

HEBREWS in Egypt

The truths of the Bible!

by **Antonio Crasto**

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Abstract

The religious texts tell the story of Jacob and his twelve children, who left the land of Canaan during a severe famine and settled in the land of Goshen, in the north-east of Egypt. While in Egypt, they would have been oppressed and enslaved by an unspecified pharaoh, but, after about 400 years, the God of Israel would have sent Moses to free them from slavery. According to the Bible, the Hebrews would have escaped from Egypt thanks to the miracles of their God and, after about 40 years, they would return to the land of their ancestors, Canaan.

However, this story is not accepted by most Hebrew and Egyptian historians, archaeologists, religious and politicians, who seem to agree that the history of the 400 years of the Hebrews in Egypt and the Exodus is an invention, as it is not there would be valid archaeological evidence.

I believe that this belief is completely wrong.

Not only is there archaeological evidence of the life of the Hebrews in Egypt and Sinai, but it also seems clear that **the Bible, even within the limits of the discussion after some time from real events, can be considered a historical text**, in line with the chronology and Egyptian history.

Chronology

The early history of the Hebrews can be divided into three periods, defined from: the Universal Flood, the birth of Abram, the arrival of Jacob in Egypt and the Exodus.

One of the various chronologies, the Masoretic one, considers the following dates:

Events	Masoretic dates	Years
Universal Flood of Noah	2395 BC	
		290
birth of Abram	2105 BC	
		290
arrival of Jacob in Egypt	1815 BC	
		430
Exodus	1385 BC	

Exodus dating

The Bible tells us that the construction of the 1st temple in Jerusalem, in the 4th year of Solomon's reign, began 480 years after the Exodus.

Solomon's reign is generally dated around 970 - 930 BC or 961 – 922 BC, whereby, considering my chronology of the XVIII dynasty ¹, there would be the Exodus in 1446 BC (18th year of Amenhotep II) or 1437 BC (6th year of Thutmose IV).

However, some versions of the Bible tell us about 440 instead of 480 years, so the Exodus should be considered in 1406 BC (27th year of Amenhotep III) or 1397 BC (36th year of Amenhotep III / 6th year of coregency of Amenhotep IV).

The referents of the Ptolemaic historian Manetho (Josephus, Sextus Julius Africanus and Eusebius of Caesarea) tell us about two different "Exoduses": of the expulsion of the Hyksos at the beginning of the reign of Ahmose (1578 - 1553 BC) the first two and of the escape from Egypt of the Hebrews during the reign of Akhenaten's successor, Smenkhkare, (1386 - 1385 BC) the third.

The difference of 12 years (1397 - 1385 BC) or 21 years (1406 - 1385 BC) between the date of the Exodus according to the Bible and the end of the reign of Smenkhkare therefore seems negligible and could be further reduced if we assume that the transcribers of the Bible have sought the sacredness of the number 40, symbolizing the link between God (10) and Humanity (4). They may therefore have corrected a real period of 428 or 419 years to 440 years.

The reporting of the Bible, which could confirm the Exodus at the end of the reign of Smenkhkare, has generally been neglected, as the interpretation of some passages from the Bible (assignment to Jacob of the land of Ramses and construction of the city of Ramses) would lead to erroneously speculate the Exodus in the next dynasty during the reign of Ramesses II or that of Merenptah.

On the other hand, it is very probable that religious want to remove the Exodus from Akhenaten's pseudo-monotheism, so as to consider the Hebrew religion as the first monotheistic religion.

Moses

The Bible tells us that:

- when he **was about forty years old**, he killed a team leader and fled to Midian;
- **after forty years**, after learning that the king had died, he returned to Egypt;
- met the new pharaoh, trying to obtain forgiveness and a better life for the Hebrews;
- not having obtained what was requested, he organized the Exodus of the Hebrews;
- remained in Sinai another 40 years and died at 120 years.

In reality, the words "**past forty years**" take on another meaning if we write "**past the forty years**".

So we would have that Moses could, in reality, have fled at about 40 years and returned at about 50 years, a difference of 10 and not 40 years, more realistic since in the meantime he had married and his two children were still children.

The Exodus would then have occurred after a portion of the reign of about 10 years and at the end of a very short reign of a king, who died chasing the Hebrews.

Moses quarrel with a pharaoh may have occurred during the construction of the new city of Akhetaten, around the 5th year of Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten's co-regency. Moses would have fled to Midian and returned to Egypt about 12 years later, once he learned of the king's death.

Considering that during the XVIII and XIX dynasty the only sovereigns who reigned very little (about 1 year) are only Smenkhkare (XVIII) and Ramesses I (XIX) it seems logical to accept Eusebio's report and consider the Exodus in 1385 BC at the end of the reign of Smenkhkare.

This would also justify the ephemeral reign of this pharaoh, the lack of evidence of his death, his insignificant burial and the bad conditions of his corpse, almost certainly fished out of the Sea of rushes and mummified when it was now in very bad conditions.

A further confirmation of the goodness of the Exodus date in the reign of Smenkhkare is obtained from the dating of the Exodus of the Hebrews obtained on the basis of the 19 jubilees preceding that celebrated by Cyrus the Great in 455 B-C. Since Persian jubilees are celebrated every 49 years, $455 + 19 \times 49 = 1386$ BC would occur.

Chronology of the Hebrews

The following mirror presents a summary of the main events concerning some Hebrew patriarchs (from Abram to Moses) and two chronologies (relative and absolute) obtained on the basis of the:

- reference point with the Egyptian chronology, identified on the Exodus date, 1385 BC;
- 430 year period between Jacob's arrival in Egypt and the Exodus (1815 - 1385 BC);
- period of 290 years between the birth of Abram and the arrival of Jacob in Egypt (2105 - 1815 BC);
- 24 year period between arrival in Egypt of Joseph and Jacob (1839 - 1815 BC);
- fact that Abram becomes Abraham from the 99th year.

