

THE EXODUS

BY MAURICE BARNETT

The Exodus of Israel from Egyptian bondage under Moses is a Biblical fact. Establishing it as an historical fact takes us beyond the Bible to combine both Bible and secular history. In some sense, this is a formidable task. There are things we cannot certify as to their accuracy in secular history. Historical records, especially of ancient Egypt, are incomplete or even contradictory, as well as tarnished by opinions of historians and archaeologists.

This material will not follow all of the arguments, pro and con, nor produce all evidence for the conclusions presented. That would require a good sized book to accomplish. The essential evidence will be given, however.

In coming material, we will try to put together what we do know with what records are available. Of necessity, there will be some instances of guesswork in order to put the facts together. We will try to identify those areas and explain why the conclusions were reached. We will note a little of why some of the claims made by other authors are not acceptable. We will not respond to every position taken on the subject. Likewise, no attempt will be made trying to correlate all of the possible chronological dates on the general subject. We just do not have enough information on how dates were established to be absolutely certain in every case. In some instances, we can be satisfactorily certain as to their accuracy.

Most of us are familiar with the story of the older sons of Jacob, great-grandsons of Abraham, who sold their young brother, Joseph, into slavery. Joseph wound up in Egypt. The Bible story of Joseph and his coat of many colors is a popular one with children in Bible classes. But, with God ordering events, Joseph became powerful in Egypt, second only to Pharaoh. When opportunity presented itself, Joseph brought his family to Egypt. They were settled in the fertile lower delta. It was “the best of the land,” Genesis 47:6. It was called, *Goshen*. After several hundred years, a Pharaoh arose who began to oppress the children of Israel. The prominent activity was in their building the storehouse cities of Raamses and Pi-thom.

It has long been presented by skeptics that Rameses II was the Pharaoh of the Exodus because the Israelites built the storehouse city of Raamses in Goshen. Rameses II was one of the most colorful and powerful Pharaohs in Egyptian history. Many of his structures still stand, considering he filled the land with his temples, monuments and statuary. It is said that he must have been the Pharaoh who used Israel to build the storehouse cities in Goshen, because of his name. However, they conveniently overlook a number of things.

Rameses, a contraction of Ra-Mose, which means “Son of Ra,” was a fairly common name in ancient Egypt even appearing on the tomb of Amenhotep III, who ruled a hundred years before the time of Rameses II. The first we biblically hear the name is in Genesis 47:11. It was a synonym for

all of the land of Goshen. Here is the King James text of Genesis 47:6 and 11. Pharaoh told Joseph—

“The land of Egypt *is* before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest *any* men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.” Vs. 6

“And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses, as Pharaoh had commanded.” Vs. 11

Thus, several hundred years before the time of Rameses II, the *Land of Goshen* was called the *Land of Rameses*. It is only assumed, based on the name of the the storehouse city, that neither city existed before the time of Rameses II and thus all other data must fit that assertion.

However, Ramses II could not have been the Pharaoh of the Exodus. It took some 20 years in the building of the cities. Along the close of that period, Moses was born and grew to manhood, receiving the best of educations in the knowledge of the Egyptians. At 40 years of age, Acts 7:23, Moses fled the wrath of Pharaoh and dwelt in Midian. Midian was in Arabia. Forty years later, when he was eighty years old and after Pharaoh was dead, Moses was directed by God to return to Egypt, Exodus 2:23. This was the same Pharaoh who had caused Moses to flee. Thus, about a hundred years after Israel began construction of the two cities, immediate events leading to the Exodus began.

The Pharaoh who caused Moses to flee had to live past forty years, the time Moses was in Midian. The only Pharaoh of that time period who fits that is Thutmose III who reigned 54 years. His death is placed, according to what is called “High Chronology,” as 1450 B.C. That would make the Pharaoh of the Exodus to be one of his sons, Amenhotep II.

We must begin with establishing the time of the Exodus and that means starting with I Kings 6:1—

“And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon’s reign over Israel, in the month Zif, which *is* the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.”

Scholars have identified 966-967 BC as the date mentioned in this verse that was the fourth year of Solomon’s reign. (See *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* by Gleason Archer, p. 223). Adding 480 years to that date gives us 1446 or 1447 B.C. as the date of the Exodus.

In many respects, Egyptian dates are a little inexact. Three different approaches have been taken by “scholars,” a “high, middle, or low” chronology. The chronology taken will give us different time periods and different Pharaohs. I will take

what I consider the one most applicable to the evidence in keeping with the Bible record.

Exodus 7:7 tells us that, at the time he spoke to Pharaoh, Moses was 80 years old and Aaron was 83. Let's take 1447 as the date of the Exodus though it could be as much as seven years after that. Add 80 years to that and we get 1527 B.C. for the date of Moses' birth. Apparently, the Pharaoh at the time of Moses' birth was Thutmose I. It was this Pharaoh who began construction of the storehouse cities and ordered all male babies born to the Hebrews were to be thrown into the river to drown. It was his daughter who discovered Moses, named him and raised him as her own. Josephus says that her name was *Thermusis*. "Moses" is an Egyptian name. Thutmose is a combination adding "mose" at the end, as is found in several names of prominent Egyptians from Ahmose to Rameses.

Another reason why Amenhotep II is a reasonable choice for the Pharaoh of the Exodus is that, first, he was not the firstborn son of Thutmose III and, second, his successor was not his firstborn son; his firstborn had died at some previous time which fits with the death of the firstborn of Pharaoh in the last of the plagues.

It is generally accepted that Pharaoh perished in the waters along with his army but both Thutmose III and Amenhotep II died of natural causes and their mummies are on display in Egypt at the present time. Does that not furnish a contradiction with the Bible record?

