 22-24). Balaam couldn’t prophecy against the Israelites, but as he departed for home, he evidently stopped among the Midianites and advised them to corrupt the Israelites (Numbers 31:16).

Numbers 25:1-9 While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate and bowed down before these gods. So Israel joined in worshiping the Baal of Peor. And the LORD’s anger burned against them. The LORD said to Moses, “Take all the leaders of these people, kill them and

^a Although the eastern side of the Arabah, is here called the plains of Moab, it had been conquered by the Amorites some time before. Since the Israelites conquered the Amorites, it was their land now.

expose them in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the LORD's fierce anger may turn away from Israel." So Moses said to Israel's judges, "Each of you must put to death those of your men who have joined in worshipping the Baal of Peor." Then an Israelite man brought to his family a Midianite woman right before the eyes of Moses and the whole assembly of Israel while they were weeping at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. When Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw this, he left the assembly, took a spear in his hand and followed the Israelite into the tent. He drove the spear through both of them--through the Israelite and into the woman's body. Then the plague against the Israelites was stopped; but those who died in the plague numbered 24,000.

This instigated a campaign against the Midianites, but not the Moabites. With just 12,000 troops the Israelites inflicted a terrible slaughter and defeat on the Midianites and the Lord visited His anger on the disobedient Balaam who had lingered in Midian, probably hoping for a reward for his advice. He got it!

Numbers 31:1-16 The LORD said to Moses, "Take vengeance on the Midianites for the Israelites. After that, you will be gathered to your people." So Moses said to the people, "Arm some of your men to go to war against the Midianites and to carry out the LORD's vengeance on them. Send into battle a thousand men from each of the tribes of Israel." So twelve thousand men armed for battle, a thousand from each tribe, were supplied from the clans of Israel. Moses sent them into battle, a thousand from each tribe, along with Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, who took with him articles from the sanctuary and the trumpets for signaling. They fought against Midian, as the LORD commanded Moses, and killed every man. Among their victims were Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba--the five kings of Midian. They also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword.^a The Israelites captured the Midianite women and children and took all the Midianite herds, flocks and goods as plunder. They burned all the towns where the Midianites had settled, as well as all their camps. They took all the plunder and spoils, including the people and animals, and brought the captives, spoils and plunder to Moses and Eleazar the priest and the Israelite assembly at their camp on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan across from Jericho. Moses, Eleazar the priest and all the leaders of the community went to meet them outside the camp. Moses was angry with the officers of the army--the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds--who returned from the battle. "Have you allowed all the women to live?" he asked them. "They were the ones who followed Balaam's advice and were the means of turning the Israelites away from the LORD in what happened at Peor, so that a plague struck the LORD's people.

The Israelites never attacked Moab, Ammon, or Edom when they came up from Egypt.

2 Chronicles 20:10 "But now here are men from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, whose territory you would not allow Israel to invade when they came from Egypt; so they turned away from them and did not destroy them.

So everything had been done, short of crossing the Jordan. Every battle had been won, the east bank was secured all the way to Galilee, and every instruction had been given. The Lord told Moses it was time to go. It was time to transfer his authority to a successor

Numbers 27:12-23 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go up this mountain in the Abarim range and see the land I have given the Israelites. After you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was, for when the community rebelled at the waters in the Desert of Zin, both of you disobeyed my command to honor me as holy before their eyes." (These were the waters of Meribah Kadesh, in the Desert of Zin.)^b Moses said to the LORD, "May the LORD, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over this community to go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the LORD's people will not be like sheep without a shepherd." So the LORD said to Moses, "Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay your hand on him. Have him stand before Eleazar the priest and the entire assembly and commission him in their presence. Give him some of your authority so the whole Israelite community will obey him.^c He is to stand before Eleazar the priest, who will obtain decisions for him by inquiring of the Urim before the LORD. At his command he and the entire community of the Israelites will go out, and at his command they will come in." Moses did as the LORD commanded him. He took Joshua and had him stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole assembly. Then he laid his hands on him and commissioned him, as the LORD instructed through Moses.

Then the Lord took Moses home to wait for his next assignment.

Deuteronomy 34:1-8 Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. There the LORD showed him the whole land--from Gilead to Dan, all of Naphtali, the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the western sea, the Negev and the whole region from the Valley of Jericho, the City of Palms, as far as Zoar. Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it." And Moses the servant of the LORD died

^a The presence of Balaam among the Midianites is a further proof of the location of Midian. Balaam's home was on the Euphrates River (Numbers 22:5 "the river"). He would have travelled east way on his journey home from Moab, since he would have wanted to avoid the warfare along the east bank of the Jordan.

^b It is ironic that most of the Israelite men rebelled at Kadesh Barnea in year one and as a consequence never entered the land. In year 40 Moses failed at the same place and never entered the land.

^c Note that Joshua only had some of Moses authority. Much of the spiritual authority was to be exercised instead by Eleazar the High Priest. Moses, on the other hand, had been a type of King-Priest.

there in Moab, as the LORD had said. He buried him in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is. Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone. The Israelites grieved for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, until the time of weeping and mourning was over.

Finally, at last, after thirty days the Israelites crossed the Jordan, in what was the fortieth stage of their journey since they had left Egypt forty years before. The crossing, like the whole journey, was full of symbolism of things to come, of deeper, more spiritual things. It is no coincidence that they crossed at the very place, that 1,500 years later, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist.

Joshua 3:1- 4:24 Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over.^a After three days the officers went throughout the camp, giving orders to the people: “When you see the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, and the priests, who are Levites, carrying it, you are to move out from your positions and follow it. Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before. But keep a distance of about a thousand yards (*two thousand cubits*) between you and the ark; do not go near it.” Joshua told the people, “Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will do amazing things among you.” Joshua said to the priests, “Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on ahead of the people.” So they took it up and went ahead of them. And the LORD said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, so they may know that I am with you as I was with Moses. Tell the priests who carry the ark of the covenant: ‘When you reach the edge of the Jordan’s waters, go and stand in the river.’” Joshua said to the Israelites, “Come here and listen to the words of the LORD your God. This is how you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites and Jebusites. See, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth will go into the Jordan ahead of you. Now then, choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. And as soon as the priests who carry the ark of the LORD—the Lord of all the earth—set foot in the Jordan, its waters flowing downstream will be cut off and stand up in a heap.” So when the people broke camp to cross the Jordan, the priests carrying the ark of the covenant went ahead of them. Now the Jordan is at flood stage all during harvest. Yet as soon as the priests who carried the ark reached the Jordan and their feet touched the water’s edge, the water from upstream stopped flowing. It piled up in a heap a great distance away, at a town called Adam^b in the vicinity of Zarethan, while the water flowing down to the Sea of the Arabah (the Salt Sea) was completely cut off. So the people crossed over opposite Jericho. The priests who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel passed by until the whole nation had completed the crossing on dry ground.^c When the whole nation had finished crossing the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua, “Choose twelve men from among the people, one from each tribe, and tell them to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan from right where the priests stood and to carry them over with you and put them down at the place where you stay tonight.” So Joshua called together the twelve men he had appointed from the Israelites, one from each tribe, and said to them, “Go over before the ark of the LORD your God into the middle of the Jordan. Each of you is to take up a stone on his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, to serve as a sign among you. In the future, when your children ask you, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them that the flow of the Jordan was cut off before the ark of the covenant of the LORD. When it crossed the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones are to be a memorial to the people of Israel forever.” So the Israelites did as Joshua commanded them. They took twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites, as the LORD had told Joshua; and they carried them over with them to their camp, where they put them down. Joshua set up the twelve stones that had been in the middle of the Jordan at the spot where the priests who carried the ark of the covenant had stood.^d And they are there to this day. Now the priests who carried the ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until everything the LORD had commanded Joshua was done by the people, just as Moses had directed Joshua. The people hurried over, and as soon as all of them had crossed, the ark of the LORD and the priests came to the other side while the people watched. The men of Reuben, Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh crossed over, armed, in front of the Israelites, as Moses had directed them. About forty thousand armed for battle crossed over before the LORD to the plains of Jericho for war. That day the LORD exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel; and they revered him all the days of his life, just as they had revered Moses. Then the LORD said to Joshua, “Command the priests carrying the ark of the Testimony to come up out of the Jordan.” So Joshua commanded the priests, “Come up out of the Jordan.” And the priests came up out of the river carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD. No sooner had they set their feet on the dry ground than the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and ran at flood stage as before. On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. And Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan. He said to the Israelites, “In the future when your descendants ask their fathers, ‘What do these stones mean?’ tell them, ‘Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground.’ For the LORD your God dried up the Jordan before you

^a As this was just at the end of the rainy season (just days before the Passover), and the snow on Mount Hermon, at the headwaters of the Jordan was beginning its spring thaw, the Jordan would have been running high, perhaps so high that the Canaanites did not foresee the need to oppose their crossing. Indeed, Joshua 4:18 states that the Jordan was running at flood stage.

^b Literally, this says in the Hebrew, “it rose up on a heap very far, from the city of Adam.” The alternate translation given here, has been interpreted that the river rose up in a heap at Adam. This seems unlikely, as Adam is usually conceded as being 16 miles up river. If the water piled up there when the Ark was brought into the water, it would have taken 3 hours for the water to drain out of the river. Furthermore, it would have hidden the truly miraculous nature of God’s provision. The Exodus was ending as it began at the Red Sea.

^c This whole scene is prophetic of Jesus Christ. The ark of the Covenant stands for Christ. Its contents stood for the birth (pot of manna), life (tables of the Law), death (Aaron’s staff which stood for the cross), and resurrection (the dead staff which miraculously budded and produced flowers and almonds). The box itself was acacia wood (the humanity of Christ) overlaid with gold (the deity of Christ). The Ark was carried into the Jordan where the water stood for judgement for sin (water stands for judgement as in the Pre-Adamic world of Genesis 1:2, as in the flood of Noah, or as in the judgement of the armies of Egypt in the Red Sea). The water backed up back to Adam (standing for the withholding of judgement on sin from the time of Adam - Romans 5:14-21). The fact that the nation of Israel was led across the Jordan thus by a man named Joshua (Jesus in the Greek) was not coincidental)

^d The twelve stones were taken out of the Jordan River to symbolize the deliverance of the twelve tribes of Israel from judgement by the Lord. Eventually, one stone replace the twelve stones when Jesus, the “stone the builders rejected” was baptized at the same place in the Jordan River about 1500 years later.

until you had crossed over. The LORD your God did to the Jordan just what he had done to the Red Sea when he dried it up before us until we had crossed over. He did this so that all the peoples of the earth might know that the hand of the LORD is powerful and so that you might always fear the LORD your God.”

The Curse on the Exodus Generation

One of the common teachings about the Exodus that I have heard is that all the adults from the generation who left Egypt came under the curse of God and died before they could enter the promised land. I have discovered that the Bible never makes that claim. I have summarized what it does say under seven points:

1. THE CURSE ONLY APPLIED TO THE MEN COUNTED IN THE CENSUS, WHICH WERE ALL NON-LEVITE MEN OVER 20 WHO WERE ABLE TO SERVE IN THE ARMY.

Numbers 1:20 From the descendants of Reuben the firstborn son of Israel: *All the men twenty years old or more who were able to serve in the army* were listed by name, one by one, according to the records of their clans and families. (The same phrase is repeated for all the tribes that were counted. The Levites were not counted)

Numbers 14:29 In this desert your bodies will fall--every one of you twenty years old or more *who was counted in the census*

This specifically leaves out all women, Levites, and all men who were unable, because of age or disability, to serve in the army.

2. THE CURSE MAY HAVE ONLY APPLIED TO THE ONES WHO DISOBEYED, GRUMBLED, OR TREATED THE LORD WITH CONTEMPT. THE FOLLOWING IS THE ORIGINAL AND FULLEST ELUCIDATION OF THE CURSE.

Numbers 14:21-36 Nevertheless, as surely as I live and as surely as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth, not one of the men who saw my glory and the miraculous signs I performed in Egypt and in the desert but who disobeyed me and tested me ten times--not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their forefathers. *No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it.* But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it. Since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea." The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: "How long will this wicked community grumble against me? I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites. So tell them, 'As surely as I live, declares the LORD, I will do to you the very things I heard you say: *In this desert your bodies will fall--every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me.* (My Note -Only males were counted in the census) Not one of you will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. As for your children that you said would be taken as plunder, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you have rejected. But you--your bodies will fall in this desert. Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the desert. For forty years--one year for each of the forty days you explored the land--you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you.' I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will surely do these things to this whole wicked community, which has banded together against me. They will meet their end in this desert; here they will die." So the men Moses had sent to explore the land, who returned and made the whole community grumble against him by spreading a bad report about it-- these men responsible for spreading the bad report about the land were struck down and died of a plague before the LORD. Of the men who went to explore the land, only Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh survived.