Events	Chron. abs. BC	Chron. rel.	Bible	Note
Exodus	1385	0	E. 12,40	430 years of stay
birth of Moses	1435 1465	-50 -80	E. 7,7	50 before the Exodus 80 before the Exodus
beginning of slavery	?	?	E. 1,11	
death of Joseph	1744	-359	G. 50,22	at 110
beginning of oppression	1785	-400	G. 15,13	400 years before the Exodus
death of Jacob	1798	-413	G. 47,28	at 147
Jacob in Egypt	1815	-430	G. 47,9 G. 45,6	Jacob is 130 years old 2nd year of famine
	1824	-439	G. 41,1	beginning of fat cows
Joseph meets the pharaoh	1826	-441	G. 41,46	at 30
Joseph in Egypt	1839	-454	G. 37,2	at 17
Jacob struggles with God			G. 32,25	takes the name Israel
Rachel gives birth to Joseph	1856	-471	G. 30,23	Jacobs is 89 years old
Jacob marries Lia and Rachel			G. 29	daughters of Laban
Esau marries Giudit and Basemat	1905	-520	G. 26,34	Hittite wives
death of Abraham	1930	-545	G. 25,7	Abram+Abraham 175 years
Rebecca gives birth to Esau and Jacob	1945	-560	G. 25,26	Isaac is 60 years old
Isaac marries Rebecca	1965	-580	G. 25,20	
Sarah gives birth to Isaac	2005	-620	G. 21,5	Abraham is 100 years old
Abram bicommes Abraham Sarai bicommes Sarah			G. 17,5 G. 17,15	Abram is 99 years old Sarai is 89 years old
Abram in Egypt	~2028	-643		~2 years later
Abram leaves Carran	2030	-645	G. 12,4	Abram is 75 years old
birth of Abram	2105	-720	G. 11,26	Exodus-(430+290)

From which, considering my Egyptian chronology:

	Year BC	Pharaoh	Kingdom BC
Abram in Egypt	2028	11th Amenemhat I	2039 - 2023
Joseph in Egypt	1839	13th Amenemhat III	1852 - 1814
Joseph meets the pharaoh	1826	26th Amenemhat III	
Jacob in Egypt	1815	37th Amenemhat III	
Jacob's death	1798	4th XIII din.	1802 - 1749
beginning of oppression	1785	17th XIII din.	1802 - 1749
death of Joseph	1744	5th XIV din.	1749 - 1731
occupation of the Hyksos		XV- XVI - XVII din.	1731 - 1578
reconquest of L. and M. Egypt		Ahmoose's reign	1578 - 1553
Moses quarrels with Pharaoh	1398	5th Akhenaton	1403 - 1386
Exodus	1385	1th Smenkhkara	1386 - 1385
death of Moses	1345	23th Horemheb	1368 - 1331

Abram and his descendants

The biblical text considers:

- a divine justification for the presence of the Hebrews in Canaan, speculating for it a promise from God to Abram and his descendants;
- Abram's sudden enrichment in Egypt, as a reward for the taking of Sarai in the harem of Amenemhat I;
- the liberation of Sarai and Abram's departure from Egypt as a consequence of misfortunes that occurred to Pharaoh, for divine punishment because of Sarai's capture;
- some apparitions of the Lord to Abram, Isaac and Jacob as supernatural interventions to reconfirm the alliance pact with the Hebrew people;
- the physical struggle, which Jacob would have had directly with God, as a warning for the respect of the faithfulness of the Hebrew people.

It is possible that the events narrated in Genesis imply, however, a much more earthly history and with a close relationship with the events of the twelfth Egyptian dynasty. It is very probable that the following reconstruction of events is not far from historical reality:

- Abram is rewarded for the taking of his wife Sarai in 2028 BC by Amenemhet I (2039-2023 BC);
- five years later, the pharaoh is assassinated inside the harem;
- the son-in-law of Amenemhat I, Senusert I (2023-1972 BC), frees Sarai and obtains from her a report on the criminal events she had witnessed;
- on the other hand, it is possible that Senusert I orchestrated the conspiracy at a time when the legitimate heir was on a military mission in Libya;
- in this case the many gifts given to Abram and Sarai would have been a reward for their silence on the tragic events;
- Abram and Sarai are accompanied to the border, bringing with them rich gifts and a considerable number of animals;
- in consideration of the continuous danger shown by some cities of Palestine, Senusert I makes an alliance with Abram promising him the future possession of vast territories in exchange for his espionage and military collaboration;
- in this sense, Abram and his nephew Lot separate to control the land of Canaan and the Jordan valley respectively;
- later, Senusert I comes directly to Abram, tells him that he will be called Abraham and his wife Sarah; he therefore made a new alliance, which provided, as a sign of recognition of the Hebrew people, the circumcision, analogous to the custom of the Egyptian people;
- after having advised Lot to run away quickly from the city of Sodom, the pharaoh, accompanied by Abraham, besieges the rebel cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and destroys them with a rain of sulfur and fire;
- Senusert I asks Abraham to meet his son Isaac, so as to renew the alliance with the future patriarch of the Hebrews;
- the marriage of Esau, Isaac's grandson with Hittite women, in 1905 BC during the reign of Senusert II (1932 - 1882 BC), it could indicate the failure of the commitment to the Egyptians of Esau and his tribe, if not the change of alliance with their enemies of northern Syria;
- the blessing of Isaac to the second-born Jacob in place of Esau, can therefore be interpreted as a split of the Hebrew people, a part favorable to the Hurrites and Hittites, that of Esau, and the other still allied to the Egyptians, that of Jacob;
- the physical struggle of the Lord with Jacob / Israel, after 1854 BC, can be interpreted as a decisive intervention by Pharaoh Senusert III (1882 - 1852 BC) to call Jacob to

respect the old covenant pact, due to a relaxation of the activity carried out by the Hebrew people in fighting the populations of Palestine, intolerant of Egyptian domination;

- Jacob's return to Canaan can be seen as a new espionage effort by the people of Israel for the Egyptians.

Joseph and the Hebrews in Egypt

The reconstruction of the chronology of Hebrew history led us to assume that:

- the seventeen year old Joseph was sold to the Egyptians around 1839 BC (13th year of Amenemhat III);
- he, after unfortunate events, obtained the esteem of the Egyptian authorities;
- finally, it was presented, now thirty years old, to Pharaoh in 1826 BC (26th year of Amenemhat III).

Joseph would have interpreted the pharaoh's dreams and envisaged the event of seven years of abundance followed by a famine of seven years. He would thus have been assigned the task of following the interests of the kingdom until he later assumed the position of vizier.

Joseph continued the reclamation and irrigation work of the Fayum, so that he could have a large cultivable area. After two years, in 1824 BC (28th of Amenemhat III), began the long period of "fat cows". Wheat was cultivated intensively throughout Egypt, so as to have at the end of the seven years, in 1817 BC, a huge reserve of wheat in the warehouses of the pharaoh, who had forfeited all the food surplus.

The subsequent seven-year famine put Egypt and the whole of the Near East into crisis and Pharaoh was able to sell the accumulated grain.

In the second year of famine, Joseph met his brothers who came to Egypt to buy grain. He made himself known and asked them to accompany their old father, Jacob, to Egypt, so that they could live again with all his family.

Upon the arrival of the father in 1815 BC (37th year of Amenemhat III), Joseph wanted to introduce him to the sovereign. He indoctrinated his father to declare himself a breeder of cattle and not sheep, as in reality was the family of Jacob.

This fact, not interpreted by biblical scholars, has an explanation in a political / religious dispute between Upper and Lower Egypt.