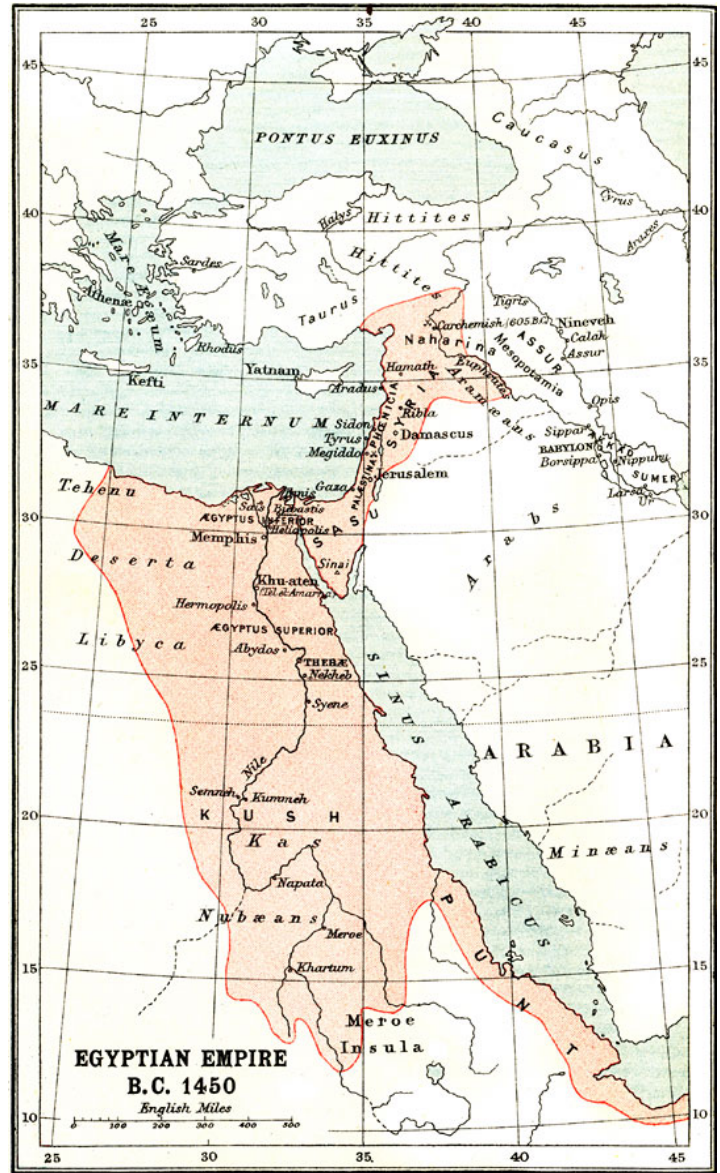
The fact is, the Bible does not say that Pharaoh died in the sea with his army. Here are the passages that are pointed to for such a death of Pharaoh—Exodus 14:23-28, 15:19, Psalm 106:9-11 and Nehemiah 9:10-11. The major argument for his death is from Psalm 136:13-15—

"To him which divided the Red sea into parts:
for his mercy *endureth* for ever: 14 And made Israel to pass through the midst of it: for his mercy *endureth* for ever: 15 But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea: for his mercy *endureth* for ever."

To be "overthrown" does not require death. They were unable to accomplish their aim, they were powerless, were stopped. In that sense, they were "overthrown." Pharaoh survived and lived many years after.

Well, why was there no mention in Egyptian records or monuments of the plagues on Egypt, the escape of so many slaves and the destruction of such a great army? Simply, such a record would have been unthinkable to the Egyptians. Pharaohs only recorded their successes and greatly exaggerated those. The plagues showed the utter uselessness of the Egyptian gods, seeing that each plague attacked a single god; each god was powerless to stop the God of Israel. The rest was total embarrassment. Further, slaves would not have left any monuments nor records behind. Thus, no records.

At the beginning, Israel settled in the rich delta of north-east Egypt when they were brought to Egypt by Joseph. Egypt was already an old country, a long way from the days of the pyramid builders. After about 400 years in Egypt, having fallen into slavery, the time for the Exodus arrived. The territory under the control of Egypt was quite extensive.



This map shows the territory controlled by Egypt in 1450 BC at the time of Moses. See the light orange area on the map. The Sinai peninsula was part of Egypt long before and after the Exodus. This is important for us to understand.

Sinai was known as the wilderness of Egypt, Judges 11:16, Exodus 13:18, Ezekiel 20:36. *Israel went through the wilderness of Egypt in order to reach the Red Sea.* There was no wilderness in Goshen before arriving at the Gulf of Suez.

But, where did Israel wind up after crossing "the Red Sea"? Where is Mt. Sinai where the Ten Commandments were given? The traditional view is that the crossing happened at the north end of the gulf of Suez, quite possibly in a shallow marshy area tagged the Sea of Reeds. That is followed by locating Mt. Sinai in south-central Sinai peninsula.

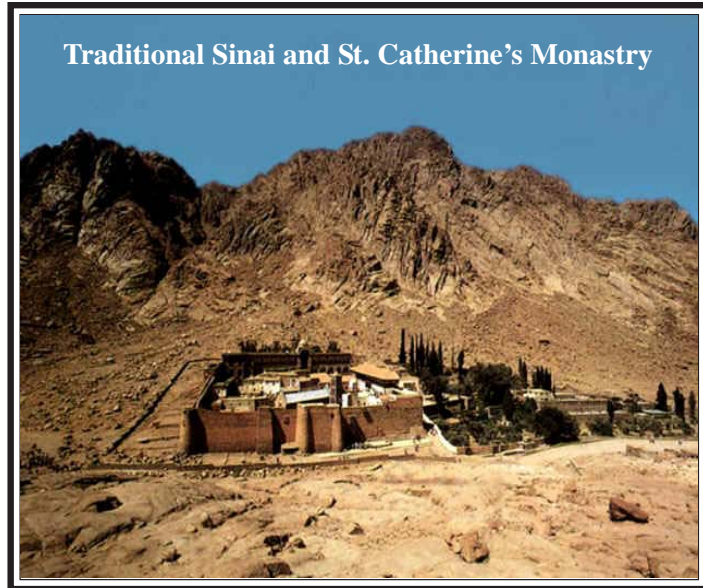
The Apostle Paul gives us a clue to its location in Galatians 4:25—

"Now this Hagar is mount Sinai in Arabia and answereth to the Jerusalem that now is: for she is in bondage with her children."

Notice that inspiration places Sinai in Arabia, today's Saudi Arabia, east of the gulf of Aqaba. A common explanation of Commentators is the Sinai peninsula was part of Arabia

during the time of Moses. It is true that Rome, having taken control of Egypt, for a short time assigned the name Arabia to Sinai in 106 AD. But that was decades after Paul's statement in Galatians 4:25; in Paul's time and before, Sinai was Egypt. Practically, Sinai has always been under Egyptian control—

"...the land east of a line from the Wady of Egypt to the Elanitic Gulf [the Gulf of Aqaba] has always belonged to the Egyptian political sphere, and actually that is the present boundary of Egypt...the South-Arabians called the same region Msr, i.e. Misraim, Egypt." *Arabia and the Bible*, by James A. Montgomery, 1934, p. 31.