This specifically adds grumbling to the qualification for the curse. This does not mean that there was anyone who was in the census did not grumble.

3. WHEN THE ISRAELITES WERE READY TO GO INTO THE LAND, NOT A MAN FROM THE ORIGINAL CENSUS WAS ELIGIBLE FOR THE SECOND CENSUS.

Numbers 26:1-4 After the plague the LORD said to Moses and Eleazar son of Aaron, the priest, "Take a census of the whole Israelite community by families--*all those twenty years old or more who are able to serve in the army of Israel.*" So on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho, Moses and Eleazar the priest spoke with them and said, "Take a census of the men twenty years old or more, as the LORD commanded Moses."

Numbers 26:63-65 These are the ones counted by Moses and Eleazar the priest when they counted the Israelites on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho. *Not one of them was among those counted by Moses and Aaron the priest when they counted the Israelites in the Desert of Sinai.* For the LORD had told those Israelites they would surely die in the desert, and not one of them was left except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

This, however, does not exclude the possibility that some of the men in the original census were not disobedient were still alive, but were not included in this second census because they were no longer able to serve in the army because of old age or disability.

4. THE FOLLOWING VERSES ALSO REINFORCE THE POINT THAT THE CURSE WAS AGAINST THE FIGHTING MEN.

Deuteronomy 2:14-16 Thirty-eight years passed from the time we left Kadesh Barnea until we crossed the Zered Valley. By then, *that entire generation of fighting men had perished from the camp*, as the LORD had sworn to them. The LORD's hand was against them until he had completely eliminated them from the camp. Now when the last of these fighting men among the people had died,

Joshua 5:3-7 So Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the Israelites at Gibeath Haaraloth. Now this is why he did so: All those who came out of Egypt--*all the men of military age--died in the desert on the way* after leaving Egypt. All the people that came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the desert during the journey from Egypt had not. The Israelites had moved about in the desert forty years until all the men who were of military age when they left Egypt had died, since they had not obeyed the LORD. For the LORD had sworn to them that they would not see the land that he had solemnly promised their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. So he raised up their sons in their place, and these were the ones Joshua circumcised. They were still uncircumcised because they had not been circumcised on the way.

It could be argued that these verses exclude the possibility of any but Caleb and Joshua not being disobedient. However, it could also be argued that once a principal has been established (as it was in Numbers 14:21-36) it doesn't have to be stated in full every time.

5. THE CLOSEST THE BIBLE COMES TO SAYING ALL MEN WOULD DIE ARE IN THE FOLLOWING VERSES:

Deuteronomy 1:34-39 When the LORD heard what you said, he was angry and solemnly swore: "*Not a man of this evil generation shall see the good land I swore to give your forefathers, except Caleb son of Jephunneh.*" He will see it, and I will give him and his descendants the land he set his feet on, because he followed the LORD wholeheartedly." Because of you the LORD became angry with me also and said, "You shall not enter it, either. But your assistant, Joshua son of Nun, will enter it. Encourage him, because he will lead Israel to inherit it. And the little ones that you said would be taken captive, your children who do not yet know good from bad--they will enter the land. I will give it to them and they will take possession of it.

Numbers 32:7-13 Why do you discourage the Israelites from going over into the land the LORD has given them? This is what your fathers did when I sent them from Kadesh Barnea to look over the land. After they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and viewed the land, they discouraged the Israelites from entering the land the LORD had given them. The LORD's anger was aroused that day and he swore this oath: 'Because they have not followed me wholeheartedly, *not one of the men twenty years old or more who came up out of Egypt will see the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob-- not one except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun*, for they followed the LORD wholeheartedly.' The LORD's anger burned against Israel and he made them wander in the desert forty years, until the whole generation of those who had done evil in his sight was gone.

These verses, it could be argued however, are only summarizing what has been more fully explained earlier.

6. THE CURSE DID NOT APPLY TO THE LEVITES BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THE CENSUS OF THE ISRAELITES.

Numbers 1:49-50 "You must not count the tribe of Levi or include them in the census of the other Israelites. Instead, appoint the Levites to be in charge of the tabernacle of the Testimony--over all its furnishings and everything belonging to it. They are to carry the tabernacle and all its furnishings; they are to take care of it and encamp around it.

Numbers 3:14-15 The LORD said to Moses in the Desert of Sinai, "Count the Levites by their families and clans. Count every male a month old or more."

7. ELEAZAR (A LEVITE) WAS OVER TWENTY AT THE TIME OF THE CURSE AND HE WENT INTO THE LAND WITH JOSHUA.

Eleazar participated in the Tabernacle services before the time of the curse which occurred after they left Mt. Sinai.

Exodus 28:1 "Have Aaron your brother brought to you from among the Israelites, along with his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, so they may serve me as priests.

At that time Eleazar had to be at least twenty-five years old.

Numbers 8:23-26 The LORD said to Moses, “This applies to the Levites: Men twenty-five years old or more shall come to take part in the work at the Tent of Meeting, but at the age of fifty, they must retire from their regular service and work no longer. They may assist their brothers in performing their duties at the Tent of Meeting, but they themselves must not do the work. This, then, is how you are to assign the responsibilities of the Levites.”

Yet well after the time the Israelites took their second census and entered the land, Eleazar was with them.

Joshua 19:51 These are the territories that Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun and the heads of the tribal clans of Israel assigned by lot at Shiloh in the presence of the LORD at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. And so they finished dividing the land.

In fact God had assigned him as the spiritual co-leader to Joshua when Joshua succeeded Moses.

Numbers 34:16b-17 The LORD said to Moses, “These are the names of the men who are to assign the land for you as an inheritance: Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun.

This proves that at least Levite survived the curse.

8. THERE WERE ALSO NON-ISRAELITES WHO CAME OUT OF EGYPT WITH THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL. THE BIBLE DOESN'T MENTION THAT THEY WERE ASSIGNED TO A TRIBE. UNLESS THEY WERE ASSIGNED TO A TRIBE, THEY WERE NOT COUNTED IN THE CENSUS, EITHER MEN OR WOMEN.

There were numerous non-Israelites in the Exodus.

Exodus 12:37-38 The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. *Many other people went up with them*, as well as large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds.

These other people would not have been under the curse.

9. TO WHAT CONCLUSION ARE WE FORCED?

- A. Women were definitely excluded from the curse.
- B. Levites were also almost certainly excluded from the curse (all priests were also Levites).
- C. The other people who went up with them would not have been under the curse unless they had been enrolled in one of the tribes.
- D. Perhaps some men who were not disobedient, or were not eligible for the army, were excluded from the curse.

Summary of the Forty Years Journey.

Numbers 33:1-2 Here are the stages in the journey of the Israelites when they came out of Egypt by divisions under the leadership of Moses and Aaron. At the LORD's command Moses recorded the stages in their journey. This is their journey by stages:

#	List of Stages in Numbers 33:3-52	Stages and details of stages in other Passages
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From Egypt to Sinai

1	The Israelites set out from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Passover. They marched out boldly in full view of all the Egyptians, who were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had struck down among them; for the LORD had brought judgment on their gods. The Israelites left Rameses and camped at Succoth.	Exodus 12:37-38 The Israelites journeyed from Rameses^a to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. Many other people went up with them, as well as large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds. Exodus 13:17-18 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea.
2	They left Succoth and camped at Etham, on the edge of the desert.	Exodus 13:20-22 After leaving Succoth they camped at Etham ^b on the edge of the desert. By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.
3	They left Etham, turned back to Pi Hahiroth, to the east of Baal Zephon, and camped near Migdol.	Exodus 14:1-4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth ^c , between Migdol ^d and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea, directly opposite Baal Zephon. Pharaoh will think, 'The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.' And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD." So the Israelites did this.
4	They left Pi Hahiroth and passed through the sea into the desert,	Exodus 14:5-10 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, "What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!" So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him. He took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers over all of them. The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly. The Egyptians--all Pharaoh's horses and chariots, horsemen and troops--pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea near Pi Hahiroth, opposite Baal Zephon. As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. Exodus 14:11-18 They said to Moses, "Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn't we say to you in Egypt, 'Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians'? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!" Moses answered the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still." Then the LORD said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground. I will harden the hearts of

^a Rameses was one of the store cities of Pharaoh. **Exodus 1:11** So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh.

^b Means "fortress."

^c Pi-hahiroth means "place where the reeds grow." LXX. and Coptic read "farmstead."

^d Migdol means "watchtower." Perhaps an ancient watchtower and/or lighthouse guarding the approaches to the northern end of the Red Sea.

		the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. The Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.” Exodus 14:19-29 Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel’s army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light^a to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night^b the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall^c of water on their right and on their left. The Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea. During the last watch of the night the LORD looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. He made the wheels of their chariots come off so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, “Let’s get away from the Israelites! The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt.” Then the LORD said to Moses, “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen.” Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it, and the LORD swept them into the sea. The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen--the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived. But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left. Exodus 15:8 By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The surging waters stood firm like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.
5	and when they had traveled for three days in the Desert of Etham, they camped at Marah.	Exodus 15:22-26 Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur.^d For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah,^e they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “What are we to drink?” Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the LORD made a decree and a law for them, and there he tested them. He said, “If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.”
6	They left Marah and went to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there.	Exodus 15:27 Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water.
7	They left Elim and camped by the Red Sea.	Exodus 16:1a The whole Israelite community set out from Elim
8	They left the Red Sea and camped in the Desert of Sin.	Exodus 16:1b and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. Exodus 16:2-36 In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the LORD’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.” Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.” So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see

^a A potent figure of the effect of God’s revelation on mankind. To those who believe it is light, to those who do not it is deep darkness (Matthew 6:22-23).

^b It has been suggested that this occurred on the 18th of Nisan in figurative anticipation of the Lord’s delivering mankind from death by His Resurrection some 1500 years later on that date.

^c Psalms 78:13

^d Means “wall.”

^e Marah means bitterness in Hebrew.

		the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?” Moses also said, “You will know that it was the LORD when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD.” Then Moses told Aaron, “Say to the entire Israelite community, ‘Come before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’” While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud. The LORD said to Moses, “I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, ‘At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.’” That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat. This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Each one is to gather as much as he needs. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.’” The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. And when they measured it by the omer, he who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little. Each one gathered as much as he needed. Then Moses said to them, “No one is to keep any of it until morning.” However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them. Each morning everyone gathered as much as he needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away. On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much—two omers for each person--and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses. He said to them, “This is what the LORD commanded: ‘Tomorrow is to be a day of rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.’” So they saved it until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not stink or get maggots in it. “Eat it today,” Moses said, “because today is a Sabbath to the LORD. You will not find any of it on the ground today. Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any.” Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none. Then the LORD said to Moses, “How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions? Bear in mind that the LORD has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where he is on the seventh day; no one is to go out.” So the people rested on the seventh day. The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey. Moses said, “This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Take an omer of manna and keep it for the generations to come, so they can see the bread I gave you to eat in the desert when I brought you out of Egypt.’” So Moses said to Aaron, “Take a jar and put an omer of manna in it. Then place it before the LORD to be kept for the generations to come.” As the LORD commanded Moses, Aaron put the manna in front of the Testimony, that it might be kept. The Israelites ate manna forty years, until they came to a land that was settled; they ate manna until they reached the border of Canaan. (An omer is one tenth of an ephah.)
9	They left the Desert of Sin and camped at Dophkah.	Exodus 17:1a The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place
10	They left Dophkah and camped at Alush.	Exodus 17:1b to place as the LORD commanded.
11	They left Alush and camped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.	Exodus 17:1c-3 They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. So they quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses replied, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?” But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?” Exodus 17:1-3 The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim,^a but there was no water for the people to drink. So they quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses replied, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?” But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?” Exodus 17:4-7 Then Moses cried out to the LORD, “What am I to do with these people? They are

^a Means “refreshments” or “supports.”