Once Egypt was reunited, Amenemhat I moved the capital of the kingdom to Menphy, thus seeking better control of the nomarches of Lower Egypt, which after a long period of independence during the 1st Intermediate Period, could not stand the authority of the sovereigns by *Waset* / Luxor.

The nomarches of Lower Egypt also did not want to renounce their solar deity of the Age of Taurus, Ra, and welcome the new solar deity of the Age of Aries, Amon, imposed by the priests of Upper Egypt.

The nomes of Lower Egypt thus continued to venerate the sacred bull Mnevis, as an epiphany of the god Ra.

Joseph knew well that the nomads of Lower Egypt did not appreciate sheep farmers (sheep, goats and their rams), so he told his father to declare himself a cattle breeder (cows and bulls). Amenemhat III could never have granted Delta lands to Semitic shepherds sheep breeders, so Jacob declared himself a cattle breeder and obtained from Pharaoh to be able to live in the Eastern Delta region, in the 20th nome.

Avaris

Thus the Hebrews of Jacob got to live in the northern part of the Nomo of *Per Soped* / Gesem / Goshen, in a place that the Bible calls Ramses.

This fact has created much confusion in biblical scholars and Egyptologists. They believe that the name Ramses / Ramesses "son of Ra" was first used by the 1st ruler of the 19th dynasty, Ramesses I.

In fact, the name Ramesses could be a characteristic name of Lower Egypt and it is very likely that it has been used precisely in the nome of Qesen / Goshen since the Ancient Kingdom. Otherwise an anachronism of the text should be admitted, which does not affect the historical interpretation of the facts.

Excavations conducted by Labib Habachi (1941 - 1942) showed that the site of the modern city of Tell el-Dab'a was precisely that of the city of Hyksos, Avaris. Subsequent excavations conducted by Shehata Adam (1951 - 1954), Manfred Bietak (1966 - 2009) and Irene Forstner-Müller (2009 onwards) have demonstrated the existence of a site of the XII, XIII and XIV dynasty, certainly that of the Hebrews of Jacob.

Beginning of the oppression

The historical reconstruction of the Hebrews tells us that the quiet life of the Hebrews in Goshen would last only 30 years, since in 1785 BC according to the Bible, **the 400-year oppression of the Hebrews in Egypt** would have begun (1785 - 1385 BC).

30 years of life in Avaris of Jacob and his tribe took place during:

- the last year of Amenemhat III's reign (1852 - 1814 BC);
- the 8 years of the reign of Amenemhat IV (1814 - 1806 BC);
- the 4 years of the reign of Nefrusobek (1806 - 1802 BC);
- the first 17 years of the XIII dynasty (1802 - 1749 BC).

The names of the kings of the thirteenth dynasty and the duration of their kingdoms are not well known. The Turin Papyrus lists about 60 kings, among whom, according to some ancient historians, at least one king lived at the time of the Hebrews in Egypt. Manetho's referents report: XIII dynasty (60 kings in 453 years) and XIV dynasty (76 kings in 184 years). There are obviously important mistakes. We know that the 15th Hyksos dynasty had to start, according to my chronology, in 1731 BC so there would be only 71 years available.

years	date	Pre-name	name
XIII revision			
~2	1802	Sekhemra-khutaui	Amenemhat Sobekhotep
?		Sekhemkara	Amenemhat-sonbef
~3			Ra-Amenemhat
~1		Sehotepibra	Hornedjheritef
	1749		
XIV revision			
	1749		
	1731		

The first three kings seem somewhat connected to the kings of the XII dynasty (Amenemhat V, VI and VII).

On the other hand, it seems likely that after Ra-Amenemhat (VII) there had been a secession of some Delta nomarches, with the consequent creation of contemporary kingdoms separated from the central power of Menphy.

King / nomarch Sehotepibra Hornedjheritef was known as *Sa Kemau* (seal found in Byblos in Canaan and command stick found in Ebla in Syria), a title that should mean "son of the Asian" or, as written in another inscription, "son of Ameny the Asian".

We can then speculate that Joseph assumed control of the 20th nome of Gesem / Goshen

after Jacob's death in 1798 BC, appearing as king of the thirteenth dynasty.

We do not know how long Joseph's command of the nome lasted, but it is likely that it lasted about 13 years until 1785 BC, the date of the start of the oppression of the Hebrews in Egypt.

This fact leads us to believe that it was not a normal rotation of nomarches, but a forced dismissal of Joseph, conducted by important personalities of the 20th nome, unhappy with being employed by a Hebrew leader.

We can still speculate that Joseph and the adult males of Avaris have been transferred to other areas of Lower Egypt, perhaps in the workers village of El-Lahun, built by Senusert II, to continue this time, as workers, the remediation works of the Fayum.

Joseph died in 1744 BC about 110 years, after seeing the first 41 years of oppression of his people.

Upon his death, he was mummified and buried in Avaris, but with the promise that if the Hebrews would one day leave the land of the Nile, they would bring his mummy with them.

Testimonials

It is known that the city of Avaris was the capital of the Asian invaders, Hyksos, who in 1731 BC invaded the Nile Delta and conquered Lower and Middle Egypt for a few centuries.

The city was located on the Pelusian branch of the eastern Delta and was identified on the site of the modern city of Tell el-Dab'a.

Recent archaeological excavations have highlighted how the city:

- was built during the XII - XIII dynasty, certainly by the Hebrews of Jacob and Joseph;
- was razed to the ground by the Hyksos, who built their capital there;
- was occupied again by the Egyptians at the beginning of the XVIII dynasty;
- has finally become Pi-Ramesses, the capital of the kings of the 19th dynasty.

Archaeological excavations have highlighted the presence of non-Egyptian style houses and ceramics that recall those of the Near East, a certain testimony to the presence of the Hebrews of Jacob. In confirmation of this, two statues were found: one of Meritra Nefrusobek, the last female king of the XII dynasty, and the other of Sehotepibra, king / nomarch of the XIII dynasty, identifiable in the Hebrew patriarch Joseph.

The discovery of many sheep skeletons seems to tell us that the Hebrews of Jacob's family, sheep breeders, had to sacrifice their flocks in order not to offend the Gesem / Goshen nomarch, worshiper of the Mnevis bull.

Professor Manfred Bietak speculated that the name Avaris derives precisely from Hebrew names. In the Torah, Joseph is in fact called several times "*Ivri*" (Hebrew) and "*Ha Ish*" (man). Avaris could then derive from "*Ivri Ish*", the city of the Hebrew Joseph.

Excavations have identified the ruins of a XII - XIII dynasty palace, which should be the one built by Sehotepibra / Joseph. It has clear references to the number 12: columns, apartments and tombs, which recall the 12 sons of Jacob.

Finally, one of the 12 tombs has a purely Egyptian style, with a small pyramid built above the funeral chamber, a tomb that evidently should be that of Sehotepibra / Joseph. In confirmation of this, the excavations have brought to light the fragments of a large statue, whose reddish hair is mushroom-like, not in the Egyptian style.