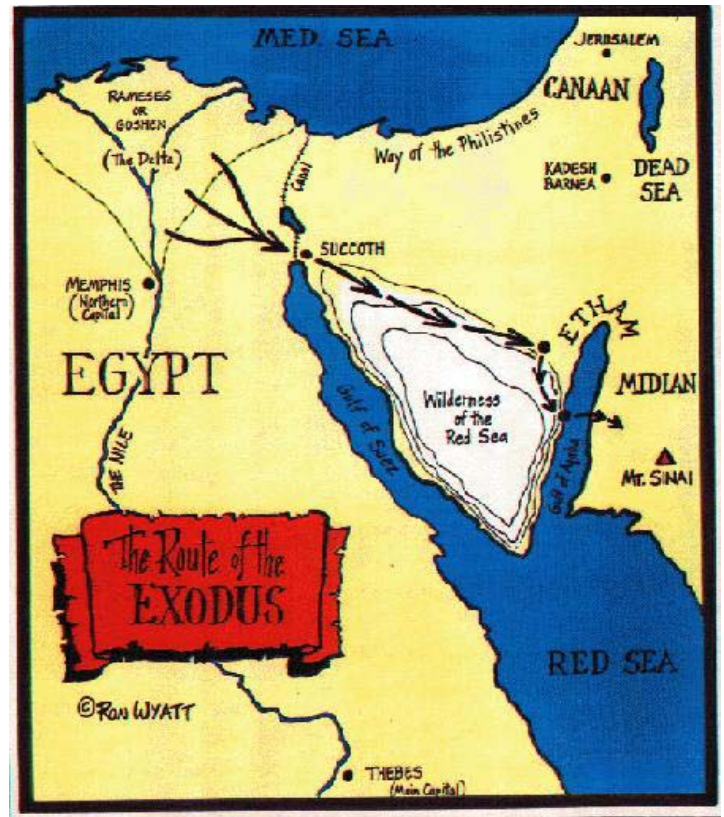
Traditional Sinai and St. Catherine's Monastery

"The origin of the present Monastery of Saint Catherine on the NW slope of Jebel Musa is traced back to A.D. 527, when Emperor Justinian established it on the site where Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, had erected a small church two centuries earlier." (The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, 1962, p. 376.)

So, the tagging of *Jebel Musa* in the Sinai peninsula was the doing of Helena, the mother of Constantine, in the fourth century. There was no archaeological or Biblical reasons for deciding that location. It was all based on some of Constantine's dreams from which his mother concluded that *Jebel Musa* in southern Sinai was the place known, since then, as Mt. Sinai. It was on that mountain, she said, that Moses received the ten commandments. Helena used that same approach for a number of locations which have also turned out to be incorrect. Later, St Catherine's Monastery was built on the slopes of the mount that has been the accepted Sinai since that time. It is surprising to find that the Biblical Mount Sinai is not in the Sinai peninsula at all. Actually, there are numerous places that have been proposed as the site of Mt. Sinai by various "experts."

The Gulf of Aqaba has long been presented as the location of the crossing of the Red Sea by Israel. "Modern" authors, going back to the early nineteenth century and forward, have taken that position. Fairly recent evidence that Aqaba was the place of crossing has come to light giving us a compelling reason to place the Sea crossing there.

We have noted that it took Israel 15 days to cross the Wilderness of Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula. It was the most direct route that would take Israel out of the areas dominated by Pharaoh. They travelled quickly with only very short rests, being guided by day by a pillar of cloud and by night a pillar of fire to give them light, Exodus 13:20-22.. The map below shows the route that would have been taken considering the goal of a mountain in Arabia where Moses had encountered God just a relatively short time before. Here is a map that pictures that particular route.



This places Mount Sinai across Aqaba in Northwest Arabia, just as Paul said, Galatians 4:25. Exodus 3:1ff says—

"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. 2 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed... 12 And he said, Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain."

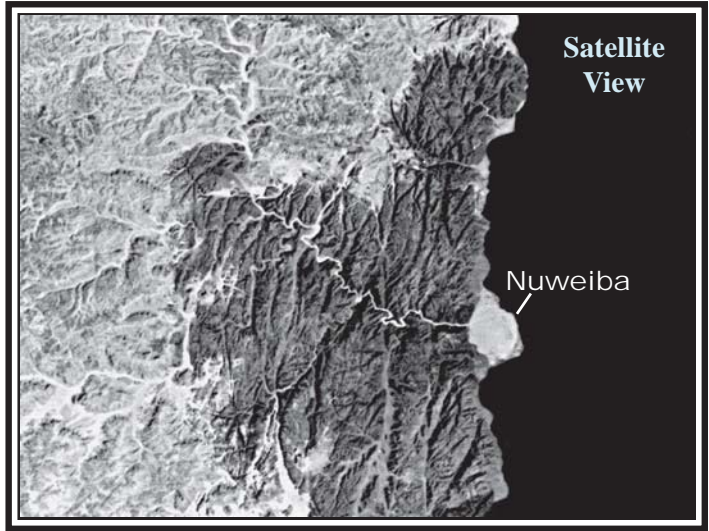
The area of Israel's 40 years of wandering was not in the Sinai peninsula but Midian, in Arabia where Moses was for 40 years.

But, if Israel crossed the Gulf of Aqaba by the power of God, just where was that and is there any specific evidence to point to it as the place? Exodus 14:2 says that the place Israel camped before crossing the Sea on dry land was called *Pi-hahiroth*, meaning, "mouth of the Gorges." We will now take a look at the spot that fits that description.

Here is another map that gives the same view but may be easier to visualize the route and area.



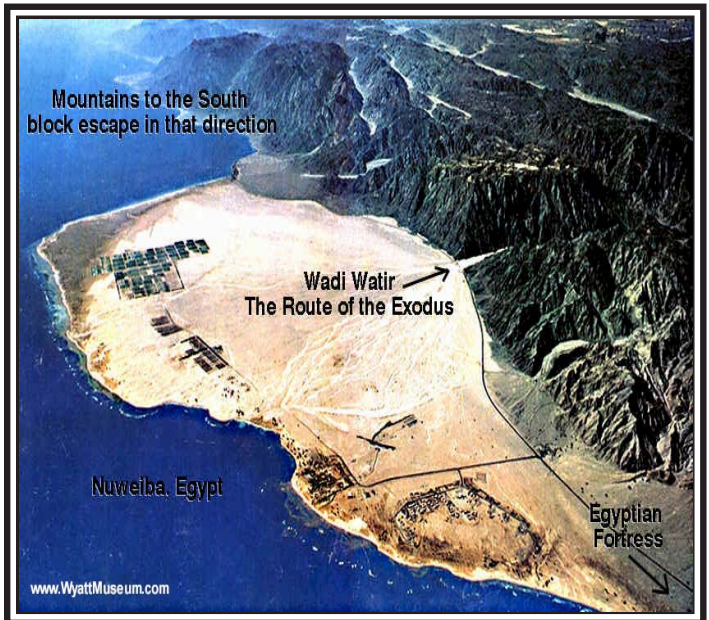
The journey to the place of encampment could not have been a large open area but rather one confined along its route. It would lead to the exact place where there would be a big enough area to hold the large number of Israelites. As we have noted, they camped on the edge of the Red Sea at a place called “Pi-hahiroth,” according to Exodus 14:2, which means “Mouth of the Gorges,” There is only one place on the coastline that answers to that description. North and South along the coast is mountainous right down to the Sea. The exception is one place that is a large sandy beach that drained numerous gorges from the mountain range surrounding it. The beach is called the *Nuweiba Peninsula*. The Israeli route wound between the mountains and emptied onto the perfect place for all things that were about to happen. Here are two views of the large gorge winding through the mountains and emerging at Nuweiba, first from the air and then a satellite.



“Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn and encamp before Pihahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, over against Baalzephon: before it shall ye encamp by the sea. For Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They *are* entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.” Exodus 14:2-3.

It is easily seen that Nuweiba is perfectly described in these verses. Pharaoh thought there was no escape from the trap of nature itself. They were soon to be quite surprised.

The large beach on the Sinai side of the Gulf has been very little changed over the centuries. It is at the end of the long stretch of gorges that wind between rugged mountains rising on either side. This opening to the gorge can be seen in the middle of the aerial picture below, where the beach meets the mountains. The land then gradually slopes down to the underwater “bridge” that crosses to the other side of the sea, to Arabia.

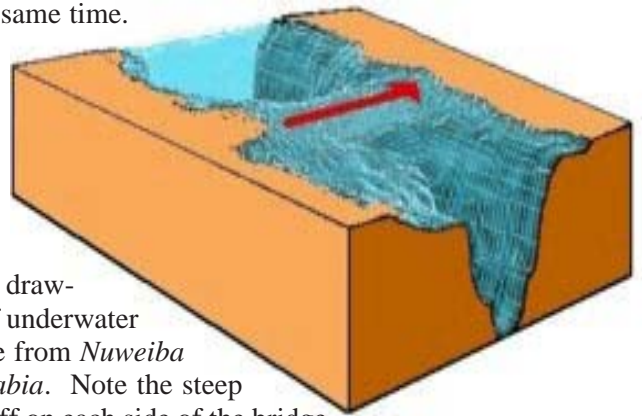


The small modern community on the beach is named, *Nuwayba*, which is short for *Nuwayba' al Muzayyina*, meaning “Waters of Moses Opening.” Today, it is a popular resort area with hotels and recreation facilities.

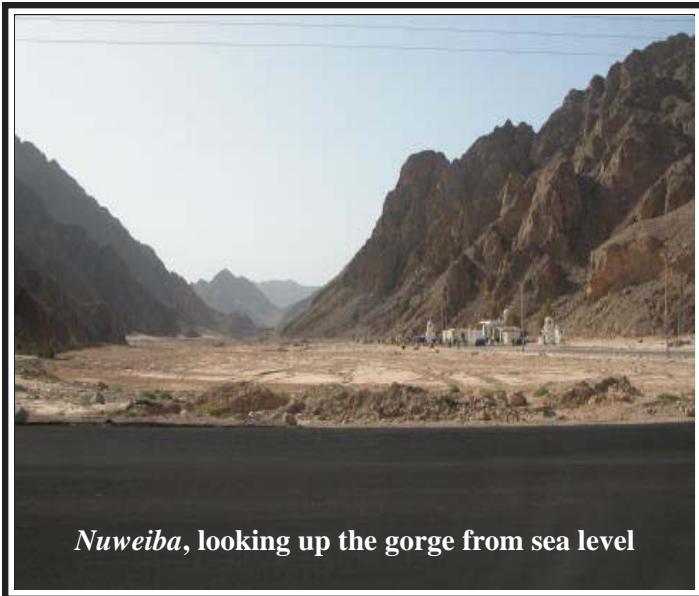
The next three photos are of *Nuweiba*, first from water level looking into the mouth of the gorge, then from the other direction, and finally from Arabia across the sea.

The “Red Sea” may have gotten its name from Esau, which means “red.” Esau settled in Edom just to the north. “Edom” also means “red.” Actually, *Aqaba* could lay more claim than *Suez* to being the *Red Sea*.

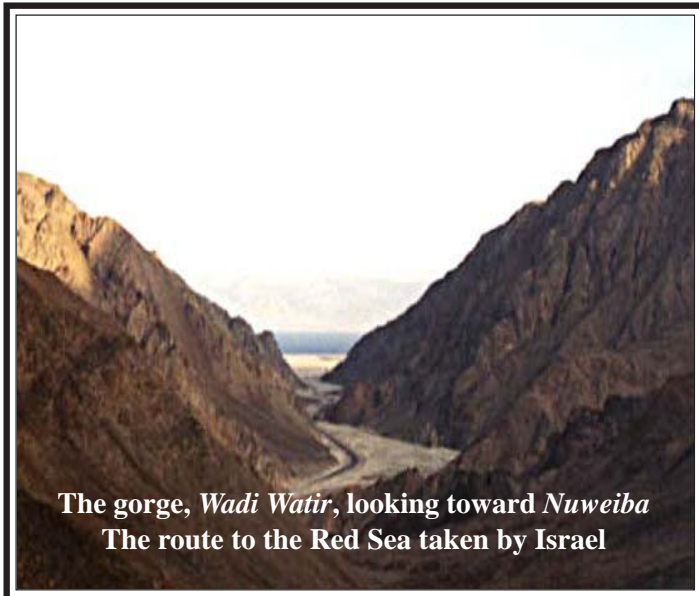
So, Israel had marched over a period of 15 days to reach *Pi-Hahiroth* to camp before the Egyptian army came upon them. It looked as though Israel was trapped between the Egyptian army, the mountains on each side and the sea before them. It is also obvious why this would be called *Pi-Hahiroh*, “Mouth of the Gorges.” Look back at the circumstance Israel was in to see clearly why it was said that “*Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.*” Have you ever wondered why Pharaoh’s army could so easily be blocked by a “pillar” of cloud, Exodus 14:19-20? Why did they not just go around it? They couldn’t. It was Pharaoh who was entangled in the land. Look at the maps and pictures of the gorge that stretched for miles, the only way in to *Nuweiba*. There was no way to get out of the gorge, especially with horses and chariots. It is thus seen why the full name of *Nuweiba* means “Waters of Moses Opening.” God opened the waters for Israel to escape into Arabia and destroy the army of Pharaoh at the same time.



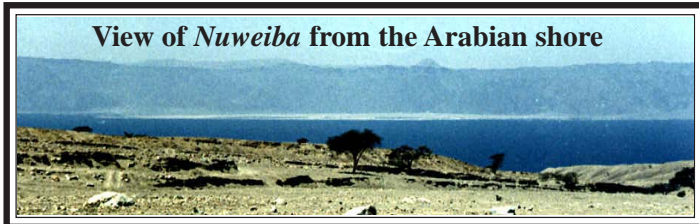
Artist drawing of underwater bridge from *Nuweiba* to *Arabia*. Note the steep dropoff on each side of the bridge.