		almost ready to stone me.” The LORD answered Moses, “Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?” Exodus 17:8-10 The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.” So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. Deuteronomy 25:17-19 Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and cut off all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God. When the LORD your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land he is giving you to possess as an inheritance, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget!
12	They left Rephidim and camped in the Desert of Sinai.	Exodus 18:5-6 Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, together with Moses’ sons and wife, came to him in the desert, where he was camped near the mountain of God. Jethro had sent word to him, “I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons.” Exodus 19:1-2 In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt--on the very day--they came to the Desert of Sinai. After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

Advancing to take the land – unbelief and failure

13	They left the Desert of Sinai <i>(and went to Taberah before going to Kibroth Hattaavah the next camp mentioned in Numbers 33)</i>	Numbers 9:1-5 The LORD spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the first month of the second year after they came out of Egypt. He said, “Have the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time. Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with all its rules and regulations.” So Moses told the Israelites to celebrate the Passover, and they did so in the Desert of Sinai at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. The Israelites did everything just as the LORD commanded Moses. Numbers 1:1-2 The LORD spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting in the Desert of Sinai on the first day of the second month of the second year after the Israelites came out of Egypt. He said: “Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one. Deuteronomy 1:6-8 The LORD our God said to us at Horeb, “You have stayed long enough at this mountain. Break camp and advance into the hill country of the Amorites; go to all the neighboring peoples in the Arabah, in the mountains, in the western foothills, in the Negev and along the coast, to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the Euphrates. See, I have given you this land. Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore he would give to your fathers--to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob--and to their descendants after them.” Deuteronomy 1:18 And at that time I told you everything you were to do. Then, as the LORD our God commanded us, we set out from Horeb Numbers 10:11-12 On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle of the Testimony. Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place Numbers 10:33-36 So they set out from the mountain of the LORD and traveled for three days. The ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them during those three days to find them a place to rest. The cloud of the LORD was over them by day when they set out from the camp. Whenever the ark set out, Moses said, “Rise up, O LORD! May your enemies be scattered; may your foes flee before you.” Whenever it came to rest, he said, “Return, O LORD, to the countless thousands of Israel.”
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		Numbers 11:1-3 Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. When the people cried out to Moses, he prayed to the LORD and the fire died down. So that place was called Taberah, because fire from the LORD had burned among them.
14	and camped at Kibroth Hattaavah.	Numbers 11:24-35 So Moses went out and told the people what the LORD had said. He brought together seventy of their elders and had them stand around the Tent. Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again. However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp. They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the Tent. Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp. A young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.” Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses’ aide since youth, spoke up and said, “Moses, my lord, stop them!” But Moses replied, “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put his Spirit on them!” Then Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp. Now a wind went out from the LORD and drove quail in from the sea. It brought them down all around the camp to about three feet above the ground,^a as far as a day’s walk in any direction. All that day and night and all the next day the people went out and gathered quail. No one gathered less than ten homers. Then they spread them out all around the camp. But while the meat was still between their teeth and before it could be consumed, the anger of the LORD burned against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague. Therefore the place was named Kibroth Hattaavah,^b because there they buried the people who had craved other food. From Kibroth Hattaavah the people traveled to Hazeroth and stayed there.
15	They left Kibroth Hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth.	Numbers 10:13-14 to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran. They set out, this first time, at the LORD’s command through Moses. The divisions of the camp of Judah went first, under their standard. Nahshon son of Amminadab was in command. Numbers 12:15-16 So Miriam was confined outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not move on till she was brought back. After that, the people left Hazeroth and encamped in the Desert of Paran. Deuteronomy 1:19 and went toward the hill country of the Amorites through all that vast and dreadful desert that you have seen, and so we reached Kadesh Barnea.
16	<i>For some reason Kadesh Barnea is not enumerated in the account of Numbers 33.</i>	Numbers 10:13-14 to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran. Numbers 13:1-3 The LORD said to Moses, “Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders.” So at the LORD’s command Moses sent them out from the Desert of Paran. All of them were leaders of the Israelites. Numbers 13:17-26 When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, “Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or fortified? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees on it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land.” (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.) So they went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin as far as Rehob,^c toward Lebo Hamath.^d They went up through the Negev^e and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, lived.

^a This is probably to be interpreted that they were so exhausted they could not get above three feet above the ground. Since it is probable that they were located in the Wadi Rum, surrounded by mountains, it meant that they birds could not spread out, and were thus heavily concentrated. It is also worth noting that this provision of the quail took place almost exactly a year after the Lord’s provision of quail just the other side of Aqaba. It was early spring. Perhaps this was along the migration flight path to North Central Asia from Africa.

^b Kibroth-hattaavah means “the graves of the longing or of lust,”

^c Part of the inheritance of Asher in for Northwestern Israel.

^d Lebo Hamath was a place in near Mt. Hermon that later formed part of the northeastern border of Israel.

^e There is no doubt that the Negev is the desert south of Judah between the hill country and the Gulf of Aqaba.

	(Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) When they reached the Valley of Eshcol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs. That place was called the Valley of Eshcol because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there. At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land. They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh^a in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land. Numbers 13:31- 14:4 But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.” That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.” Numbers 14:25 Since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea. Numbers 14:40-45 Early the next morning they went up toward the high hill country.^b “We have sinned,” they said. “We will go up to the place the LORD promised.” But Moses said, “Why are you disobeying the LORD’s command? This will not succeed! Do not go up, because the LORD is not with you. You will be defeated by your enemies, for the Amalekites and Canaanites will face you there. Because you have turned away from the LORD, he will not be with you and you will fall by the sword.” Nevertheless, in their presumption they went up toward the high hill country, though neither Moses nor the ark of the LORD’s covenant moved from the camp. Then the Amalekites and Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and attacked them and beat them down all the way to Hormah.^c Deuteeronomy 1:19-46 Then, as the LORD our God commanded us, we set out from Horeb and went toward the hill country of the Amorites through all that vast and dreadful desert that you have seen, and so we reached Kadesh Barnea. Then I said to you, “You have reached the hill country of the Amorites, which the LORD our God is giving us. See, the LORD your God has given you the land. Go up and take possession of it as the LORD, the God of your fathers, told you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.” Then all of you came to me and said, “Let us send men ahead to spy out the land for us and bring back a report about the route we are to take and the towns we will come to.” The idea seemed good to me; so I selected twelve of you, one man from each tribe. They left and went up into the hill country, and came to the Valley of Eshcol and explored it. Taking with them some of the fruit of the land, they brought it down to us and reported, “It is a good land that the LORD our God is giving us.” But you were unwilling to go up; you rebelled against the command of the LORD your God. You grumbled in your tents and said, “The LORD hates us; so he brought us out of Egypt to deliver us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us. Where can we go? Our brothers have made us lose heart. They say, ‘The people are stronger and taller than we are; the cities are large, with walls up to the sky. We even saw the Anakites there.’” Then I said to you, “Do not be terrified; do not be afraid of them. The LORD your God, who is going before you, will fight for you, as he did for you in Egypt, before your very eyes, and in the desert. There you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place.” In spite of this, you did not trust in the LORD your God, who went ahead of you on your journey, in fire by night and in a cloud by day, to search out places for you to camp and to show you the way you should go. When the LORD heard what you said, he was angry and solemnly swore: “Not a man of this evil generation shall see the good land I swore to give your forefathers, except Caleb son of Jephunneh. He will see it, and I will
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^a Kadesh means “sanctuary” or “holy place.” There are two places called Kadesh in the journeys of Moses and the Israelites. Here, in this verse, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Paran, and in Numbers 20:1, 39 years later, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Zin. It was probably called Kadesh because that was where the Tabernacle of God was located.

^b That is, through the Negev, to the land of the Canaanites, around Hebron.

^c Hormah means “devoted.” The place name came from the incidents of Numbers 21:3 some 38 years later.

		give him and his descendants the land he set his feet on, because he followed the LORD wholeheartedly.” Because of you the LORD became angry with me also and said, “You shall not enter it, either. But your assistant, Joshua son of Nun, will enter it. Encourage him, because he will lead Israel to inherit it. And the little ones that you said would be taken captive, your children who do not yet know good from bad--they will enter the land. I will give it to them and they will take possession of it. But as for you, turn around and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea. “Then you replied, “We have sinned against the LORD. We will go up and fight, as the LORD our God commanded us.” So every one of you put on his weapons, thinking it easy to go up into the hill country. But the LORD said to me, “Tell them, ‘Do not go up and fight, because I will not be with you. You will be defeated by your enemies.’” So I told you, but you would not listen. You rebelled against the LORD’s command and in your arrogance you marched up into the hill country. The Amorites who lived in those hills came out against you; they chased you like a swarm of bees and beat you down from Seir all the way to Hormah. You came back and wept before the LORD, but he paid no attention to your weeping and turned a deaf ear to you. And so you stayed in Kadesh many days--all the time you spent there. Numbers 14:25 ---- set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea. (An Nafud means “the desert” in Arabic. I believe this was the desert they wandered in for 38 years. Deuteronomy 2:1a Then we turned back and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea, as the LORD had directed me.
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Wandering in the desert for 38 years

17	They left Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir.
18	They left Rithmah and camped at Rimmon Perez.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. <i>(This last sentence is speaking of 38 years of the Exodus after Sinai)</i> – the desert.
19	They left Rimmon Perez and camped at Libnah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
20	They left Libnah and camped at Rissah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
21	They left Rissah and camped at Kehelathah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
22	They left Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
23	They left Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
24	They left Haradah and camped at Makheloth.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
25	They left Makheloth and camped at Tahath.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
26	They left Tahath and camped at Terah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
27	They left Terah and camped at Mithcah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
28	They left Mithcah and camped at Hashmonah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
29	They left Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
30	They left Moseroth and camped at Bene Jaakan.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
31	They left Bene Jaakan and camped at Hor Haggidgad.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
32	They left Hor Haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.
33	They left Jotbathah and camped at Abironah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. – the desert.

From Ezion Geber to the Border of Moab

34	They left Abronah and camped at Ezion Geber.	Deuteronomy 2:1 ^b For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. The head of the Red Sea – Gulf of Aquaba.
35	They left Ezion Geber and camped at Kadesh, in the Desert of Zin.	Numbers 20:1-3 ^a In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. ^a There Miriam died and was buried. Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. They quarreled with Moses and said, “If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the LORD!
36	They left Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the border of Edom. At the LORD’s command Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor, where he died on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year after the Israelites came out of Egypt. Aaron was a hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor. The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev of Canaan, heard that the Israelites were coming.	Numbers 20:22-29 The whole Israelite community set out from Kadesh and came to Mount Hor. At Mount Hor, near the border of Edom, the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Aaron will be gathered to his people. He will not enter the land I give the Israelites, because both of you rebelled against my command at the waters of Meribah. Get Aaron and his son Eleazar and take them up Mount Hor. Remove Aaron’s garments and put them on his son Eleazar, for Aaron will be gathered to his people; he will die there.” Moses did as the LORD commanded: They went up Mount Hor in the sight of the whole community. Moses removed Aaron’s garments and put them on his son Eleazar. And Aaron died there on top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain, and when the whole community learned that Aaron had died, the entire house of Israel mourned for him thirty days. Numbers 21:1-4 When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming along the road to Atharim, he attacked the Israelites and captured some of them. Then Israel made this vow to the LORD: “If you will deliver these people into our hands, we will totally destroy their cities.” The LORD listened to Israel’s plea and gave the Canaanites over to them. They completely destroyed them and their towns; so the place was named Hormah. ^b They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. Judges 11:15-18 “This is what Jephthah says: Israel did not take the land of Moab or the land of the Ammonites. But when they came up out of Egypt, Israel went through the desert to the Red Sea and on to Kadesh. Then Israel sent messengers to the king of Edom, saying, ‘Give us permission to go through your country,’ but the king of Edom would not listen. They sent also to the king of Moab, and he refused. So Israel stayed at Kadesh. “Next they traveled through the desert, skirted the lands of Edom and Moab, passed along the eastern side of the country of Moab, and camped on the other side of the Arnon. They did not enter the territory of Moab, for the Arnon was its border.
37	They left Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah.	Deuteronomy 2:1 Then we turned back and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea, as the LORD had directed me. For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir. <i>(This last sentence is speaking of the whole Exodus)</i>
38	They left Zalmonah and camped at Punon.	Deuteronomy 2:1 Then we turned back and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea, as the LORD had directed me. For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir.
39	They left Punon and camped at Oboth.	Deuteronomy 2:2-4 Then the LORD said to me, “You have made your way around this hill country long enough; now turn north. Give the people these orders: ‘You are about to pass through the territory of your brothers the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. They will be afraid of you, but be very careful. Deuteronomy 2:8 So we went on past our brothers the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. We turned from the plains road, which comes up from Elath and Ezion Geber, and traveled along the desert road of Moab. Numbers 21:4a –10 But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!” Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, “We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. The LORD said to

^a Kadesh means “sanctuary” or “holy place.” There are two places called Kadesh in the journeys of Moses and the Israelites. Here, in this verse, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Zin. In Numbers 13:26, some 39 years earlier, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. It was probably called Kadesh because that was where the Tabernacle of God was located.