The layer of discovery seems to confirm that the statue was found in the tomb with a pyramid roof, so it could represent Joseph, which, moreover, was demonstrated by the vertical striped dress of different colors, such as those of the important Hebrew characters.

Crisis in Avaris

Archaeological data tells us that the Avaris settlement extended considerably for several generations, perhaps demonstrating a consistent migration of people from the Near East in the approximately 90 years since the settlement of Jacob at the arrival of the Hyksos.

Suddenly and before the Hyksos invasion, the site went into crisis. A great many deaths appear to have occurred in a fairly short period. One could think of an epidemic, but the fact that there is a large percentage of children and a strong inequality between women and men (about 60% of the former and 40% of the latter) leads to speculate that many men were far from the city and the Hebrew men who died in El-Lahun were buried in the local necropolis, confirming the beginning of the oppression of the Hebrews in 1785 BC.

Hyksos

At the end of the eighteenth century BC, suddenly the invasion of Egypt by people from the Near East took place, which, according to Manetho, broke into the Nile Delta and, without any difficulty, seized power. We must therefore speculate that the Hyksos, the *Heka Khasut* the kings of foreign countries, were a coalition of Asian peoples.

The Bible makes no mention of the new situation, but the anomalous descendants of Esau and his five wives (three Hittites, one Hurrite and one Ishmaelite) and his alliance with the people of the Urrites of Seir suggest a vast alliance of peoples, under the military leadership of the emerging Urriti / Khurriti people. Thanks to the military superiority, due to the horse-drawn carts and the enhanced arch, these people of the Near East would have conquered the entire Lower and Middle Egypt in a short time.

Giuseppe Flavio writes that during the reign of Tutimaios, an obscure race of invaders marched from eastern territories to our country. With their numerical strength and without efforts, they seized our lands, burned our cities, razed the temples of the gods, massacred our inhabitants and enslaved their wives and their children. Finally they elected king Salitis / Sheshi, who placed his capital in Menphy, demanding tributes from the various nomes of Lower and Middle Egypt. He rebuilt the city of Avaris and protected it with imposing walls and a garrison of many thousands of men.

According to Africano, 6 kings for 284 years, 32 kings for 518 years and 43 kings for 151 years, respectively for the XV, XVI and XVII dynasty, would have reigned.

In reality we only have 153 years available (1731 - 1578 BC) so we have to propose some corrections. We therefore speculated that the six kings of the 15th African dynasty covered the entire 153-year period.

Once settled in Avaris (1731 BC) the Hyksos replaced the Egyptian divinities with the divinities of the Near East and in particular exalted the figure of their god Sutekh, almost certainly a syncretism of the Egyptian god Seth.

A confirmation of the date of the Hyksos invasion and the foundation of the temple of Sutekh / Seth comes from the fact that Ramesses I (1331 BC), the first king of the 19th dynasty, commemorated the 400 years of the foundation of the temple of Sutekh / Seth in Avaris, a city that the first kings of the 19th dynasty: Ramesses I, Sethy I and Ramesses II transformed and enlarged, as the new capital of Egypt.

Hebrews in the Hyksos period

After the dismissal of King Sehoteplibra / Joseph, the fall out of favor of the Hebrews of Avaris and the beginning of their oppression, it is very likely that the Israelite Hebrews have resumed contact with the Edomite Hebrews (descendants of Esau).

The Hebrew Israelites may have seen the possibility of revenge and, just as they had carried out an espionage service in favor of Senusert I and his successors of the XII dynasty in the land of Canaan, this time they would have carried out an espionage service in favor of the kings from the Near East.

One can then speculate their involvement in the conquest of the Delta by the Hyksos. The Israelites may have unveiled the fortifications along the Mediterranean coastal route and suggested a safer route to enter Egypt. So the Hyksos would have:

- traveled the caravan routes of eastern Sinai;
- crossed the Sinai in the central area, that of the mines well known to the Bedouins and the Israelites;
- climbed the western coast of Sinai to Lake Timsah;
- crossed the Sea of rushes and traveled the wadi Tumilat, so as to quickly reach Menphly and take the Egyptians by surprise.

Once they conquered Lower and Middle Egypt, the Hyksos would reward the Israelite Hebrews by assigning them a new home in Middle Egypt, perhaps around the city of Minya, which was to be a border area with neighboring Upper Egypt.

The transfer of the Hebrews to Middle Egypt may have had a military significance. They would have formed military contingents that would have opposed the forces of Upper Egypt. Furthermore, they could have informed the Hyksos kings of the movements and military operations of the kings of *Waset* / Luxor. In practice, the Hebrews would have carried out a new espionage service, this time against the Egyptians of Upper Egypt and in favor of the Hyksos.

The Bible does not tell us about an interruption of the 400-year oppression of the Hebrews during the Hyksos domination. This fact could stem both from a certain oppression of the new rulers and from not wanting to emphasize their involvement in the Hyksos occupation and thus provide the justification for their subsequent slavery.

Slavery of the Hebrews

Once the Hyksos had been driven out, the time had come to punish the Hebrews, who had sided with the Hyksos and betrayed the trust given to them by Amenemhat III. The Hebrews were seen as former allies of the invaders and potential enemies for the future.

Once power was reorganized in Lower and Middle Egypt, it is very likely that Ahmose (1578 - 1553 BC) or rather Amenhotep I (1553 - 1532 BC) decided to subject the Hebrews into slavery, using them to forced labor for the construction of new city or reconstruction of various sites destroyed or damaged during the occupation war.

It therefore seems very probable that the sovereign who decreed slavery was Amenhotep I. A possible justification comes from the fact that it was Amenhotep I who started the construction of the new workers village in Deir el-Medina.

This site later became the Village of the workers who worked on the construction of the tombs in the nearby Valley of the Kings, but, given the high fence walls, we can assume that initially the village was intended for Hebrew slaves.

At the temples of Amenhotep I, the area was to be little used and perhaps occupied by some necropolises of the previous dynasties and some temples.

The Hebrews were said to have been employed for the excavation of the tombs of the necropolis of the XVIII dynasty and for the manufacture of bricks, starting from those for the fences of the Village of Deir el-Medina.

Amenhotep I also decided to put a stop to the birth of new males.

It therefore seems very probable that the decree of the slavery of the Hebrews and the order to kill, for a certain period, the male Hebrew infants were events very close in time, so as to be able to assign them to the same year of reign of Amenhotep I.

The killing of Hebrew babies recalls the birth of Moses and his rescue from the waters of the Nile. However, the supposed date of the beginning of slavery would be 168 - 147 years earlier than the supposed Exodus in 1385 BC, far too many to a single character.

We must therefore speculate two characters, spaced from a few generations, considered in a unified way by the Bible.