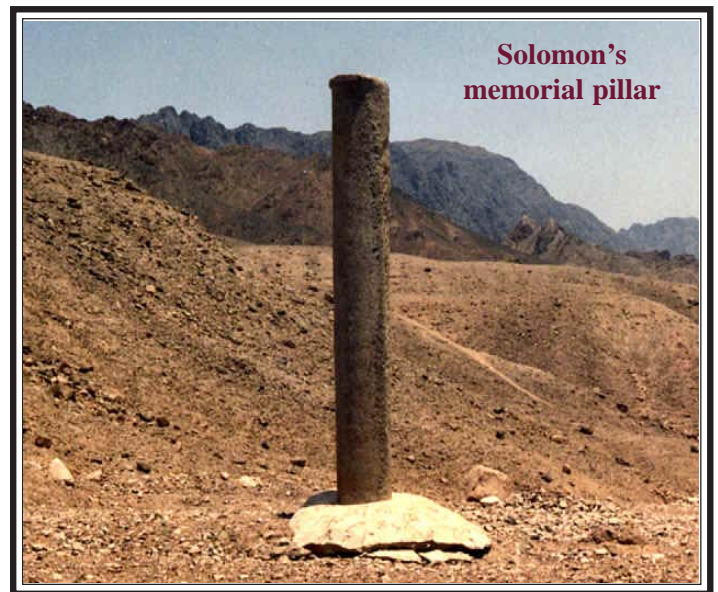
Nuweiba, looking up the gorge from sea level



The gorge, *Wadi Watir*, looking toward *Nuweiba*
The route to the Red Sea taken by Israel



View of *Nuweiba* from the Arabian shore



Solomon’s memorial pillar

The Gulf of Aqaba is quite deep except for a shallow bridge stretching from *Nuweiba* to *Arabia*, Water over the bridge is 60 to 200 feet in depth. Its gentle slope made a bridge that, once exposed by the power of God, made an ideal walled pathway to the other side, 8 miles away. God stood the water up as walls on each side of the pathway and dried the sea bed so Israel could walk to the other side. This was where the armies of Pharaoh perished when, having tried to follow Israel, found that God turned the walls of water loose upon them.

Nuweiba was just fifty miles south of the northern tip of the Gulf of Aqaba. The city of *Elat* would later be established in that place and Solomon would create a ship building site there, “on the shore of the Red Sea.” See I Kings 9:26.

In 1978, adventurer/explorer Ron Wyatt, when he first visited *Nuweiba*, found a Phoenician style column lying in the water. All inscriptions were eroded away. Finally in 1984, a second column was found on the Saudi side across from

Nuweiba. It was identical to the other but had inscriptions on it. The inscription in archaic Hebrew was—

“Mizraim (Egypt), Solomon, Edom, death, Pharaoh, Moses, Yahweh.”

It was a memorial to the crossing of Israel erected by Solomon. The Saudi government has since removed the pillar and replaced it with a flag marker. Access to Saudi locations that might prove Israel’s ancestry is denied; they even erected a fence around Sinai. What little has been explored was accomplished before the ban was put into effect.

Artifacts On The Underwater Bridge

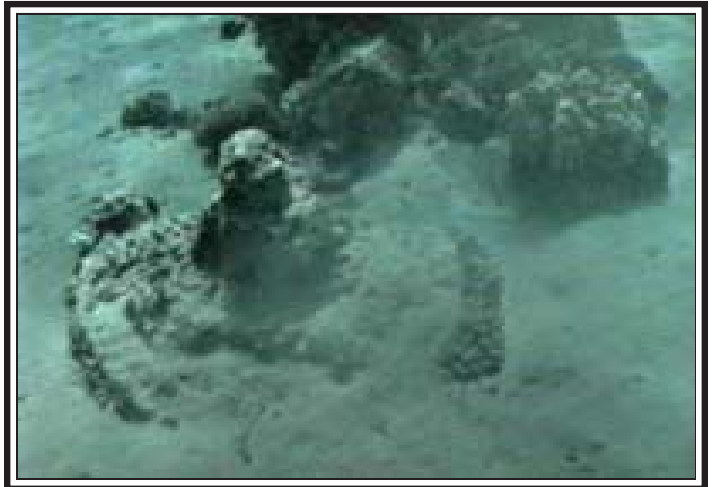
Underwater exploration and photography, since the discoveries of Wyatt, have uncovered numerous artifacts that very strongly indicate the destruction of the Egyptian army.

Repeated dives in depths ranging from 60 to 200 feet deep (18m to 60m), over a stretch of almost 2.5 km, has shown that the chariot parts are scattered across the sea bed. Artifacts found include wheels and chariot bodies as well as human and horse bones. Divers have located wreckage on the Saudi coastline opposite Nuweiba as well.

Below is one of the chariot wheels resting on the underwater bridge. It is covered in gold. The wood underneath the gold overlay has deteriorated and the whole is very fragile. Special equipment would be needed to raise it.



Following are three more examples of chariot wheels on the floor of the Red Sea.

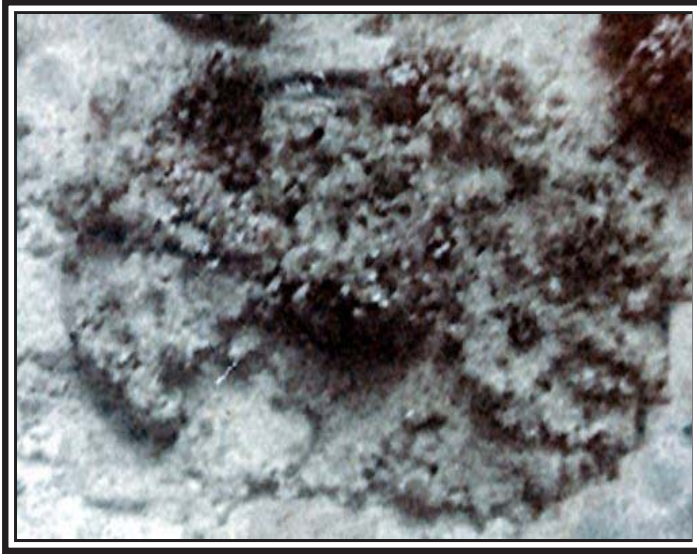


Above, a wheel with hub projecting from the sea floor. Below, a wheel held high on its shaft.

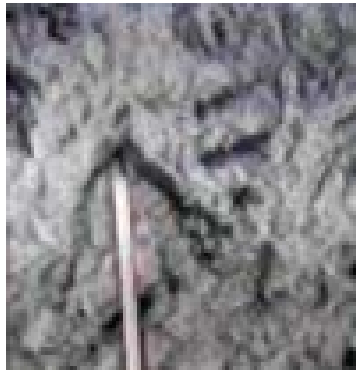


The next picture is a wall painting found in a tomb dating to the time of the Exodus. It shows the same four spoked chariot wheel as seen above. There were also eight spoked chariot wheels found in the same Sea bed location. Such eight spoked wheels appeared only in the period of Egyptian history as that of the exodus.