^b Hormah means “devoted,” evidently so called because the Israelites had dedicated the city to total destruction. The site of the end of the rout the Israelites had suffered some 38 years earlier (Numbers 14:45).

		Moses, “Make a snake and put it up on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live.” So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived. The Israelites moved on and camped at Oboth.
40	They left Oboth and camped at Iye Abarim, on the border of Moab.	Numbers 21:11 Then they set out from Oboth and camped in Iye Abarim, in the desert that faces Moab toward the sunrise. <i>(Is it the desert that is toward the sunrise from Moab or vice versa. The former from everything else we know)</i> There are some who hold that Israel advanced on the land from the Arabah and turned up the Zered Valley here to go around the back side of Moab. However, if they had they would have encountered opposition from the Amalekites and Canaanites before this point. Further more the Lord had told Moses to go south from Mt. Hor toward the Red Sea and around Edom. This could not have put them back in the Arabah.
41	They left Iyim and camped at Dibon Gad.	Numbers 21:12 From there they moved on and camped in the Zered Valley. Jeremiah 48:21 “Judgment has come to the plateau-- to Dibon, Nebo and Beth Diblathaim.”
42	They left Dibon Gad and camped at Almon Diblathaim.	Numbers 21:13 They set out from there and camped alongside the Arnon, which is in the desert extending into Amorite territory. The Arnon is the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. Jeremiah 48:21 “Judgment has come to the plateau-- to Dibon, Nebo and Beth Diblathaim.”
43		Numbers 21:16-18 From there they continued on to Beer, the well where the LORD said to Moses, “Gather the people together and I will give them water.” Then Israel sang this song: “Spring up, O well! Sing about it, about the well that the princes dug, that the nobles of the people sank-- the nobles with scepters and staffs.” Then they went from the desert to Mattanah,
44		Numbers 21:18b Then they went from the desert to Mattanah, Jeremiah 48:21 “Judgment has come to the plateau-- to Dibon, Nebo and Beth Diblathaim.”
45		Numbers 21:19a from Mattanah to Nahaliel,
46		Numbers 21:19b from Nahaliel to Bamoth,
47	They left Almon Diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim, near Nebo. <i>(Nebo is north of the Arnon)</i>	Numbers 21:20 and from Bamoth to the valley in Moab where the top of Pisgah overlooks the wasteland. Numbers 21:21-35 Israel sent messengers to say to Sihon king of the Amorites: “Let us pass through your country. We will not turn aside into any field or vineyard, or drink water from any well. We will travel along the king’s highway until we have passed through your territory.” But Sihon would not let Israel pass through his territory. He mustered his entire army and marched out into the desert against Israel. When he reached Jahaz, he fought with Israel. Israel, however, put him to the sword and took over his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, but only as far as the Ammonites, because their border was fortified. Israel captured all the cities of the Amorites and occupied them, including Heshbon and all its surrounding settlements. Heshbon was the city of Sihon king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab and had taken from him all his land as far as the Arnon. That is why the poets say: “Come to Heshbon and let it be rebuilt; let Sihon’s city be restored. “Fire went out from Heshbon, a blaze from the city of Sihon. It consumed Ar of Moab, the citizens of Arnon’s heights. Woe to you, O Moab! You are destroyed, O people of Chemosh! He has given up his sons as fugitives and his daughters as captives to Sihon king of the Amorites. “But we have overthrown them; Heshbon is destroyed all the way to Dibon. We have demolished them as far as Nophah, which extends to Medeba.” So Israel settled in the land of the Amorites. After Moses had sent spies to Jazer, the Israelites captured its surrounding settlements and drove out the Amorites who were there. Then they turned and went up along the road toward Bashan, and Og king of Bashan and his whole army marched out to meet them in battle at Edrei. The LORD said to Moses, “Do not be afraid of him, for I have handed him over to you, with his whole army and his land. Do to him what you did to Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon.” So they struck him down, together with his sons and his whole army, leaving them no survivors. And they took possession of his land. Judges 11:19-22 “Then Israel sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, who ruled in Heshbon, and said to him, ‘Let us pass through your country to our own place.’ Sihon, however, did not trust Israel to pass through his territory. He mustered all his men and encamped at Jahaz and fought with Israel. “Then the LORD, the God of Israel, gave Sihon and all his men into Israel’s hands, and they defeated them. Israel took over all the land of the Amorites who lived in that

		country, capturing all of it from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the desert to the Jordan.
48	They left the mountains of Abarim and camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho. There on the plains of Moab they camped along the Jordan from Beth Jeshimoth to <u>Abel Shittim</u>. On the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho the LORD said to Moses, “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you.	Numbers 22:1 Then the Israelites traveled to the plains of Moab and camped along the Jordan across from Jericho. It was while they were here that Balaam prophesied about the Israelites from the mountains overlooking the Arabah (Numbers 22-24). Balaam couldn’t prophecy against the Israelites, but as he departed for home, he evidently stopped among the Midianites and advised them to corrupt the Israelites. Numbers 25:1-9 While Israel was staying in Shittim, the men began to indulge in sexual immorality with Moabite women, who invited them to the sacrifices to their gods. The people ate and bowed down before these gods. So Israel joined in worshiping the Baal of Peor. And the LORD’s anger burned against them. The LORD said to Moses, “Take all the leaders of these people, kill them and expose them in broad daylight before the LORD, so that the LORD’s fierce anger may turn away from Israel.” So Moses said to Israel’s judges, “Each of you must put to death those of your men who have joined in worshiping the Baal of Peor.” Then an Israelite man brought to his family a Midianite woman right before the eyes of Moses and the whole assembly of Israel while they were weeping at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. When Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, saw this, he left the assembly, took a spear in his hand and followed the Israelite into the tent. He drove the spear through both of them--through the Israelite and into the woman’s body. Then the plague against the Israelites was stopped; but those who died in the plague numbered 24,000. Numbers 31:1-16 The LORD said to Moses, “Take vengeance on the Midianites for the Israelites. After that, you will be gathered to your people.” So Moses said to the people, “Arm some of your men to go to war against the Midianites and to carry out the LORD’s vengeance on them. Send into battle a thousand men from each of the tribes of Israel.” So twelve thousand men armed for battle, a thousand from each tribe, were supplied from the clans of Israel. Moses sent them into battle, a thousand from each tribe, along with Phinehas son of Eleazar, the priest, who took with him articles from the sanctuary and the trumpets for signaling. They fought against Midian, as the LORD commanded Moses, and killed every man. Among their victims were Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur and Reba--the five kings of Midian. They also killed Balaam son of Beor with the sword. The Israelites captured the Midianite women and children and took all the Midianite herds, flocks and goods as plunder. They burned all the towns where the Midianites had settled, as well as all their camps. They took all the plunder and spoils, including the people and animals, and brought the captives, spoils and plunder to Moses and Eleazar the priest and the Israelite assembly at their camp on the plains of Moab, by the Jordan across from Jericho. Moses, Eleazar the priest and all the leaders of the community went to meet them outside the camp. Moses was angry with the officers of the army--the commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds--who returned from the battle. “Have you allowed all the women to live?” he asked them. “They were the ones who followed Balaam’s advice and were the means of turning the Israelites away from the LORD in what happened at Peor, so that a plague struck the LORD’s people. 2 Chronicles 20:10 “But now here are men from Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, whose territory you would not allow Israel to invade when they came from Egypt; so they turned away from them and did not destroy them. Deuteronomy 32:48-52 On that same day the LORD told Moses, “Go up into the Abarim Range to Mount Nebo in Moab, across from Jericho, and view Canaan, the land I am giving the Israelites as their own possession. There on the mountain that you have climbed you will die and be gathered to your people, just as your brother Aaron died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people. This is because both of you broke faith with me in the presence of the Israelites at the waters of Meribah Kadesh in the Desert of Zin and because you did not uphold my holiness among the Israelites. Therefore, you will see the land only from a distance; you will not enter the land I am giving to the people of Israel.”
49		Joshua 3:1 Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and went to the Jordan, where they camped before crossing over. Joshua 4:19-20 On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho. And Joshua set up at Gilgal the twelve stones they had taken out of the Jordan.

The First Stage – Egypt to Sinai:

Numbers 33:3-15 The Israelites set out from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Passover. They marched out boldly in full view of all the Egyptians, who were burying all their firstborn, whom the LORD had struck down among them; for the LORD had brought judgment on their gods. The Israelites left Rameses and camped at Succoth. They left Succoth and camped at Etham,^a on the edge of the desert. They left Etham, turned back to Pi Hahiroth,^b to the east of Baal Zephon,^c and camped near Migdol.^d They left Pi Hahiroth and passed through the sea into the desert, and when they had traveled for three days in the Desert of Etham, they camped at Marah. They left Marah and went to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there. They left Elim and camped by the Red Sea. They left the Red Sea and camped in the Desert of Sin. They left the Desert of Sin and camped at Dophkah.^e They left Dophkah and camped at Alush.^f They left Alush and camped at Rephidim,^g where there was no water for the people to drink. They left Rephidim and camped in the Desert of Sinai.

The Second Stage –after a year to Kedesh Barnea to await the spies:

Numbers 33:16-17 They left the Desert of Sinai and camped at Kibroth Hattaavah. They left Kibroth Hattaavah and camped at Hazeroth.^h

The Third Stage –from Kedesh Barnea to Kedesh Barnea - 38 Years:

Numbers 33:18-36 They left Hazeroth and camped at Rithmah.ⁱ They left Rithmah and camped at Rimmon Perez.^j They left Rimmon Perez and camped at Libnah.^k They left Libnah and camped at Rissah.^l They left Rissah and camped at Kehelathah.^m They left Kehelathah and camped at Mount Shepher.ⁿ They left Mount Shepher and camped at Haradah.^o They left Haradah and camped at Makheloth.^p They left Makheloth and camped at Tahath.^q They left Tahath and camped at Terah.^r They left Terah and camped at Mithcah.^s They left Mithcah and camped at Hashmonah.^t They left Hashmonah and camped at Moseroth.^u They left Moseroth and camped at Bene Jaakan.^v They left Bene Jaakan and camped at Hor Haggidgad.^w They left Hor Haggidgad and camped at Jotbathah.^x They left Jotbathah and camped at Abronah.^y They left Abronah and camped at Ezion Geber.^z They left Ezion Geber and camped at Kadesh, in the Desert of Zin.

The Fourth Stage –from Kedesh Barnea to the Plains of Moab:

Numbers 33:37-52 They left Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the border of Edom. At the LORD's command Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor, where he died on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year after the Israelites came out of Egypt. Aaron was a hundred and twenty-three years old when he died on Mount Hor. The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev of Canaan, heard that the Israelites were coming. They left Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah.^{aa} They left Zalmonah and camped at Punon.^{bb} They left Punon and camped at Oboth.^{cc} They left Oboth and camped at Iye Abarim,^{dd} on the border of Moab. They left Iyim^{ee} and

^a Means "fortress."

^b Pi-hahiroth in the original is variously conjectured to mean "mouth of the canals," "place where the reeds grow" or "house of the Goddess." LXX. and Coptic read "farmstead."

^c Baal Zephon means Baal of the north. As most Altars to Baal were on hilltops, this was probably in the hills west of Pi Hahiroth.

^d Migdol means "watchtower." Perhaps an ancient watchtower and/or lighthouse guarding the approaches to the northern end of the Red Sea.

^e Means "a knocking."

^f Means "mingling together."

^g Means "supports, refreshments, rest."

^h It was after they left Hazeroth that the Israelites went back to the Desert of Paran and awaited the report of the spies. There they rebelled and then tried to invade without the support of the Lord with disastrous consequences (Numbers 14). This stop is left out of the itinerary.

ⁱ Rithmah is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "valley of broombushes."

^j Rimmon Perez is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "breach of pomegranates."

^k There is a Libnah mentioned in Joshua's conquest of the land, but is not likely this one. Libnah means "whiteness" likely describing the desert sands.