For the first character, the one born in the period of commencement of slavery and the killing order of male infants, the book of Exodus tells us that the newborn Moses would have been placed by his mother in a tarred basket and sent to two little princesses who they were bathing in the waters of the Nile. However, the Bible does not mention the name of the princesses or that of her father.

The Book of Jubilees and Giuseppe Flavio tell us about a certain king Thermuthis / Tharmuth. The Leviticus Rabbah and the Book of Chronicles instead speak to us of Princess Bat-ah / Bity-ah / Bithiah, explaining that the name could mean "daughter of Yahweh".

The name Thermuthis / Tharmuth should derive from the Egyptian name Thutmose, Greekized in Thutmosis.

The name of the princess reported in the book of Chronicles, Bityah, is an Egyptian name and certainly does not derive from the name of the God of the Hebrews, however not yet invented by Moses. Bityah is a name composed, as the custom of the Egyptians, by a name of a divinity and an adjective. Thus we have Bity-'ah "the great bee", as a tribute to the symbol of Lower Egypt, the sacred bee *Bity*. As the reference to the bee is not very common, this name is believed to have been a tribute from the father to the reconquered Lower Egypt.

So we have to look for a princess whose name contained the reference to the bee *Bity*, was born during the reign of Amenhotep I and whose father had the name Thutmose.

The result of the research is unique: **Neferu-bity, second daughter of the Egyptian army general, Thutmose, husband of Amenhotep I's sister, Ahmes.**

Moses saved from the waters

The Bible tells us that:

- he was the son of a woman from Levi's family;
- the mother placed him in a tarred basket, which she pushed towards two little princesses;
- the princesses had the basket recovered and brought the newborn to court;
- the newborn was adopted;
- the baby was raised by the real mother, who in the meantime had made herself recognized;
- his whole family lived in court, presumably taking Egyptian names.

It therefore seems very likely that Princess Bityah was Neferubity "The beauties of the bee". On the other hand, it seems logical to speculate that Neferubity was together with the older sister Hatshepsut "Before me the most noble of the girls" and that both found the basket with the Hebrew infant.

We can consider that:

- Hatshepsut and his younger sister Neferubity were born in the early years of Amenhotep I's reign (1553 - 1532 BC), perhaps in 1549 and 1547 BC respectively;
- the king's brother-in-law, Thutmose (I), was an army general, so he could have well hidden the adoption of the Hebrew child;
- the two princesses found the newborn in the basket and the father Thutmose (I) and the mother Ahmes adopted the newborn, despite knowing that he was a Hebrew child;
- the little infant, a few years younger than the two princesses, has been given an Egyptian name, perhaps that of the reigning king, Amenhotep I;
- his parents and relatives have assumed Egyptian names, have lived in court and the little boy has attended the school of the royal palace, *kep*, being a playmate and study companion for the princesses.

Amenhotep - Senenmut

We know that at the court of Thutmose I there was an adopted young man named Amenhotep, who was considered "First son of Thutmose I", but whose real parents are known. It therefore seems conceivable that this Amenhotep was, in all likelihood, the newborn saved from the waters.

We still know that very close to Thutmose (I) and his daughter Hatshepsut there was a certain Senenmut.

We also know that:

- between Hatshepsut and Senenmut there was a particular emotional relationship;
- Senenmut did not marry, as if his bond with Hatshepsut was a love forbidden and kept hidden;
- Senenmut was the tutor of both the daughters of Hatshepsut and Thutmose II, as if he were an uncle.

It therefore seems legitimate to believe that Thutmose (I) 's adopted son, Amenhotep, was actually Senenmut. In this case it is possible that the name Senenmut is a nickname, perhaps given to Amenhotep by Hatshepsut or his daughter Neferura.

Amenhotep no longer used his name, but in homage to Hatshepsut and Neferura he preferred to be called Senenmut, but after the premature death of Neferura, he took up the old name Amenhotep.

The young Amenhotep / Senenmut studied at the *kep* school, the school of the royal palace, certainly together with the five children of Thutmose (I), where he demonstrated great intellectual abilities. Becoming a boy, Senenmut participated in the military expeditions conducted by Thutmose I in Nubia and his behavior in battle earned him the honor of the *menefert* bracelet.

During the reigns of Thutmose I, Thutmose II, Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, Senenmut held almost all the most important positions, including:

- responsible for the Double House of Gold, the garden, the fields and the flocks of Amun;
- priest of the boat of Amun;
- tutor of the royal daughter Neferura;
- supervisor of the works.

The memory of the rescue from the waters of the Nile, however, seems to permeate in the sentence reported by Senenmut himself: "**I am one who came out of the waves and who was given the Flood by which I have power over the Nile**".

Senenmut's family would have remained faithful to the royal family, but it is conceivable that he secretly kept the memory of Hebrew traditions. Some anomalies in the behavior of this important character would thus be justified:

- the tendency to neglect the Osiris divinity;
- the particular vision of the figure of the bull, perhaps linked to the Mnevis bull;
- the association of the seven sacred cows with the sacred bull;
- the indication of the father's name before that of the mother;
- the tribute brought to Senenmut by non-Egyptian, perhaps Cretan, characters.

The hypothesis of not belonging to the Egyptian culture could justify, again, the fact that Senenmut has never married or the names of his possible children are known.

This very strange situation for an Egyptian man can also be explained by assuming that the friendship between Hatshepsut and his adopted brother, Amenhotep / Senenmut, has gradually transformed into a deeper feeling.

After the death of Thutmose II, the widow Hatshepsut would have sentimentally approached her adopted brother, but their relationship had to be kept hidden for clear political reasons. Officially loving a Hebrew at a time when Egyptian kings kept Hebrews in slavery would have been a scandal enough to indict the female pharaoh.

Egyptologists have tried to explain why almost all the representations of the female pharaoh Hatshepsut and Senenmut were found carefully hammered.

It has long been speculated that the instigator of the vandalism was Thutmose III, for a certain feeling of rancor kept hidden during the stepmother's regency and collateral reign. This possibility is however contradicted by the archaeological evidence that tells us of a collaboration of Senenmut with Thutmose III after the death of Hatshepsut.

The action to destroy the images of Hatshepsut and Senenmut seems to have started only during the reign of Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten.