Badly deteriorated but still recognizable as a chariot wheel.



The Bible says that God caused the chariot wheels of the Egyptians to fall off which made it impossible for them to continue the chase and they were caught between the walls of water. In addition to wheels, chariot bodies were also found. The picture below left is of human femurs that are of an adult 5 ft., 5 inches in height. The picture right is of a human rib cage. These have been mineralized due to such a long time immersed in sea water so that very little can be concluded as to the century they came from.



Diodorus Siculus, Greek Historian from Sicily living from 80 BC to approximately 15 BC (12 years before Christ's birth in about 4 BC) writes—

“In ancient times there happened a great plague in Egypt, and many ascribed the cause of it to God, who was offended with them because there were many strangers in the land, by whom foreign rites and ceremonies were employed in their worship of the deity. The Egyptians concluded; therefore, that unless all strangers were driven out of the country, they should never be freed from their miseries.”

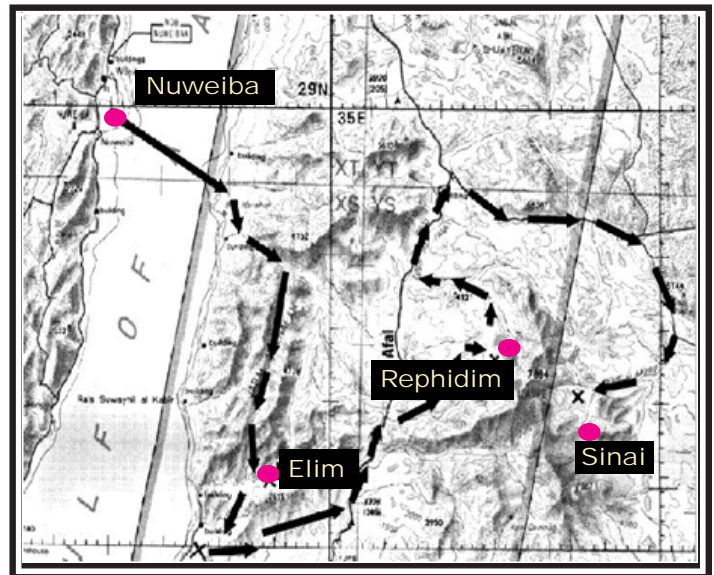
Josephus records that Israel was well gone when Pharaoh repented to have let them go and gathered his great army. The Egyptians considered Israel was boxed in with the mountains on either side and retreat cut off. The distance across to Arabia from Nuweiba is eight miles. That was distance enough to hold Pharaoh's army when God brought the walls crashing down upon them.

Journey to Mt. Sinai

Having crossed the Red Sea at *Nuweiba*, Israel is now in Midian where Moses had spent forty years of his life. It had been about three to four years since Moses had left there to return to Egypt and lead Israel out of bondage to serve God.

As for all other locations in that part of the world, there are scholars who believe that *Midian* included the Sinai Peninsula and so *Sinai* should be located in the traditional place. However, the preponderance of evidence shows that Midian was limited to the northwest area of Arabia and to the east of the *Gulf of Aqaba*. The home of Moses' father-in-law, Jethro, was in the area near the modern city of *El Bad*. It was while tending the flock of Jethro that Moses came upon *Mt. Horeb* where God spoke to him. The mountain is known today as *Jebel el Lawz*, “The Mountain of the Law.”

In their journey from the crossing, they had several stops, among which were Elim, where there was an oasis, and Rephidim.



The origin of the Midianites is from Midian, the son of Abraham by Keturah. Midian's five sons were the progenitors of the Midianites. Thus, the Midianites were related to Israel. Like the Sinai Peninsula, the land was barren and mountainous with oases scattered throughout. Wadis provided the easiest travel for anyone and especially the large number of Israelites carrying their belongings. It was through this area that Israel traveled, first in one direction and then another, following the washes through the hills and mountains.

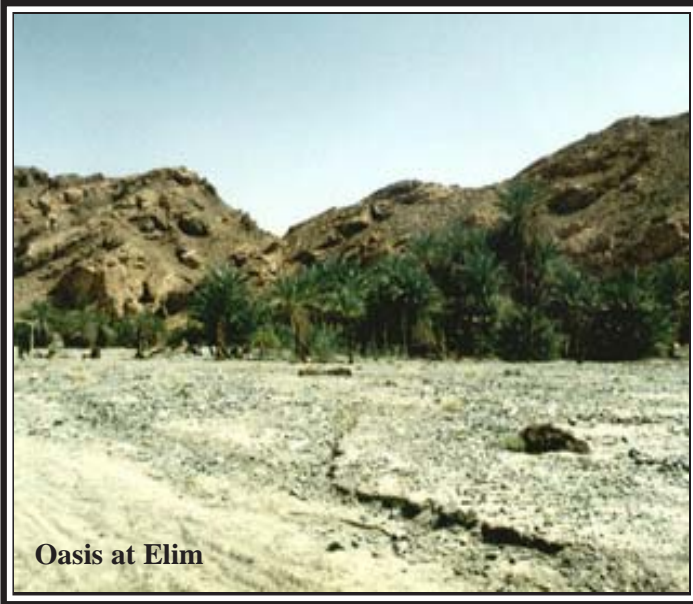
However, there were people living throughout the area, as witnessed by Jethro, Moses father-in-law, the Amalakites and others. Even today, there are villages as well as many nomadic bedouins throughout the area, as there have been for centuries.

This would not be possible without the oases. As we will see, God directed Moses to bring forth water from a rock to the people at *Rephidim* because there was none there, as there had been at Elim. Israel was to wander for 40 years in this wilderness as a punishment for their lack of faith in God.

The Israelites followed the Wadis, (gorges), between mountains for ease of travel, which at times took them on circuitous routes. Numerous events make this area interesting. One author said—

“...From here my guide and I climbed up the cliff to visit the ‘circles’ of Jethro on the summit of Musalla ridge, from which we climbed down quite easily to our camp on the far side.... A cairn marked the spot where Jethro is supposed to have prayed, and all around it are numerous circles,... From here I had a magnificent view of the whole of the Midian mountain range, with Lauz [Jebel el Lawz] and its sister peaks in the northeast...” *“The Land of Midian”,* by H. St. John Philby, Ernest Bean Limited, London, p.222.