^l Rissah is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "watering," "distillation" or "dew."

^m Kehelathah is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "assembly."

ⁿ Mount Shepher is not mentioned anywhere else. Shepher means "beauty."

^o Haradah is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "fright" or "fear."

^p Makheloth is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "assembly."

^q Tahath is not mentioned anywhere else. Its meaning may be "going down."

^r Terah is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "wanderer." It was also the name of Abraham's father.

^s Mithcah is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "sweetness."

^t Hashmonah is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "fatness."

^u Moseroth is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "bonds."

^v Bene Jakan as a location is not mentioned anywhere else. However since it means "sons of Jakan," the mention of the Jakanites in Deuteronomy 10:6 certainly refers to the same place.

^w Hor Haggidgad is not mentioned anywhere else. However in Deuteronomy 10:6 Gudgodah is listed as the location prior to Jotbathah. Because of the similarity of the consonants it is almost certainly the same place. The meaning of both Haggidgad and Gudgodah is uncertain.

^x Jotbathah is not mentioned anywhere except in Deuteronomy 10:6. The meaning is uncertain.

^y Abronah is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "crossing or ford."

^z Ezion Geber is well established as being at the head of the present day Gulf of Aqaba.

^{aa} Zalmonah is not mentioned anywhere else. It means "dark, shady."

^{bb} Pinon or Punon. The name of one of the chiefs of Edom. Not mentioned in Numbers 21.

^{cc} Oboth means "bottles." Mentioned in Numbers 21:10-11.

^{dd} Iye Abarim. Abarim which means "regions beyond" is the name of the mountain of Moab of which Mt. Nebo was a part. Iye Abarim may mean something like foothills of Abarim.

^{ee} Evidently a shortened form of Iye Abarim.

camped at Dibon Gad.^a They left Dibon Gad and camped at Almon Diblathaim.^b They left Almon Diblathaim and camped in the mountains of Abarim, near Nebo.^c They left the mountains of Abarim and camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho. There on the plains of Moab they camped along the Jordan from Beth Jeshimoth to^d Abel Shittim.^e On the plains of Moab by the Jordan across from Jericho the LORD said to Moses, “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you.’”

Details of the Forty Years Journey.

The First Stage:

Exodus 12:37-38 The Israelites journeyed from Rameses^f to Succoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. Many other people went up with them, as well as large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds.

Exodus 13:17-18 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, “If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.” So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea.

Exodus 13:20-22 After leaving Succoth they camped at Etham^g on the edge of the desert. By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people.

Exodus 14:1-4 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Tell the Israelites to turn back and encamp near Pi Hahiroth^h, between Migdolⁱ and the sea. They are to encamp by the sea, directly opposite Baal Zephon. Pharaoh will think, ‘The Israelites are wandering around the land in confusion, hemmed in by the desert.’ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will pursue them. But I will gain glory for myself through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.” So the Israelites did this.

Exodus 14:5-10 When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his officials changed their minds about them and said, “What have we done? We have let the Israelites go and have lost their services!” So he had his chariot made ready and took his army with him. He took six hundred of the best chariots, along with all the other chariots of Egypt, with officers over all of them. The LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh king of Egypt, so that he pursued the Israelites, who were marching out boldly. The Egyptians--all Pharaoh’s horses and chariots, horsemen and troops--pursued the Israelites and overtook them as they camped by the sea near Pi Hahiroth, opposite Baal Zephon. As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD.

Exodus 14:11-18 They said to Moses, “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that you brought us to the desert to die? What have you done to us by bringing us out of Egypt? Didn’t we say to you in Egypt, ‘Leave us alone; let us serve the Egyptians’? It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!” Moses answered the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.” Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground. I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them. And I will gain glory through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. The Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I gain glory through Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen.”

Exodus 14:19-29 Then the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel’s army, withdrew and went behind them. The pillar of cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them, coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel. Throughout the night the cloud brought darkness to the one side and light^j to the other side; so neither went near the other all night long. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night^k the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall^l of water on their right and on their left. The

^a Dibon means “pinning, wasting.” A city in Moab (Numbers 21:30); called also Dibon Gad because it was settled by Gad after the conquest. See note below.

^b Same as Beth Diblathaim, means “house of two figs,” A city on the plateau of Moab. **Jeremiah 48:21** “Judgment has come to the plateau-- to Dibon, Nebo and Beth Diblathaim.”

^c Nebo means “proclaimer; prophet.”

^d Beth-jeshimoth means “house of wastes, or deserts” According to Ezekiel 25:9 is on the border of Moab.

^e Abel-shittim means “meadow of the acacias.” It is frequently called simply “Shittim” (Num. 25:1; Josh. 2:1; Micah 6:5), a place on the east of Jordan, in the plain of Moab, nearly opposite Jericho.

^f Rameses was one of the store cities of Pharaoh. **Exodus 1:11** So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor, and they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh.

^g Means “fortress.”

^h Pi-hahiroth means “place where the reeds grow.” LXX. and Coptic read “farmstead.”

ⁱ Migdol means “watchtower.” Perhaps an ancient watchtower and/or lighthouse guarding the approaches to the northern end of the Red Sea.

^j A potent figure of the effect of God’s revelation on mankind. To those who believe it is light, to those who do not it is deep darkness (Matthew 6:22-23).

^k It has been suggested that this occurred on the 18th of Nisan in figurative anticipation of the Lord’s delivering mankind from death by His Resurrection some 1500 years later on that date.

^l Psalms 78:13

Egyptians pursued them, and all Pharaoh's horses and chariots and horsemen followed them into the sea. During the last watch of the night the LORD looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. He made the wheels of their chariots come off so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, "Let's get away from the Israelites! The LORD is fighting for them against Egypt." Then the LORD said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen." Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and at daybreak the sea went back to its place. The Egyptians were fleeing toward it, and the LORD swept them into the sea. The water flowed back and covered the chariots and horsemen--the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea. Not one of them survived. But the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.

Exodus 15:8 By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The surging waters stood firm like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.

Exodus 15:22-26 Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea and they went into the Desert of Shur.^a For three days they traveled in the desert without finding water. When they came to Marah,^b they could not drink its water because it was bitter. (That is why the place is called Marah.) So the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What are we to drink?" Then Moses cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the LORD made a decree and a law for them, and there he tested them. He said, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you."

Exodus 15:27 Then they came to Elim,^c where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and they camped there near the water.

Exodus 16:1 The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt.

Exodus 16:2-36 In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days." So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?" Moses also said, "You will know that it was the LORD when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD." Then Moses told Aaron, "Say to the entire Israelite community, 'Come before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.'" While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud. The LORD said to Moses, "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'" That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat. This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Each one is to gather as much as he needs. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.'" The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. And when they measured it by the omer, he who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little. Each one gathered as much as he needed. Then Moses said to them, "No one is to keep any of it until morning." However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them. Each morning everyone gathered as much as he needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away. On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much--two omers for each person--and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses. He said to them, "This is what the LORD commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a day of rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.'" So they saved it until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not stink or get maggots in it. "Eat it today," Moses said, "because today is a Sabbath to the LORD. You will not find any of it on the ground today. Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any." Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none. Then the LORD said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions? Bear in mind that the LORD has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where he is on the seventh day; no one is to go out." So the people rested on the seventh day. The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey. Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Take an omer of manna and keep it for the generations to come, so they can see the bread I gave you to eat in the desert when I brought you out of Egypt.'" So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put an omer of manna in it. Then place it before the LORD to be kept for the generations to come." As the LORD commanded Moses, Aaron put the manna in front of the Testimony, that it might be kept. The

^a Means "wall."

^b Marah means bitterness in Hebrew.

^c Elim means "trees" or "oaks."

Israelites ate manna forty years, until they came to a land that was settled; they ate manna until they reached the border of Canaan. (An omer is one tenth of an ephah.)

Exodus 17:1-3 The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, traveling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim,^a but there was no water for the people to drink. So they quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.” Moses replied, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?” But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?”

Exodus 17:4-7 Then Moses cried out to the LORD, “What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me.” The LORD answered Moses, “Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they tested the LORD saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

Exodus 17:8-10 The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. Moses said to Joshua, “Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands.” So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill.

Deuteronomy 25:17-19 Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and cut off all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God. When the LORD your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land he is giving you to possess as an inheritance, you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget!

Exodus 18:5-6 Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, together with Moses’ sons and wife, came to him in the desert, where he was camped near the mountain of God. Jethro had sent word to him, “I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons.”

Exodus 19:1-2 In the third month after the Israelites left Egypt--on the very day--they came to the Desert of Sinai.^b After they set out from Rephidim, they entered the Desert of Sinai, and Israel camped there in the desert in front of the mountain.

The Second Stage:

Deuteronomy 1:6-8 The LORD our God said to us at Horeb, “You have stayed long enough at this mountain. Break camp and advance into the hill country of the Amorites; go to all the neighboring peoples in the Arabah, in the mountains, in the western foothills, in the Negev and along the coast, to the land of the Canaanites and to Lebanon, as far as the great river, the Euphrates. See, I have given you this land. Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore he would give to your fathers--to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob--and to their descendants after them.”

^a Means “refreshments” or “supports.”

^b This means that Israel had been travelling 90 days. If they travelled just five miles a day that would have carried them 450 miles. The precise location of this spot is the subject of some controversy. The traditional location is only 190 miles from where they were supposed to have started. Four hundred fifty miles could have carried them well into the Arabian peninsula, which is where I tend to believe the real Mount Sinai lies, and where I think Israel wandered for forty years. There they would be isolated from the currents of the political currents of the fertile crescent. Furthermore, there is much Biblical evidence that the Midianites, who lived in the region of Mt. Sinai/Horeb (Exodus 3:1), lived to the east of Kadesh Barnea, not the south as would be indicated by the mountain presently recognized as Mt. Sinai/Horeb.

The following scriptures seem to me support the idea that the real Mt. Sinai was in the Arabian peninsula.

The following verse seems to indicate that Midian was in closer proximity to Moab than Edom which lay to the south of Moab, precluding the idea that Midian lay to the south of Edom in Sinai.

Numbers 22:4-7 The Moabites said to the elders of Midian, “This horde is going to lick up everything around us, as an ox licks up the grass of the field.” So Balak son of Zippor, who was king of Moab at that time, sent messengers to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor, near the River, in his native land. Balak said: “A people has come out of Egypt; they cover the face of the land and have settled next to me. Now come and put a curse on these people, because they are too powerful for me. Perhaps then I will be able to defeat them and drive them out of the country. For I know that those you bless are blessed, and those you curse are cursed.” The elders of Moab and Midian left, taking with them the fee for divination.

The following verse seems to indicate that Midian lay to the east of Israel.

Judges 6:3 Whenever the Israelites planted their crops, the Midianites, Amalekites and other eastern peoples invaded the country.

The following description seems to indicate that Midian was at the eastern end of a line drawn from Egypt through Paran to Midian.

1 Kings 11:17-18 But Hadad, still only a boy, fled to Egypt with some Edomite officials who had served his father. They set out from Midian and went to Paran. Then taking men from Paran with them, they went to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave Hadad a house and land and provided him with food.

The following seems to indicate that Paran was between Sinai and Kadesh Barnea.

Deuteronomy 10:12 Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran.

The following indicates that Paran was west of the Jordan not south of it.

Deuteronomy 1:1-2 These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel in the desert east of the Jordan--that is, in the Arabah--opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazereth and Dizahab. (It takes eleven days to go from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea by the Mount Seir road.)

The following verse indicates that Teman and Paran were related. It is a well established fact that Teman is in the middle of the Arabian peninsula.

Habbakuk 3:3 God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran.

Teman --is mentioned with Dedan and Buz as a remote place. (Jeremiah 25:23) and as an oasis in the desert on the main trade route through Arabia (Isaiah 21:14). Aramaic stelae of the 5th century BC were found in the ruins of Taimae about 400 kilometers north of Medina in NW Arabia. The city is also named in (Babylonian) documents recording its occupation by Nabonidus (the successor of Nebuchadnezzar) during his exile. *Logos Bible Atlas*

Exodus 33:1 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Leave this place, you and the people you brought up out of Egypt, and go up to the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, saying, ‘I will give it to your descendants.’ I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites.

Deuteronomy 1:18-19 And at that time I told you everything you were to do. Then, as the LORD our God commanded us, we set out from Horeb and went toward the hill country of the Amorites through all that vast and dreadful desert that you have seen, and so we reached Kadesh Barnea.