A probable chronological mirror of the characters of the period:

	Pharaoh		year BC
coronation of Amenhotep I	Amenhotep I		1553
birth of Hatshepsut		4 th	1549
birth of Thutmose (II)		5 th	1548
birth of Neferubity		5 th	1548
beginning of slavery		8 th	1545
birth of Senenmut / Moses saved from the waters		8 th	1545
coronation of Thutmose I	Thutmose I		1532
Hatshepsut marries her step brother Thutmose (II)		7 th	1525
birth of Neferura		9 th	1523
birth of Marytra Hatshepsut		10°	1522
birth of Thutmose (III)		11°	1521
coronation of Thutmose II	Thutmose II		1519
Senenmut tutor of Neferura		1°	1518
Senenmut tutor of Marytra Hatshepsut		2°	1517
coronation of Thutmose III	Thutmose III		1516
regency of Hatshepsut			1516
Hatshepsut takes on royal titles		5°	1511
Thutmose III marries Neferura			1509
death of Neferura		20°	1496
Thutmose III marries Marytra Hatshepsut		21°	1495
death of Hatshepsut		22°	1494
death of Senenmut		26°	1490
death of Thutmose III			1461

Moses of the Exodus

We have so far speculated that the beginning of the slavery of the Hebrews and the birth of Senenmut occurred in the 8th year of Amenhotep I's reign (1545 BC). We also assumed that the Exodus occurred in 1385 BC, at the end of the kingdom of Smenkhkare.

In view of the fact that Senenmut held important positions, it is very probable that his direct (lineage of any children) or indirect (lineage of his brothers) descendants also occupied important positions, such as supervising the works of the kingdom or even vizier. It therefore seems important to verify the viziers who took office during the reigns of Thutmose IV (1443 - 1433 BC), Amenhotep III (1433 - 1394 BC) and Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten (1403 - 1386 BC).

Viziers	Kings	Notes
Amenemipet Paury	Thutmose IV	
Seny	Thutmose IV	
Thut-mose	Thutmose IV Amenhotep III	Ptah-mose (son) Maryptah (son)
Ptah-mose	Amenhotep III	until 20th year
Maryptah	Amenhotep III	from 20th to 30th year
Amenhotep Huy(Maryptah daughter)	Amenhotep III Amenhotep IV	from 30th to 35th year from 1st to 5th year
Ra-mose(marries Maryptah)	Amenhotep III Amenhotep IV	from 30th to 35th year from 1st to 5th year
Aper-El	Amenhotep III Amenhotep IV	from 36th to 39th year from 6th to 17th year

Considering that: the nickname of Amenemipet was Paury (equal to the name of a brother of Senenmut); three out of seven viziers had the name formed by that of a divinity and the nome mose "son"; the penultimate vizier had the same name as Senenmut's father, Ramose; Amenhotep Huy and Ramose were brothers and they started and stopped the vizier activity simultaneously; we can assume that:

- these viziers from Amenemipet Paury to Amenhotep Huy and Ramose were Hebrew - Egyptians;
- all descended, in some way, from Ramose, father of Senenmut;
- in the 35th year of Amenhotep III / 5th year of Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten something very serious happened, so they were removed from their position as vizier.

The two brothers Amenhotep Huy and Ramose were both viziers during the co-regency between Amenhotep III (31st - 35th year) and Amenhotep IV (1st - 5th year). These 5 years of co-regency saw the flourishing of the life-giving solar disk cult, Aten-Ra, and the construction of a temple dedicated to him in Karnak.

Both dug two important tombs in the Valley of the Nobles, the first on the site of el-Asasif (TT28) and the second on the site of Sheykh Abd el-Qurna (TT55). However, the two tombs were not finished and they were not buried there. They were also subject to vandalism, as if the two characters had been the object of *damnatio memoriae*. It is also certain that Ramose and Amenhotep Huy did not follow Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten in the new city of Akhetaten.

Akhetaten / Amarna

In the 35th year of Amenhotep III's reign and the 5th year of Amenhotep IV's co-regency, a new city was built in a desert area of Middle Egypt. This city was built to quarantine the couple of co-regents, Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten and Nefertiti, as an attempt to save the dynasty from the terrible bubonic plague epidemic, which had already led Amenhotep III to move the palace from the city of *Waset* / Luxor in a desert site in the western sector, in Malkata, in an area normally intended for funeral temples and necropolises.

It therefore seems conceivable that Hebrew slaves were employed in the rapid construction of Akhetaten, perhaps, as the Bible says, for the manufacture of clay and straw bricks, for the construction of the many houses and the enclosure walls.

The Hebrews would have been moved from the workers village of Deir el-Medina to the new workers village of Akhetaten. This covered a square area of about 70 meters side, surrounded by a high wall and with 72 small houses.

In the southeast corner there was the superintendent's house, while in the southwest corner there were two small houses for the site guards.

Confirmation that the workers were Hebrew slaves can be found considering that:

- a significant amount of Palestinian-style pottery was found in homes;
- the village was surrounded by high walls, with exit control through a single entrance with a guardhouse;
- in the necropolis, despite only 13 years of life in the city, a high percentage of burials of children and men were found, whose bodies show signs of heavy work and often unhealed fractures;
- in the southern necropolis, the one near the workers village, un-mummified bodies of girls and women were found, wrapped in simple sheets (according to the Palestinian custom), many of which have hair attached to the skull or to the short natural hair.

These facts therefore speak to us of Hebrew slaves, subjected to hard works. The anomalous hair of the buried women can still tell us that in life they were forced to cut their hair, perhaps to be easily distinguishable from the Egyptian women, and that before the burial they had their hair or the hair of other women attached, so as to appear in the afterlife as normal women.

Bible

It is therefore very probable that:

- Ramose, while sharing the construction of the new city and the heavy work to which the Hebrews were subjected, during his visit to the Akhetaten construction site, had to complain about the forced labor that his people were forced to;
- accidentally killed one of the Hebrew worker guardians;
- had a hard quarrel with Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten;
- was afraid of the punishment that Pharaoh would inflict on him;
- escaped from Egypt and took refuge in the land of Midian;
- brother Amenhotep Huy has been removed from the position of vizier;
- a new vizier, Aper El, has been appointed, perhaps of Mitannic or Canaanite origin;
- Ramose and Amenhotep Huy have been *damnatio memoriae* and their beautiful tombs have been destroyed;
- Akhenaten had a profound hate for all the Hebrews and in particular for Senenmut and the female pharaoh Hatshepsut, who had first brought them to court and who had made Senenmut and his descendants very important characters;
- Akhenaten would have begun the work of erasing the memory of Hatshepsut and Senenmut.

Ramose, who has now become simply Moses, would have married in the land of Midian a new wife, Zippora, the daughter of the local priest Ietro, who had hosted him.

When he learned of Pharaoh's death, he believed he could attempt to free the Hebrews from slavery, study the situation in Sinai and develop an escape plan.

Returning to Egypt he tried to obtain liberation and, having not had it, organized the escape of the Hebrews, taking advantage of the collaboration of his brother Amenhotep Huy / Aaron and his sister Miriam, who had been living among the Hebrews for about 10 years.

Moses, Aaron and Miriam exploited the various misfortunes that were happening in Egypt to convince Hebrews, the Egyptians and the pharaoh that they were a punishment from the God of the Hebrews, to punish the Egyptians for oppression, slavery and forced labor.