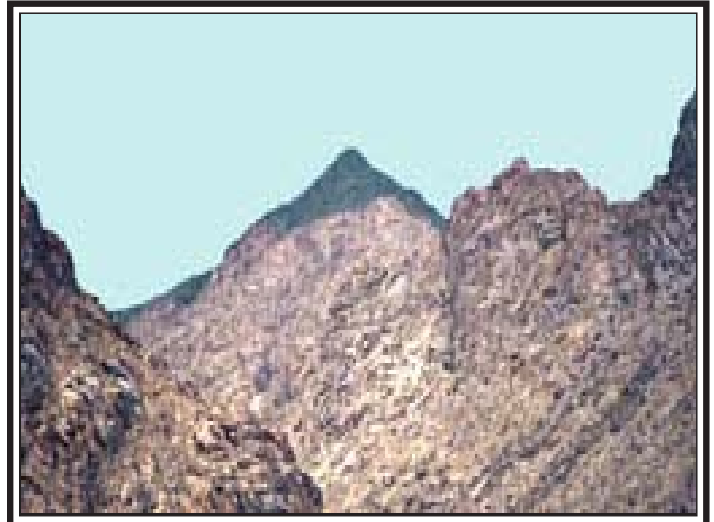
And here is a photo of *Jebel el Lawz*, Horeb/Sinai. Notice the blackened, portion at the top of the mountain.



Oasis at Elim

The Oasis at Elim had not only sufficient water for Israel but a large enough open area for an encampment. From here, they moved to Rephidim on the western side of Mt. Sinai

It was at Rephidim that Moses, under God’s directions, brought water from the rock, Exodus 17, Here they also fought the Amalakites. The first photo below shows a split rock on a high place at Rephidim. The second photo shows a close up at the foot of that rock with water erosion coming from it.



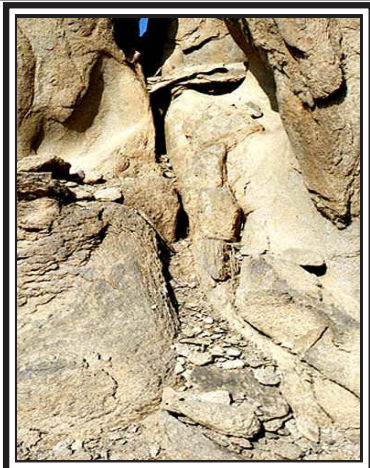
The Exodus account is very precise in the descriptions given of God’s presence upon the Holy Mountain.

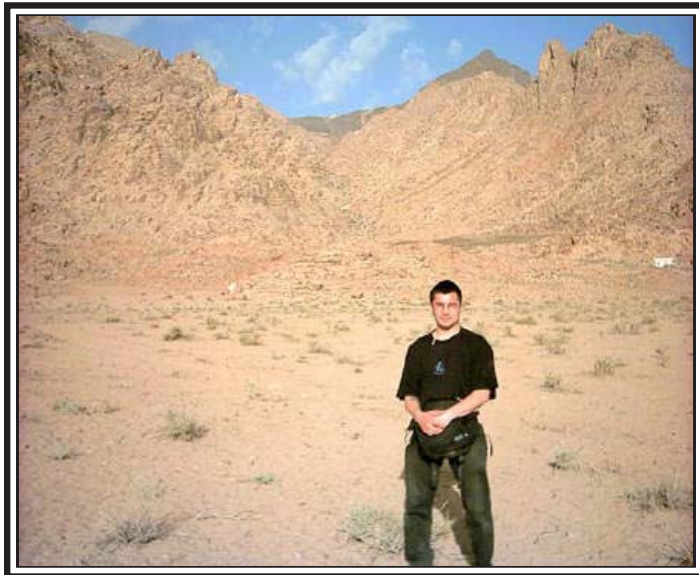
Exodus 24:17 And the sight of the glory of the LORD was like devouring fire on the top of the mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.

Deuteronomy 4:11 ... and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

Deuteronomy 5:4 The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire,... 23 And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders.

Below is an altar at Sinai with incised signs. The Saudis have erected a fence around it, and the mountain, to keep others from approaching the area.





This picture is of one early explorer before the Saudis closed the area. It shows Sinai in the background and part of the very large area on the east side of the mountain that was big enough for Israel to camp

There is a great deal we would like to know about the essential areas of Northern Saudi Arabia in view of the Israelites of the Exodus. It isn't that the evidence would be lacking but investigators are not allowed even to enter the country, much less do any research. One commentator explains it as follows—

"Yet no archaeologist working in this region of Egypt has been willing to say publicly that he or she believes that the Semitic people who inhabited the Land of Goshen, and then mysteriously disappeared from it, were the Israelites. Why not? According to several scholars and archaeologists whom Mahoney interviewed, the answer is fear: the Secretary General of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities, Dr. Zahi A. Hawass, decides personally which archaeologists will be allowed to work in Egypt, and he would never allow any archaeologist who expressed a belief in an ancient Israelite presence in the country to work there.

"If there is subtle, quiet intimidation of archaeologists in Egypt, the intimidation of them in Saudi Arabia has been anything but subtle. Explorers convinced that the Biblical 'mountain of God,' where He revealed the Law to the Israelites, is in northern Arabia, rather than in the Sinai Peninsula where post-Biblical tradition places it, have encountered fierce opposition from the Saudi authorities. One exploration party was subjected to 78 days of imprisonment. Several have encountered armed Saudi soldiers and police ordering them to evacuate the area immediately. Even the personal physician to a high-ranking Saudi prince, armed with a personal letter from the prince authorizing him to explore anywhere in Saudi Arabia, was denied entry to this area by armed guards. Why, Mahoney and his interviewees ask, is the Saudi government so intent on hiding ancient ruins and inscriptions?

"If the Exodus really took place in northern Saudi Arabia as Mr. Mahoney and his interviewees maintain, then the Arab claim to be the sole "indigenous"

inhabitants even of the Arabian Peninsula itself, let alone "Palestine," could be thrown into doubt.

In October, 2000, Israel withdrew from the area of Joseph's tomb in Shechem. In spite of assurances from the Palestinian Authority that the tomb would remain unharmed, within hours, a mob of Muslims attacked, killed one remaining Israeli guard and destroyed Joseph's tomb with Jackhammers and picks - while Muslim police did nothing to stop them. It was typical of Muslim duplicity. Below is all that is left of the tombstone, that had been over Joseph's grave, after the Muslims finished with it.