Numbers 10:11-14 On the twentieth day of the second month of the second year, the cloud lifted from above the tabernacle of the Testimony. Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran. They set out, this first time, at the LORD’s command through Moses. The divisions of the camp of Judah went first, under their standard. Nahshon son of Amminadab was in command.

Numbers 10:33-36 So they set out from the mountain of the LORD and traveled for three days. The ark of the covenant of the LORD went before them during those three days to find them a place to rest. The cloud of the LORD was over them by day when they set out from the camp. Whenever the ark set out, Moses said, “Rise up, O LORD! May your enemies be scattered; may your foes flee before you.” Whenever it came to rest, he said, “Return, O LORD, to the countless thousands of Israel.”

Numbers 11:1-3 Now the people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Then fire from the LORD burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. When the people cried out to Moses, he prayed to the LORD and the fire died down. So that place was called Taberah, because fire from the LORD had burned among them.

Numbers 11:31-35 Now a wind went out from the LORD and drove quail in from the sea. It brought them down all around the camp to about three feet above the ground,^a as far as a day’s walk in any direction. All that day and night and all the next day the people went out and gathered quail. No one gathered less than ten homers. Then they spread them out all around the camp. But while the meat was still between their teeth and before it could be consumed, the anger of the LORD burned against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague. Therefore the place was named Kibroth Hattaavah,^b because there they buried the people who had craved other food. From Kibroth Hattaavah the people traveled to Hazeroth and stayed there.

Numbers 12:15-16 So Miriam was confined outside the camp for seven days, and the people did not move on till she was brought back. After that, the people left Hazeroth and encamped in the Desert of Paran.

Numbers 13:1-3 The LORD said to Moses, “Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders.” So at the LORD’s command Moses sent them out from the Desert of Paran. All of them were leaders of the Israelites.

Numbers 13:17-26 When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, “Go up through the Negev and on into the hill country. See what the land is like and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many. What kind of land do they live in? Is it good or bad? What kind of towns do they live in? Are they unwalled or fortified? How is the soil? Is it fertile or poor? Are there trees on it or not? Do your best to bring back some of the fruit of the land.” (It was the season for the first ripe grapes.) So they went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin as far as Rehob,^c toward Lebo Hamath.^d They went up through the Negev^e and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, lived. (Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.) When they reached the Valley of Eshcol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs. That place was called the Valley of Eshcol because of the cluster of grapes the Israelites cut off there. At the end of forty days they returned from exploring the land. They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh^f in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land.

Numbers 13:29 The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan.”

Numbers 13:31- 14:4 But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored. They said, “The land we explored devours those living in it. All the people we saw there are of great size. We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We

^a This is probably to be interpreted that they were so exhausted they could not get above three feet above the ground.

^b Kibroth-hattaavah means “the graves of the longing or of lust,”

^c Part of the inheritance of Asher in for Northwestern Israel.

^d Lebo Hamath was a place in near Mt. Hermon that later formed part of the northeastern border of Israel.

^e There is no doubt that the Negev is the desert south of Judah between the hill country and the Gulf of Aqaba.

^f Kadesh means “sanctuary” or “holy place.” There are two places called Kadesh in the journeys of Moses and the Israelites. Here, in this verse, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Paran, and in Numbers 20:1, 39 years later, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Zin. It was probably called Kadesh because that was where the Tabernacle of God was located.

seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.” That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, “If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! Why is the LORD bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn’t it be better for us to go back to Egypt?” And they said to each other, “We should choose a leader and go back to Egypt.”

Numbers 14:25 Since the Amalekites and Canaanites are living in the valleys, turn back tomorrow and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea.

Numbers 14:26-35 The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: “How long will this wicked community grumble against me? I have heard the complaints of these grumbling Israelites. So tell them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the LORD, I will do to you the very things I heard you say: In this desert your bodies will fall--every one of you twenty years old or more who was counted in the census and who has grumbled against me. Not one of you will enter the land I swore with uplifted hand to make your home, except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. As for your children that you said would be taken as plunder, I will bring them in to enjoy the land you have rejected. But you--your bodies will fall in this desert. Your children will be shepherds here for forty years, suffering for your unfaithfulness, until the last of your bodies lies in the desert. For forty years--one year for each of the forty days you explored the land--you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you.’ I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will surely do these things to this whole wicked community, which has banded together against me. They will meet their end in this desert; here they will die.”

Numbers 14:40-45 Early the next morning they went up toward the high hill country.^a “We have sinned,” they said. “We will go up to the place the LORD promised.” But Moses said, “Why are you disobeying the LORD’s command? This will not succeed! Do not go up, because the LORD is not with you. You will be defeated by your enemies, for the Amalekites and Canaanites will face you there. Because you have turned away from the LORD, he will not be with you and you will fall by the sword.” Nevertheless, in their presumption they went up toward the high hill country, though neither Moses nor the ark of the LORD’s covenant moved from the camp. Then the Amalekites and Canaanites who lived in that hill country came down and attacked them and beat them down all the way to Hormah.^b

The Third Stage:

Numbers 20:1-3 In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh.^c There Miriam died and was buried. Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. They quarreled with Moses and said, “If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the LORD!

Numbers 20:22-29 The whole Israelite community set out from Kadesh and came to Mount Hor. At Mount Hor, near the border of Edom, the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Aaron will be gathered to his people. He will not enter the land I give the Israelites, because both of you rebelled against my command at the waters of Meribah. Get Aaron and his son Eleazar and take them up Mount Hor. Remove Aaron’s garments and put them on his son Eleazar, for Aaron will be gathered to his people; he will die there.” Moses did as the LORD commanded: They went up Mount Hor in the sight of the whole community. Moses removed Aaron’s garments and put them on his son Eleazar. And Aaron died there on top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain, and when the whole community learned that Aaron had died, the entire house of Israel mourned for him thirty days.

Numbers 21:1-4 When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev, heard that Israel was coming along the road to Atharim, he attacked the Israelites and captured some of them. Then Israel made this vow to the LORD: “If you will deliver these people into our hands, we will totally destroy their cities.” The LORD listened to Israel’s plea and gave the Canaanites over to them. They completely destroyed them and their towns; so the place was named Hormah.^d They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom.

Deuteronomy 2:1 Then we turned back and set out toward the desert along the route to the Red Sea, as the LORD had directed me. For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir.

Location of Mount Hor

- 1) They left Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the border of Edom.
- 2) Mount Hor, near the border of Edom

^a That is, through the Negev, to the land of the Canaanites, around Hebron.

^b Hormah means “devoted.” The place name came from the incidents of Numbers 21:3 some 38 years later.

^c Kadesh means “sanctuary” or “holy place.” There are two places called Kadesh in the journeys of Moses and the Israelites. Here, in this verse, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Zin. In Numbers 13:26, some 39 years earlier, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. It was probably called Kadesh because that was where the Tabernacle of God was located.

^d Hormah means “devoted,” evidently so called because the Israelites had dedicated the city to total destruction. The site of the end of the rout the Israelites had suffered some 38 years earlier (Numbers 14:45).

- 3) The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negev of Canaan, heard that the Israelites were coming while they were at Mount Hor.
- 4) They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom
- 5) Deuteronomy 2:1 For a long time we made our way around the hill country of Seir.^a Then the LORD said to me, “You have made your way around this hill country long enough; now turn north.

Deuteronomy 10:6-9 (The Israelites traveled from the wells of the Jaakanites to Moserah.^b There Aaron died and was buried, and Eleazar his son succeeded him as priest. From there they traveled to Gudgodah^c and on to Jotbathah, a land with streams of water. At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister and to pronounce blessings in his name, as they still do today. That is why the Levites have no share or inheritance among their brothers; the LORD is their inheritance, as the LORD your God told them.)^d

Chronology

Numbers 20:1 In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh.^e There Miriam died and was buried.

Numbers 20:28-29 Moses removed Aaron’s garments and put them on his son Eleazar. And Aaron died there on top of the mountain. Then Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain, and when the whole community learned that Aaron had died, the entire house of Israel mourned for him thirty days.

Numbers 33:38 At the LORD’s command Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor, where he died on the first day of the fifth month of the fortieth year after the Israelites came out of Egypt.

Deuteronomy 1:1 These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel in the desert east of the Jordan--that is, in the Arabah^f plain --opposite Suph,^g between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth and Dizahab. ^{1:2} (It takes eleven days to go from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea by the Mount Seir^h road.) ^{1:3} In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses proclaimed to the Israelites all that the LORD had commanded him concerning them. ^{1:4} This was after he had defeated Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, and at Edrei had defeated Og king of Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth.

Deuteronomy 4:19 On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and camped at Gilgal on the eastern border of Jericho.

Pp. 88-90, Zondervan NIV Atlas of the Bible.

Although a considerable amount of geographical data is presented in connection with the Exodus and the trek to the land of Canaan, the exact identification of many places and regions mentioned remains unknown. The major reason for this is the lack of continuity among the populace of the desert-wilderness regions of the Sinai peninsula, the Negev, and parts of southern Transjordan. Without this continuity of population, the preservation of ancient place names is almost impossible. The other difficulty is that archaeologists have not discovered any artifactual remains that can be attributed to the Israelites in those regions through which they traveled. This, however, is somewhat expected, for a nomadic people, living in tents and using animal skins instead of pottery for containers, would leave few permanent remains behind. Thus scholars are divided in their opinions as to the location even of major landmarks such as the Red Sea and Mount Sinai. Har-El noted that there were nine different proposals for the location of the Red Sea or Reed Sea—including three lakes near the Mediterranean Sea, four lakes along the line of the present-day Suez Canal, as well as the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of Elath. He also counted twelve different candidates for Mount Sinai: five in the southern part of the peninsula, four in the north, one in the center, one in Midian (Saudi Arabia), and another in Edom (southern Transjordan). In spite of these uncertainties, a few suggestions can be made regarding the Exodus and wanderings. After leaving Rameses (Tell el-Dab'a), the Israelites journeyed to Succoth (possibly Tell el-Maskhuta in the Wadi Tumilat). It is well to note that for fear of their becoming discouraged because of war, "God" did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines" (Exod 13:17 NASB). This well-known route across northern Sinai from Sile to Gaza was the one Thutmose III and Amenhotep II had used so effectively on their frequent campaigns to Canaan, and it must have been well fortified by Egyptian troops. Thus a northern route for Exodus seems excluded. Since the Israelites were led by the "way of the wilderness to the Red Sea" (v. 18), it appears that they were heading southeast toward modern Suez. The location of Etham ("fort" in Egyptian), Migdol ("fort" in Semitic), Baal Zephon, and Pi Hahiroth are problematic. Har-El's suggestion

^a Translated compassed or circled.

^b Moserah probably refers to Moseroth in Numbers 33:30-31.

^c Gudgodah refers to Hor Haggidgad in Numbers 33:32-33.

^d This entire parenthesis has three mistakes and sounds like an ancient extrabiblical note. The mistakes are the location of Aaron’s death, and the spelling of Moseroth and Hor Haggidgad. In sum I question that this is part of the original autograph.

^e Kadesh means “sanctuary” or “holy place.” There are two places called Kadesh in the journeys of Moses and the Israelites. Here, in this verse, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Zin. In Numbers 13:26, some 39 years earlier, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. It was probably called Kadesh because that was where the Tabernacle of God was located.

^f Arabah means plain. There is an arabah in geographical usage which applies to the Jordan Valley between the sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea. This is not it.

^g Possibly related to “Waheb in Suphah and the ravines, the Arnon” from Numbers 21:14, although more likely related to the Red Sea (King James Version), as the Hebrew word **וְהַיָּם** is the same word used to describe the Red Sea as in Yam Suph (Sea of Reeds) or Yam Soph (Sea of Land’s End.) Both Suph and Soph appear as the same spelling **וְהַיָּם** in the ancient vowel-less Hebrew text. The Red Sea was certainly just to the south of where Moses spoke these words.