The fact that Amenhotep Huy and Ramose held the position of vizier until the 35th year of Amenhotep III's reign / 5th year of Amenhotep IV's co-regency leads to speculate that the quarrel with Amenhotep IV / Akhenaten and the escape to earth of Midian of Moses happened in 1398 BC, so we would have:

Bible (revision)	Year BC	Diff.	King	year
beginning of slavery birth of Moses saved from the waters / Senenmut	1545		Amenhotep I	8
		110		
birth of Moses of Exodus	1435		Thutmose IV	8
		37		
escape of Moses in Midian (at about 37 years old)	1398		Amenhotep III Akhenaten	35 5
		13		
return of Moses and Exodus (at about 50 years old)	1385		Smenkhkare	1
		40		
death of Mosè (at about 90 years old)	1345		Horemheb	23

Return to Egypt

The fact that Moses returned to Egypt from the land of Midian bringing with him his new wife Zippora and his sons (Gherson and Eliezer) on a donkey, confirms that the period in exile could not have been 40 years, but about 10 years, the time to get to Midian, meet and marry a new wife and have two children, who at the time of the return were still too young to travel alone on a donkey, so they traveled together with the mother.

The sequence of wonders: 1) the water changed into blood, 2) the frogs, 3) the mosquitoes, 4) the flies, 5) the mortality of the cattle, 6) the ulcers, 7) the hail, 8) the grasshoppers, 9) the darkness, 10) the death of the firstborn, would have been wanted by the God of the Hebrews, Yahveh, to frighten the pharaoh. However, a sequence of many misfortunes concentrated in a few days seems unreal.

Instead, it is believed that the Hebrews knew of the catastrophes caused by the explosion of the volcano on the Cyclades island, Thera / Santorini:

- the very strong tsunami caused by the explosion of the volcano headed south-east arriving on the coast of the Delta;
- the dust caused by the explosion rose up above the stratosphere, so as to remain in that layer for years, with the consequence of filtering the sun's rays;
- the lapilli of the explosion reached Egypt causing serious damage.

In Egypt, but perhaps all over Earth there was a short ice age. The snows of the high mountains at the sources of the Nile did not melt even in the summer. The Nile did not overflow regularly and the fields could not be flooded regularly.

It was the basis for a long and new famine, but also for extraordinary events. Various animals came out of the Nile: frogs, mice, etc. The brief climate change exalted certain atmospheric phenomena, causing strong winds and the arrival of various animals in Egypt. The real plague, the death of the only Egyptian firstborn, is difficult to understand. It seems impossible that this has occurred across Egypt. Instead, we can speculate that the plague struck only the city of Akhetaten where Smenkhkare lived and where Moses and Aaron were negotiating with Pharaoh the liberation of the people of Israel.

It is very likely that they, now decayed viziers, stayed in the workers village east of the city. It can then be assumed that a new peak of the plague epidemic occurred, which began during the reign of Amenhotep III and arrived in Akhetaten after the 12th year of Akhenaten.

The new acute phase of plague would have been brought by the people who arrived and the infection would have spread only to the city, affecting the Egyptians, while the Hebrews, isolated in their village, would not have been infected.

The death of the only first-born seems an exaggeration, which cannot be justified, but we can believe that he wants to remember the death of the eldest daughter of Smenkhkare and Marytaten, Marytaten tashery.

The worsening of the plague, the miraculous rescue of the people of the Hebrew village

and the death of the king's eldest son would have been seen by Pharaoh as a sign of the God of the Hebrews, convincing him that the time had come to expel the Asians, from Egypt too long in oppression and slavery.

The Hebrews would have hurriedly embarked on various ships moored at the pier on the Nile and descended the river to the port of Avaris.

The escape

At Avaris, Moses and Aaron took Joseph's mummy and then headed towards Succoth, as if they wanted to travel the coastal road to Palestine.

The biblical text speaks of at least 600 thousand adults, but this interpretation is incorrect. The Hebrew term *'elef* can in fact be translated as "thousand" or "family", "clan". In that case we would have 600 family clans, for a total of a few thousand people.

They headed for the eastern desert and stopped at Etham. They went southwest and camped between Migdol and Pi-Acherot. Then they camped in front of Baal-Zefon, near the banks of the Sea of rushes (Lake Timsah).



Initial route in the Eastern Delta

Evidently the Hebrews were not wandering in the eastern Delta because the Etham desert had stopped them. They were touching the sites where there were Hebrews, so as to take them away with them. Finally they stopped at the banks of the lake / pond Timsah, *Jam sūf*, Sea of rushes.

Lake Timsah interrupted the caravan route that connected the city of Menphy to Kadesh in southern Palestine and which involved crossing the lake by boat.

The inhabitants of the area and the Hebrews, who worked to make the bricks for the construction of the city of Pithom / Pi-Acherot, knew well that the ford periodically re-emerged on the nights of the New Moon, thanks to the lesser attraction of the moon.

The knowledge of the possibility of crossing the waters and the fact that it was unknown to the Egyptians leads us to speculate that this route was precisely the one traveled, in the opposite direction, by the Hyksos. It is very likely that the Hebrews handed down the important military secret from generation to generation and, finally, they used it when they fled from Egypt.

Encamped along the shores of the lake, Moses would have made the Egyptians believe that they had gathered all the Hebrews who were in Egypt to pray to their God, in the area closest to their land of Canaan, with the hope of a further divine miracle. In reality he would have waited for the favorable night to be able to cross the pond along the ford that emerged.

Exodus 14,19-20

"The angel of God, who preceded the camp of Israel, changed places and passed back. **The column of cloud also moved and from the front passed back. Thus it found between the camp of the Egyptians and that of Israel.** Now the cloud was dark for the former while for others it illuminated the night; so they couldn't get close to each other all night."

It is very likely that Moses took advantage of a particular event in his favor. A Sinai volcano was erupting and the cloud was being pushed horizontally and lowered towards the eastern Delta by a strong wind. Initially the cloud was located east of Lake Timsah, but a rotation of the wind led it to obscure the area between the two camps. The Egyptians had serious difficulties controlling the Hebrews and did not understand that this was the true divine miracle, which would have favored the escape of their slaves during the long night of the New Moon.



Volcanic cloud deviated horizontally

Moses had surely traveled the paths of Sinai to return from the land of Midian in Egypt and it is very likely that he saw the erupting volcano and noticed its dense horizontally deviated cloud. He may therefore have hoped for help from the volcano during a future New Moon night. To deceive the Egyptians, who had camped not far from the camp of the Israelites, it would have been enough to leave the camp fires lit, shield them to the east, leave someone to make noise and animals to bellow. The Egyptian sentinels, due to the poor visibility caused by the volcanic cloud, would not have noticed the movements of the Hebrews towards the ford.

