

THE EXODUS

I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND - LATE BRONZE AGE (1550-1200 BC)

- A. "A Pharaoh who knew not Joseph" (Ex 1:8) = Ahmose I
 - 1. Drove Hyksos rulers from Egyptian delta about 1550 BC
 - 2. Founded 18th Dynasty & began Egyptian New Kingdom

- B. The Egyptian 18th Dynasty
 - 1. Empire included Canaan (=Palestine & S. Syria)
 - 2. Akhenaton (Amenhotep IV) = "the heretic Pharaoh"
 - a. Favored the god Aton (sun disc); almost monotheistic
 - b. Empire decayed in Canaan
 - 3. The Amarna letters
 - a. Found at Tell el-Amarna, ancient Akhetaton, Akhenaton's capital
 - b. Diplomatic correspondence from kings in Palestine, Syria
 - c. Fighting and accusations between kings in Palestine
 - d. Complaints against the Apiru (Habiru); a landless group

- C. The Egyptian 19th Dynasty
 - 1. Seti I
 - a. Began building projects in delta region
 - b. Pharaoh of the oppression?
 - 2. Ramses II (1290-1224 BC)
 - a. Battle of Qadesh against Hittites; later peace
 - b. Major builder of New Kingdom
 - c. Capital built in delta (Pi-Ramesse; Ex 1:11)
 - d. Pharaoh of the Exodus?
 - 3. Merneptah (Merneptah stele, ca. 1220 BC)
 - a. First mention of Sea Peoples
 - b. First extra-biblical mention of Israel

- D. Enslavement of the Israelites
 - 1. Asiatics were hated by the Egyptians
 - 2. Probably a gradual reduction in rights during 18th Dynasty
 - 3. Culminated in outright slavery under 19th Dynasty

II. DATE OF THE EXODUS

- A. Two Dates are Usually Given for Exodus: Early Date = 15th cent. BC; Late = 13th cent. BC

- B. Most Likely Date: 13th century BC
 - 1. The only period in which Biblical story can correspond to events in Egypt/ANE
 - 2. Conquest/ Israel in Canaan (archaeology) - ca. 1230 BC
 - Wilderness wanderings before conquest - + 40
 - Date of the Exodus - = 1270 BC
 - Sojourn in Egypt (Ex 12:40, 41) - + 430
 - 3. Move of patriarchs into Egypt (Hyksos) - = 1700 BC

- C. Ramses II = (Unnamed) Pharaoh of the Exodus
 - 1. Capital located in delta; used Asiatic slaves there
 - 2. Capital *Pi-Ramesse* probably = "Raamses" (Ex 1:11)

- D. Merneptah Stele: Israel in Canaan ca. 1220 BC (not fully settled)

E. Israelite settlements appear in Palestine ca. 1200 BC

III. MOSES

A. Raised and educated as an Egyptian (Ex 2:1-15)

B. In the wilderness (Ex 2:15-22; 4:17-26)

1. Fled Egypt after a murder (Ex 2:11-15)
2. Married a daughter of Jethro, of Midian (Midianites; Gen 25:2)

C. Moses at the burning bush (3:1-4:17)

1. God reveals himself as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob
2. God answers Moses' excuses
3. The personal name of God
 - a. Moses asks God's name; God: "I am that I am"
 - b. God reveals personal name in 3:15; consonants only spell **YHWH**
 - c. Not spoken by NT period; pronunciation lost
 - d. In reading, substituted by *Adonai*, "Lord"
 - e. Jehovah = YHWH with vowels from *Adonai*
 - f. **Yahweh** = most common scholarly reconstruction

D. Moses and Pharaoh

1. Pharaoh increases the burden (Ex 5)
2. The Abrahamic promise repeated (Ex 6)
3. Ten plagues (Ex 7-11): Show triumph of the Lord over Egyptian gods
4. 10th Plague = Death of firstborn; balances Pharaoh's order to kill male children

IV. THE EXODUS

A. **Passover Meal**: Instituted with the tenth plague (Ex 12:1-13:16)

1. Sheep/goat sacrificed, roasted, eaten; blood on doorpost
2. Feast of Unleavened Bread (Matzot) remembered haste
3. To be celebrated (March - April) as remembrance of Exodus

B. **Miracle at the Re(e)d Sea** (Ex 12:29-41; 13:17-14:31)

1. Deliverance (salvation) by God
2. Birth of Israel as a nation/people of God

C. Crises in the wilderness

1. Bitter water; manna and quails (Ex 15:22-16:36)
2. Water from the rock (Ex 17:1-7)
3. Battle with the Amalekites (Ex 17:8-16)
4. Jethro's visit and advice to Moses (Ex 18)

V. ISRAEL AT SINAI

- A. **The Sinai (Mosaic) Covenant**
 - 1. Theophany at Mt. Sinai (Ex 19; 20:18-21)
 - 2. The **Ten Commandments** (Ex 20:1-21)
 - 3. The **Covenant Code** (Ex 20:22-23:33): Laws and promised blessing
 - 4. The **Mosaic Covenant** ratified (Ex 24)
 - a. Conditional covenant
 - b. God promises: to drive out foes in promised land . . .
 - c. If Israel will: keep God's commandments
- B. Provisions for worship: the ark, tabernacle, and Sabbath (Ex 25-31)
 - 1. Tabernacle = portable tent shrine/temple and courtyard
 - 2. Ark of the Covenant = box containing covenant commandments
 - 3. Sabbath = seventh day of the week; no work
- C. The golden calf; Moses intercedes; covenant renewed (Ex 32-34)
- D. Construction of the tabernacle (Ex 35-40)

VI. LEVITICUS: The Priestly Code

VII. NUMBERS (Hebrew *Bemidbar*, "in the desert")

- A. Census and departure from Sinai to Kadesh-Barnea (Num 1:1-12:16)
- B. At **Kadesh-Barnea**: the land spied out (Num 13-14)
 - 1. Spies sent out and their report (Num 13)
 - 2. A lack of faith, punishment, and defeat (Num 14-15)
 - 3. Rebellion and priestly laws (Num 15-19)
- C. Departure from Kadesh and detour around Edom (Num 20-21)
 - 1. Sin of Moses and Aaron at Meribah (Num 20:1-13)
 - 2. Permission to cross Edom denied (Num 20:14-21)
 - 3. Death of Aaron at Mt. Hor (Num 20:22-29)
 - 4. Detour south to the Gulf of Aqaba/Red Sea (Num 21:4-9)
- D. Victories over **Sihon** king of Moab and **Og** of Bashan (Num 21:21-35)
- E. In the plains of Moab, opposite Jericho (Num 22-32)
 - 1. The **Balaam** story (Num 22-24)
 - 2. Sin of Baal-peor (Num 25)
 - 3. **Joshua** to succeed Moses (Num 27:12-23)
 - 4. Tribes east of Jordan: **Reuben** and **Gad** (Num 32)
- F. List of Israelite Encampments (Num 33)
- G. Instructions for promised land (Num 34-36): borders, Levitical cities

VIII. DEUTERONOMY: Moses' Farewell Addresses

- A. Deuteronomy = “second law”
- B. Contents
 - 1. Presented as four speeches of Moses plus account of his death
 - a. Historical retrospect (Deut 1-4)
 - b. Moses' second speech (Deut 5-11)
 - c. Collected statutes and rights (Deut 12-26)
 - d. Cursing and blessing (Deut 27-30)
 - e. Death of Moses and accession of Joshua (Deut 31-34)
 - 2. Order of contents and form reflects treaty documents of the period in the ANE
 - 3. Chapters 6-26 can be seen as a commentary on the Ten Commandments