^h Mt. Seir is in Edom.

that Hahiroth refers to the low ground between Jebel Geneife and the Bitter Lakes is plausible but not certain. Etham and Migdol could be any of a number of Egyptian forts located near the present-day Suez Canal. On the next stage of their journey the Israelites crossed the Red Sea. Since the Hebrew text literally means the "Reed," many scholars look for a location in the lake/marsh areas that used to exist in the region through which the Suez Canal now passes. Har-El's suggestion for a location near the junction of the Great and Little Bitter Lakes is as plausible as any. According to nineteenth-century travelers, the water at that spot was not very deep, and they even mention that at times the depth of the water decreased when the wind shifted. It is interesting to note that according to the text the "Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind" (Exod 14:21). The location of Marah, where the water was bitter (15:23), and Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees (v. 27), depends on where one locates Mount Sinai. If Har-El's suggestion of Jebel Sin Bisher is accepted, then the identifications of Marah and Elim with Bir Mara ("bitter well" in Arabic) and Ayun Musa ("the spring of Moses") are plausible. If the more traditional site of Sinai at Jebel Musa is maintained, then identifications of Marah and Elim with Ein Hawwara and Gharandal are also possible. The identification of Mount Sinai (Horeb) with Jebel Musa ("Mount Moses") is based on Christian tradition dating back to the fourth century A.D., about 1,750 years after the event. There, during the Byzantine period (A.D. 324-640), the desert monastery of St. Catherine was established.

Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible

SINAI, MOUNT (𐤋𐤏𐤍𐤓; LXX Ε4<V; meaning uncertain though miry, clayey, shiny have been suggested; also 𐤋𐤏𐤍𐤓; LXX ΟΤΑ03;. The name of the sacred mountain before which Israel encamped and upon which Moses communicated with Yahweh. In the Bible, the name occurs almost exclusively in the Pentateuch.

1. Suggested identifications. The exact identification of this mountain is uncertain. Some evidence has been deduced in support of the identification of Mt. Sinai with one of a number of mountains in the vicinity of Kadesh-barnea. In a number of Biblical references Mt. Sinai is mentioned in strong connection with Seir, Edom, Paran and Teman (Deut 33:2; Judg 5:4, 5; Hab 3:3). All of these places are in the vicinity of Kadesh-barnea and imply that Mt. Sinai may have been there too. The fact that Moses requested Pharaoh to allow Israel a three days' journey into the wilderness is somewhat more in keeping with Kadesh-barnea as an intended destination than is the location of Mt. Sinai in the South of the Sinai Peninsula (Exod 3:18; 5:3; 8:27). However, even this location for the mountain would hardly allow the journey from Egypt to be made in three days. There is also the fact that Rephidim is associated with Meribah and the two together are associated with Mt. Horeb (Exod 17:1-7). Meribah is located in the area of Kadesh-barnea in Numbers 20:2-13 and a number of springs are known to be there. It may be remarked, however, that Meribah, from rîb meaning "to strive," "contend," "find fault," should prob. be understood as referring to an event (which occurred on more than one occasion, and in more than one location), rather than to a particular geographical location.

The fact that Deuteronomy 1:2 speaks of an eleven days' journey from Kadesh to Horeb would seem to militate against the identification of Mt. Sinai with a mountain in the vicinity of Kadesh as well. The reconstruction of the route of the Exodus is rendered well nigh impossible if this identification is assumed.

Some scholars in the 19th and 20th centuries have attempted to locate Sinai in NW Arabia in the ancient land of Midian. One reason given for this is that when Moses fled from Egypt he married into a Midianite family. That in itself, however, would not necessitate a return to Midianite territory following the Exodus, though it might have made it more convenient. Besides that, however, is the fact that the tribe into which Moses married, the Kenites, were prob. wandering smiths (see KENITES) and they may well have located at the traditional site of Sinai with its mines. It is also argued that the description of the events on the mountain with its "thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud. ..and a very loud trumpet blast. ..and the smoke. ..." (Exod 19:16), presupposes a mountain which experienced volcanic activity. The nearest mountains known to have been actively volcanic in ancient times are in Arabia, S of the head of the Gulf of Aqabah. The descriptive language may equally well have been drawn from weather phenomena, however. Alternatively, even if the language itself was drawn from volcanic phenomena, that does not necessitate actual volcanic activity at Mt. Sinai.

Another suggestion made esp. during the 19th cent. is that Mt. Sinai was to be identified with Jebel Serbal (6,730 ft.). Jebel Serbal is located some distance to the WEST of the traditional Sinai by the Wadi Feiran. Significantly, the city of Pharan (Feiran) was the seat of a bishopric in the 4th and 5th centuries and in the time of Justinian, orthodox monks moved from Jebel Serbal to the traditional site of Sinai (Ptolemy, V. xvii. 3). The Pilgrimage of Sylvia, edited in 1887 and describing the journey of Sylvia of Aquitaine between A.D. 385 and 388, seems to render this identification impossible, however. The account states that the "mount of God" was thirty-five Roman miles from Pharan. This is the actual distance from the oasis at Feiran to the traditional Sinai. Also, there is no wilderness at the foot of Jebel Serbal which would fit the description given of the plain of encampment in the Pentateuch.

2. The traditional identification. Since the 4th cent., the more or less continuous Christian tradition has been that Mt. Sinai is represented by what is now called Jebel Musa (mountain of Moses). This is located in the high mountains of the southern tip of the Sinai Peninsula. Various legends and traditions are associated with the site and a number of chapels and shrines have been built in the area. Catherine of Alexandria is said to have been carried by angels after her martyrdom, to the top of the mountain that now bears her name (8,536 ft.). This story dates from the 4th cent. The summit of Jebel Katarin is some two and a half m. SW of. Jebel Musa. By the 4th cent., communities of monks had retired to the region and were subjected to various massacres at the hands of the Saracens. One, Ammonius, of Canopus in Egypt made a pilgrimage to Mt Sinai in c. A.D. 373 evidently reaching it in eighteen days from Jerusalem. In A.D. 536, Mt Sinai, Raithou (on the coast of the Red Sea), and the church at Pharan are noted as being under the presbyter Theonos. On the NW slope of Jebel Musa, Constantine's mother, Helena, built a small church in the 4th cent. The present Monastery of St. Catherine, famous for the fact that Tischendorf found Codex Aleph there in 1859, was built on the same site and is traced back to Justinian in A.D. 527.

Approaching the region from the NORTH one may enter the valley of esh-Sheikh to the EAST of the Valley. of er-Raha or to the WEST. The latter is some two m. long and at its southeastern end opens into a plain about a m. wide at the foot of the steep cliffs of Ras es-Safsaf. Ras es-Safsaf is the NW peak (6,540 ft.) of a ridge which has Jebel Musa as its highest peak (7,363 ft.) two and a half m. to the SE. The plain of er-Raha may well have been the site of the encampment of Israel (Exod 19:1,2; Num 33:15).

To the SE of Jebel Musa is the Wady es-Sebayeh with its valley up to a m. wide and two and a half m. long. This valley is sometimes identified as the place of the encampment though the former is generally preferred. Christian tradition generally claims Ras es-Safsaf as the Biblical Horeb and Jebel Musa as Sinai.

Josephus describes Mt. Sinai in fearful terms as being "the highest of all mountains that are in that country, and is not only very difficult to be ascended by man, account of its vast altitude, but because the sharpness of its precipices also; nay, and it cannot be looked at without pain of eyes; and besides this, it was terrible and inaccessible, on account of the rumor passed about, that God dwelt there" (Antiquities. II. xii. 1; III. v. 1). From St. Catherine's monastery with its Chapel of the Burning Bush (Exod 3:2) the summit of Jebel Musa can be reached after a hard climb of one and a half hours. Part way up, a little spring is passed and said to have been the place where Moses tended Jethro's flock (Exod 2:15ff.); at 6,900 ft. is the Chapel of Elijah (1 Kings 19:8ff.). Ras es-Safsaf takes its name from the Arab. word for willow and is a reference to Moses' rod (cf. Exod 4:2). A large block of granite some eleven ft. high is said to be the rock from which Moses brought water (Num 20:8ff.). A hole in the rock is said to be the mold used for the golden calf (Exod 32) and the place where the earth swallowed up Korah and his followers is identified (Num 16).

3. Mount Sinai in the Bible. The Israelites reached Mt. Sinai in the third month after their departure from Egypt and camped at its foot where they could view the summit (Exod 19:1, 16, 18,20). Yahweh revealed Himself to Moses here and communicated the Ten Commandments and other laws to the people through him. God established His covenant with the people through Moses as mediator, and this

covenant has been remembered throughout Israel's history (e.g. Judg 5:5; Neh 9: 13; Ps 68:8, 17; Mal 4:4; Acts 7:30, 38). Elijah later visited Horeb in a time of particular discouragement and depression (1 Kings 19:4-8). In the allegory of Galatians 4: 24 ff., Mt. Sinai is representative of the bondage of the law in contrast to the Jerusalem above which is free.

BIBLIOGRAPHY. E. Robinson, Biblical Researches in Palestine, I (1841), 90-144; E. H. Palmer, The Desert of the Exodus (1871); W. M. F. Petrie, Researches in Sinai (1906); B. Rothenberg, God's Wilderness (1961); G. E. Wright, Biblical Archaeology (rev. ed. 1962), 60-66 and passim. See also the commentaries, esp. on Exodus.

H. G. ANDERSEN

Josephus on Mount Sinai

"NOW Moses, when he had obtained the favor of Jethro, for that was one of the names of Raguel, staid there and fed his flock; but some time afterward, taking his station at the mountain called Sinai, he drove his flocks thither to feed them. Now this is the highest of all the mountains thereabout, and the best for pasturage, the herbage being there good;" Flavius Josephus, THE ANTIQUITIES OF THE JEWS, BOOK II, CHAPTER 12, Paragraph 1.

"When he had said this, he ascended up to Mount Sinai, which is the highest of all the mountains that are in that country (9) and is not only very difficult to be ascended by men, on account of its vast altitude, but because of the sharpness of its precipices also; nay, indeed, it cannot be looked at without pain of the eyes; and besides this, it was terrible and inaccessible, on account of the rumor that passed about, that God dwelt there." Flavius Josephus, THE ANTIQUITIES OF THE JEWS, BOOK III, CHAPTER 5, Paragraph 1.

Salient points for disagreeing with some of the currently accepted routes.

- 1) There is no excuse for saying that the Israelites didn't cross the Red Sea as we know it. Because the words translated the Red Sea is literally in the original "Sea of Reeds," some say it was in fact just a shallow lake. However, the same words, "Sea of Reeds," are used to describe where the locusts were all blown by a west wind across Egypt (Exodus 10:19). This does not comport with a small lake. It is said that Solomon built trading vessels in "the Sea of Reeds" for trading (1 Kings 9:26). That is definitely not a small lake. Clearly, whether we call it the Red Sea, or the Sea of Reeds, it is the body of water between Arabia and Africa that we are talking about. The Pacific Ocean isn't so pacific either. Furthermore, the scriptures say "the water stood like wall on both sides," and the water was "congealed in the heart of the deep." This is no shallow lake bed which can be dried out by the force of a strong wind!
- 2) There can be no good explanation for locating the ancient Mt. Sinai where they have located it. The people of Israel were at least 2 to 3 million strong, with their herds besides. The order of their encampment in front of Sinai was on the square (Numbers 2:1-33). Three tribes each, north, south, east and west with the tabernacle in the middle. If each person with his belongings and livestock just took up a 15 foot square (225 square feet), it would take almost 25 square miles to handle the encampment. A look at a satellite photo of the area around the recognized Mt. Sinai shows you would have a hard time finding one square mile of camping ground much less 25.
- 3) Furthermore, leaving the Israelites at Mt. Sinai for a year makes no sense. That would have put them within two or three days walk of Egypt if they got disillusioned. It also would have put them as a persistent danger to Egypt as a military threat.

- 4) Furthermore, according to Exodus, Mt. Sinai was near the outskirts of Midian. Midian is not in the Sinai peninsula.
- 5) Furthermore, according to Exodus 13:17-18 the road to the east through the Philistine country was shorter than the road they took. If Mt. Sinai was really located where they have put it, the Philistine road (road to Gaza) would have been almost twice as far as the road they took. The road through Gaza would have been longer for just about any proposed location except one in the Arabian Peninsula.
- 6) It is also clear that during the Exodus the Israelites were on both sides of Mt. Seir (Deuteronomy 2:1). The Sinai side, and the Arabian Peninsula side.
- 7) Mt. Paran was clearly east of the Rift Valley as was Hazaroth.
- 8) The time of the journey (60 days) and the distance to the current Mt. Sinai (180 miles as the crow flies) militate against that being the right location. It argues for a location in the Arabian desert as does the Israelite's encounter with the Amalekites.