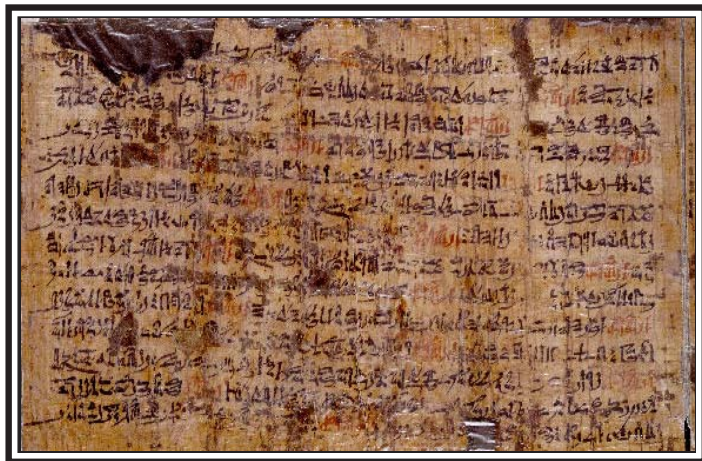


Here are other pictures of the destruction of the Tomb. They completely demolished it and built a mosque over it.



An Egyptian Eye Witness of the Plagues?

A movie appeared in 1954 titled *The Egyptian*. It is the story of an Egyptian physician by the name of *Sinuhe*. The movie is a fanciful story but with a tenuous connection with history. It is based on an Egyptian manuscript by the name of the *Papyrus of Ipuwer*. An Egyptian named Ipuwer is the author and records some of his experiences and wisdom.



The manuscript first appeared in the 12th century B.C. but is a copy of a much earlier manuscript. Information about the person of Ipuwer is virtually nonexistent. Information about the time period in which the manuscript was written is likewise conjecture. One writer says the following—

“It is impossible to give a date for the composition of this document. The surviving papyrus (Papyrus Leiden 334) itself is a copy made during the New Kingdom. Ipuwer is generally supposed to have lived during the Middle Kingdom or the Second Intermediate Period, and the catastrophes he bewails to have taken place four centuries earlier during the First Intermediate Period.”

What makes this papyrus interesting is the turmoil in Egypt at the time it was written. Ipuwer describes catastrophes that are startling in their comparison to the Bible record. It has been proposed that the papyrus is a description of the plagues of the Exodus from the viewpoint of an Egyptian eye witness. Immanuel Velikovsky wrote of this connection in his 1952 book, *Ages in Chaos*. The full text of the book is now available on the internet at — http://www.archive.org/stream/agesinchaosvolum008841mbp/agesinchaosvolum008841mbp_djvu.txt. It is very interesting reading, while the positions taken are yet to be absolutely substantiated.

Here are some of the parallels between Ipuwer and Exodus.

PAPYRUS 2:5-6 Plague is throughout the land. Blood is everywhere.

>**EXODUS 7:21** ... there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.

PAPYRUS 2:10 The river is blood.

>**EXODUS 7:20** ... all the waters that were in the river were turned to blood.

PAPYRUS 2:10 Men shrink from tasting — human beings, and thirst after water.

>**EXODUS 7:24** And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river.

>**EXODUS 7:21** ... and the river stank.

PAPYRUS 3:10-13 That is our water! That is our happiness! What shall we do in respect thereof? All is ruin!

PAPYRUS 4:14 Trees are destroyed.

>**EXODUS 9:25** ... and the hail smote every herb of the field, and brake every tree of the field.

PAPYRUS 4:14 Trees are destroyed. **6:1** No fruit nor herbs are found.

>**EXODUS 9:23-24** ... the fire ran along the ground... there was hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous.

PAPYRUS 2:10 Forsooth, gates, columns and walls are consumed by fire.

>**EXODUS 9:31-32** ... the flax and the barley was smitten; for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was boiled. But the wheat and the rye were not smitten: for they were not grown up.

It was after the next plague that the fields became utterly barren. Like the Book of Exodus (9:31-32 and 10:15), the papyrus relates that no duty could be rendered to the crown for wheat and barley; and as in Exodus 7:21 (“And the fish that was in the river died”), there was no fish for the royal storehouse.

PAPYRUS 10:3-6 Lower Egypt weeps... The entire palace is without its revenues. To it belong (by right) wheat and barley, geese and fish.

>**EXODUS 10:15** ... there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the fields, through all the land of Egypt.

PAPYRUS 6:3 Forsooth, grain has perished on every side. **5:12** Forsooth, that has perished which yesterday was seen. The land is left over to its weariness like the cutting of flax.

The statement that the crops of the fields were destroyed in a single day (“which yesterday was seen”) excludes drought, the usual cause of a bad harvest; only hail, fire, or locusts could have left the fields as though after “the cutting of flax”. The plague is described in Psalms 105:34-35 in these words: “... the locusts came, and caterpillars, and that without number. And did eat up all the herbs in their land, and devoured the fruit of their ground.”

PAPYRUS 6:1 No fruit nor herbs are found... hunger.

PAPYRUS 5:5 All animals, their hearts weep. Cattle moan.

>**EXODUS 9:3** ... the hand of the Lord is upon the cattle which is in the field... there shall be a very grievous murrain.

PAPYRUS 5:5 All animals, their hearts weep. Cattle moan....

PAPYRUS 9:2-3 Behold, cattle are left to stray, and there is none to gather them together. Each man fetches for himself those that are branded with his name.

>**EXODUS 9:19** .. gather thy cattle, and all that thou hast in the field... **21** And he that regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his cattle in the field.

>**EXODUS 10:22** ... and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt.

PAPYRUS 9:11 The land is not light...

According to the Book of Exodus, the last night the Israelites were in Egypt was a night in which death struck instantly and took victims from every Egyptian home. The death of so many in a single night, even at the same hour of midnight, cannot be explained by a pestilence, which would last more than a single hour. The story of the last plague does seem like a myth; it is a stranger in the sequence of the other plagues, which can be explained.

PAPYRUS 4:3, and 5:6 Forsooth, the children of princes are dashed against the walls.

6:12 Forsooth, the children of princes are cast out in the streets.

2:13 He who places his brother in the ground is everywhere.

>**EXODUS 12:29-30** And it came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon...there was not a house where there was not one dead.

PAPYRUS 3:14 It is groaning that is throughout the land, mingled with lamentations.

>**EXODUS 12:30** .. there was a great cry in Egypt.

A book by Artapanus, no longer extant, which quoted some unknown ancient source and which in its turn was quoted by Eusebius, tells of "hail and earthquake by night [of the last plague], so that those who fled from the earthquake were killed by the hail, and those who sought shelter from the hail were destroyed by the earthquake. And at that time all the houses fell in, and most of the temples."

The earth was equally pitiless towards the dead in their graves: the sepulchers opened, and the buried were disinterred.

PAPYRUS 4:4, also 6:14 Forsooth, those who were in the place of embalment are laid on the high ground.

"The residence is overturned in a minute." On a previous page it was stressed that only an earthquake could have overturned and ruined the royal residence in a minute. Sudden and simultaneous death could be inflicted on many....

>**EXODUS 12:30** And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt: for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

>**EXODUS 12:27** [The Angel of the Lord] passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses.

There are more parallels than are presented here.