Where was Kadesh, Paran and the Desert of Zin

Genesis 14:5-7 In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him went out and defeated the Rephaites in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emmites in Shaveh Kiriathaim and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El **Paran** near the desert. Then they turned back and went to En Mishpat (that is, **Kadesh**), and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon Tamar.

El Paran means oak of Paran. From this, evidently El Paran is located in a grove on the slopes of the Seir range, southwest of Kadesh, overlooking the Desert of Paran.

Deuteronomy 33:1-2 This is the blessing that Moses the man of God pronounced on the Israelites before his death. He said: "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran.

From this Mt. Paran is a mountain of the Mt. Seir range, probably above El Paran, and from which the desert gets its name.

1 Kings 11:18 They set out from Midian and went to Paran. Then taking men from Paran with them, they went to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave Hadad a house and land and provided him with food.

From this we infer it was between Midian and Egypt, which means it was west of Edom.

Habakkuk 3:3 God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran.

Not enough here to infer anything except to reinforce the fact it was a mountain.

Deuteronomy 1:1 These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel in the desert east of the Jordan--that is, in the plain --opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth and Dizahab.

There are too many unknown place names here for this to be any use in location Paran, if this is the same Paran.

Paran means abounding in foliage, or abounding in caverns, (Gen. 21:21) according to Easton

Numbers 13:21-22 So they went up and explored the land from the Desert of Zin^a as far as Rehob,^b toward Lebo Hamath.^c They went up through the Negev and came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, lived.

Since this seems to indicate two routes, one east of the Jordan and one west of the Jordan, with the Negev being in the western route, the conclusion is that the Desert of Zin is east of the Negev.

Numbers 33:36-37 They left Ezion Geber and camped at Kadesh, in the Desert of Zin. They left Kadesh and camped at Mount Hor, on the border of Edom.

Clearly Mt. Hor was on the western side of the Seir range. That means the Desert of Zin was there as well.

^a The spies evidently split into two groups. This one went up the east side of the Jordan.

^b Part of the inheritance of Asher in for Northwestern Israel.

^c Lebo Hamath was a place in near Mt. Hermon that later formed part of the northeastern border of Israel.

Numbers 34:3-4 “Your southern side will include some of the Desert of Zin along the border of Edom. On the east, your southern boundary will start from the end of the Salt Sea, cross south of Scorpion Pass, continue on to Zin and go south of Kadesh Barnea. Then it will go to Hazar Addar and over to Azmon, where it will turn, join the Wadi of Egypt and end at the Sea.

Joshua 15:2-4 Their southern boundary started from the bay at the southern end of the Salt Sea, crossed south of Scorpion Pass, continued on to Zin and went over to the south of Kadesh Barnea. Then it ran past Hezron up to Addar and curved around to Karka. It then passed along to Azmon and joined the Wadi of Egypt, ending at the sea. This is their southern boundary.

Clearly, Kadesh Barnea was on the western border of Edom in the Desert of Zin.

Numbers 20:1 In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh.^a

Numbers 27:12-14 Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go up this mountain in the Abarim range and see the land I have given the Israelites. After you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your people, as your brother Aaron was, for when the community rebelled at the waters in the Desert of Zin, both of you disobeyed my command to honor me as holy before their eyes.” (These were the waters of Meribah Kadesh,^b in the Desert of Zin.)

Deuteronomy 32:49-51 “Go up into the Abarim Range to Mount Nebo in Moab, across from Jericho, and view Canaan, the land I am giving the Israelites as their own possession. There on the mountain that you have climbed you will die and be gathered to your people, just as your brother Aaron died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his people. This is because both of you broke faith with me in the presence of the Israelites at the waters of Meribah Kadesh in the Desert of Zin and because you did not uphold my holiness among the Israelites.

Types of Christ

1. First passover
2. Sacrifice of the first born.
3. Possible addition -- Three and a half days /three and a half marches – foreshadow Christ’s entry into Jerusalem and crucifixion.
4. Crossing the Red Sea
5. Tree into the bitter waters at Marah
6. Manna at Desert of Sin
7. Battle vs. Amalekites at Meribah
8. Rock of Horeb
9. Two sets of tablets of the law
10. Staff of Aaron with almonds.
11. Meribah
12. Brass serpent
13. Crossing the Jordan
14. A prophet like you.

New Testament references to Exodus.

John 3:14-17 *Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert,^c so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life.*” “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

1 Corinthians 10:1-11 For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers^d were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ.^e Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: “The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry.”^f We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of

^a Kadesh means “sanctuary” or “holy place.” There are two places called Kadesh in the journeys of Moses and the Israelites. Here, in this verse, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Zin. In Numbers 13:26, some 39 years earlier, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. It was probably called Kadesh because that was where the Tabernacle of God was located.

^b It is ironic that most of the Israelite men rebelled at Kadesh Barnea in year one and as a consequence never entered the land. In year 40 Moses failed at the same place and never entered the land.

^c The bronze snake of Numbers 21:8-9 was a picture of Israel recognizing their sin (the snake) and holding it up to God for judgement. In the fullness of time God raised up Jesus on the cross for mankind and Israel to receive that judgement for sin, in the meantime the judgement was withheld and Israel was forgiven. John 3:14. Remember also that the staff of Moses which symbolized the cross striking Christ (the Rock) also turned into a snake. As that snake ate up other snakes Exodus 7:10-12, so all sins were covered at the cross.

^d “Our forefathers” is another indication that Paul is writing to a largely Jewish or Jewish oriented group.

^e Paul is making the point that all of the adults of Israel were part of the Mosaic covenant by faith, baptism, and communion, yet their disobedience did not prevent God from destroying them for their subsequent disobedience. Likewise, Christians, may be under the New Covenant by faith, baptism, and communion, and yet they will be destroyed if they are also are disobedient.

^f Exodus 32:6

them died.^a We should not test the Lord, as some of them did—and were killed by snakes.^b And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.^c These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.

John 6:32 Jesus said to them, *“I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ^{6:33} For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”* ^{6:34} “Sir,” they said, “from now on give us this bread.” ^{6:35} Then Jesus declared, *“I am the bread of life. ^d He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.*

Acts 7:36-41 He led them out of Egypt and did wonders and miraculous signs in Egypt, at the Red Sea and for forty years in the desert. “This is that Moses who told the Israelites, ‘God will send you a prophet like me from your own people.’^e He was in the assembly in the desert, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; and he received living words to pass on to us. “But our fathers refused to obey him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt. They told Aaron, ‘Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who led us out of Egypt—we don’t know what has happened to him!’ That was the time they made an idol in the form of a calf. They brought sacrifices to it and held a celebration in honor of what their hands had made.

Romans 9:15 For he says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”^f

2 Corinthians 3:7-18 Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses ^g because of its glory, fading though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! For what was glorious has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory. And if what was fading away came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts! Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from gazing at it while the radiance was fading away. But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts.^h But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

Hebrews 3:15-19 As has just been said: “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.”ⁱ Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? And with whom was he angry for forty years?^j Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert? And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief.

Hebrews 12:18-25 You have not come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; to a trumpet blast or to such a voice speaking words that those who heard it begged that no further word be spoken to them, because they could not bear what was commanded: “If even an animal touches the mountain, it must be stoned.”^k The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, “I am trembling with fear.” But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.^l See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven?

^a See Numbers 25:1-9. **Scofield Note** - A discrepancy has been imagined. 1 Corinthians 10:8. gives the number of deaths in “one day” (23,000); Numbers 25:9, the total number of deaths “in the plague.” (24,000) Some discrepant statements concerning numbers are, however, found in the existing manuscripts of the Hebrew Scriptures. These are most naturally ascribed to the fact that the Hebrews used letters in the place of numerals. The letters for Koph to Tau express hundreds up to four hundred. Five certain Hebrew letters, written in a different form, carry hundreds up to nine hundred, while thousands are expressed by two dots over the proper unit letter: e.g. the letter Teth, used alone, stands for 9; with two dots it stands for nine thousand. Error in transcription of Hebrew numbers thus becomes easy, preservation of numerical accuracy difficult.

^b See Numbers 24:4-6.

^c See Numbers 16:41-50.

^d The concept that Jesus was talking about should not have been unfamiliar to the Jews. It is found in Jeremiah 15:16: “When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart’s delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.”

^e Deuteronomy 18:15

^f Exodus 33:19

^g See Exodus 34:29-36.

^h The Corinthians were always under the attack of the Judaizer. The Corinthian Church started in a synagogue after all. Paul is pointing out that the Judaizers, who preached the supremacy of the Old Testament, only saw in it the Law which could not be kept, and was thus a ministry of death. They could not understand or see the true glory of the Old Testament. It is not only a “Law Giver,” but like Moses himself, it foreshadows, in every book the coming of the “the prophet like” Moses (Deuteronomy 18:18-19), the “Law Keeper,” Jesus Christ. It is only in the light of Jesus Christ, that the Old Testament can truly be understood.

ⁱ Psalms 95:7-8

^j I do not believe it is a coincidence that forty years was the number of years the Hebrews had before destruction in 70 AD.

^k Exodus 19:13

^l Genesis 4:10 Abel’s blood called out for a curse.

Old Notes

<http://www.centuryone.com/0918-4a.html>

<http://www.baseinstitute.org/>

Deuteronomy 1:19 Then, as the LORD our God commanded us, we set out from Horeb and went toward the hill country of the Amorites through all that vast and dreadful desert that you have seen, and so we reached Kadesh Barnea.

Deuteronomy 8:15 He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock.

Exodus 3:12 And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain."

Numbers 20:1 In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh.^a There Miriam died and was buried.

Genesis 14:5-7 In the fourteenth year, Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him went out and defeated the Rephaites in Ashteroth Karnaim, the Zuzites in Ham, the Emmites in Shaveh Kiriathaim and the Horites in the hill country of Seir, as far as El Paran near the desert. Then they turned back and went to En Mishpat (that is, Kadesh), and they conquered the whole territory of the Amalekites, as well as the Amorites who were living in Hazazon Tamar.

Numbers 10:12 Then the Israelites set out from the Desert of Sinai and traveled from place to place until the cloud came to rest in the Desert of Paran.

Numbers 12:16 After that, the people left Hazeroth and encamped in the Desert of Paran.^b

Numbers 13:3 So at the LORD's command Moses sent them out from the Desert of Paran.

Numbers 13:26 They came back to Moses and Aaron and the whole Israelite community at Kadesh^c in the Desert of Paran. There they reported to them and to the whole assembly and showed them the fruit of the land.

Deuteronomy 1:1-3 These are the words Moses spoke to all Israel in the desert east of the Jordan--that is, in the Arabah^d--opposite Suph, between Paran and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth and Dizahab. (It takes eleven days to go from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea by the Mount Seir^e road.) In the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, Moses proclaimed to the Israelites all that the LORD had commanded him concerning them.

Deuteronomy 33:1-2 This is the blessing that Moses the man of God pronounced on the Israelites before his death. He said: "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran. He came with myriads of holy ones from the south, from his mountain slopes.

¹ Kings 11:17-18 But Hadad, still only a boy, fled to Egypt with some Edomite officials who had served his father. They set out from Midian and went to Paran. Then taking men from Paran with them, they went to Egypt, to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who gave Hadad a house and land and provided him with food.

The following verse refers to the Red Sea. It is obviously not a shallow lake, but the Sea at the gulf of Aqaba. It is the same words that are used to refer to the Red Sea as crossed miraculously by the children of Israel.

¹ Kings 9:26 King Solomon also built ships at Ezion Geber, which is near Elath in Edom, on the shore of the Red Sea.

The following verse clearly refers to the classic Red Sea. It is obviously not a shallow lake, as some have contended, or a shallow coastal swamp on the Mediterranean.

^a Kadesh means "sanctuary" or "holy place." There are two places called Kadesh in the journeys of Moses and the Israelites. Here, in this verse, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Zin. In Numbers 13:26, some 39 years earlier, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Paran. It was probably called Kadesh because that was where the Tabernacle of God was located.

^b Paran means "abounding in foliage, or abounding in caverns."

^c Kadesh means "sanctuary" or "holy place." There are two places called Kadesh in the journeys of Moses and the Israelites. Here, in this verse, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Paran, and in Numbers 20:1, 39 years later, we have Kadesh in the Desert of Zin. It was probably called Kadesh because that was where the Tabernacle of God was located.

^d Arabah means plain

^e Mt. Seir is in Edom.

Exodus 10:19 And the LORD changed the wind to a very strong west wind, which caught up the locusts and carried them into the Red Sea.