The escape during the dark night would have been possible thanks to the many lanterns that the Hebrews had prepared and the possibility of forming ropes, binding each other.

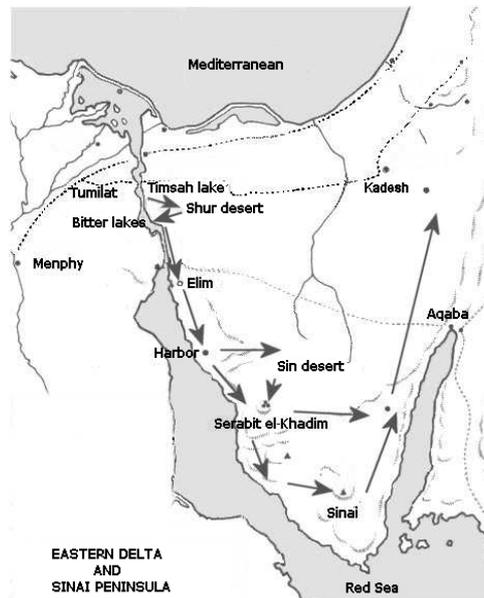
Only at the first light of dawn did the Egyptians make the escape of their slaves and pursue them, unaware however that the ford was made up of wet earth so the carts would get bogged down by their weight. They had not even realized that the ford had emerged thanks the strong low tide, that it was ending and that the waters would soon submerge the ford again.

In light of this interpretation, divine intervention therefore had to consist in turning natural events in favor of Moses, keeping the volcano active and directing the dense volcanic cloud between the two camps.

Exodus - Beginning of the journey

After three days of escaping to the Shur desert, east of Lake Timsah, Moses realized that he was no longer chased, a fact certainly linked to the death in the flooded ford of Pharaoh Smenkhkare and his soldiers. However, he found that he had not found water, so crossing this desert would have been impossible.

On the other hand, he had already decided to take the paths of the central area of Sinai, those he knew well for having already traveled them at least a couple of times. He then decided to go back to the Bitter Lakes. He knew he could give his people a drink by taking advantage of the characteristics of a plant that grew spontaneously close to the sea and in brackish waters, the salicornia, whose water content is remarkable. Obviously he pretended that the suggestion had come directly from the new God of the Hebrews. Moses threw a stick where the salicornia grew and told the people to eat the plant. They would quench their thirst and acquire minerals and vitamins. Once they quenched their thirst, they headed south to the sources of Elim, following the coastal road east of the Gulf of Suez to the harbor used for the loading of minerals extracted from the Sinai mines. The coastal road around the Sinai peninsula was easier but longer and more exposed to the possible pursuit of the army. Moses then chose to cross the peninsula and go directly to the Gulf of Aqaba, crossing the various deserts, which the Egyptian carts would have had difficulty traveling. It was also the shortest and most hidden road, the one he knew well and which allowed him to reach the mining site of Serabit el-Khadim by crossing the Sin desert.



Second part of the route

It is evident that Moses knew how to survive in the Sin desert. In the morning in the central regions of Sinai it was possible to collect manna, the sap of *Tamarix mannifera* shrubs, a species of acacia very common in the area. The sap quickly lost its aqueous content, becoming a whitish solid, grindable and usable, together with wheat flour, to make bread. In the evening the quails would provide dinner. Thus the Hebrews crossed the Sin desert and arrived at the miners' camps in Serabit el-Khadim.

Serabit el-Khadim

South of the Sin desert there was the Egyptian mining settlement of Serabit el-Khadim, where they worked on forced labor, in the various mines in the area, the prisoner of war. The site was home to a military garrison, needed to quell any miners' riots and attacks by the Bedouins in the area.

The settlement was also protected by the heavenly mother goddess Hathor (Egyptian) and by the god Sopdu, protector of the caravan routes of the Near East, to whom two hypogean chapels were initially consecrated and therefore a real temple.

Moses had to know the area well, but also the people who worked there. As vizier of Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV he had accompanied Amenhotep III, to ask for grace to the goddess Hathor and thus try to heal from his various diseases.

He had known in detail the site and the area of the mines, realizing the consistency of the guard contingent and the possibility of conquering the site.

He certainly stopped there during his escape to Midian and on his return to Egypt. He thus understood that the site's food resources would be the only way to feed the many people who left Egypt during such a long period in the desert.

Moses therefore had no difficulty in overcoming the opposition of the guards, also taking advantage of an internal revolt by the miners, with whom he had already agreed when he had come coming from the land of Midian. Obviously he didn't talk about his previous experiences. He needed to exalt the goodness of their new God and make people forget the various Egyptian gods. Only a monotheism, inspired by Akhenaten's pseudo monotheism, could bring about the cohesion of the new Hebrew - Egyptian people and allow them to face the difficulties of the long march. The new God would grant them the Promised Land, but would also impose strict laws and strict rules of conduct.

In the area and in the temple, excavated by Egyptologist W.F. Petrie in 1905, many writings were found in an unknown language, which was interpreted as a mixture of hieroglyphics and characters from the Near East, so there was talk of a proto-Sinaitic writing, born to record the production of various metals and the work of individual miners.

The site and the writings found convinced the Egyptologist L. Eckenstein, Petrie's assistant, that Serabit el-Khadim was connected to the Exodus and that Mount Sinai of the Bible was one of the three mountains in the area: Serabit el-Khadim, Ghorab or Saniya.

I believe that Moses was also aware of the mystery of Serabit el-Khadim. W.F. Petrie found there, under the floor of the temple, a huge amount of a white powder, perhaps white phosphorus. Moses knew that this dust, in particular environmental conditions, could ignite, illuminate the dark nights of the desert and allow small miracles to be attributed to the new God.

It is therefore possible that Moses took some of this miraculous dust from the temple and used it in various clashes with the Sinai tribes and / or the more demanding ones with the populations of southern Palestine.

The desert and mountainous area would still allow him to make people believe that the new God had presented himself to him on the various mountains of the site.

Exodus - Continuation of the journey

Moses left Serabit el-Khadim with the intent to cross the Sinai desert to the southeast, to reach the eastern region. We can therefore speculate that their new camp in Refidim was at the base of Mount Ghorab, most likely the Horeb of the Bible.

The presence of the Israelites had to annoy the Bedouin tribe of Amalek, who lived southeast of Refidim. Also this time Moses wanted to emphasize the presence and favor of the new God, so as to condition his people, making it clear that Joshua's victory was favored by divine intervention.

After the defeat of the Bedouins, the Israelites were able to resume their journey.

Sinai desert and the mountain of God

Exodus 19.14-20

"Moses came down from the mountain towards the people; he had the people cleansed and they washed their clothes. Then he said to the people, "Be ready in these three days: don't join a woman." On the third day, in the morning, **there was thunder, lightning, a dense cloud on the mountain and a very loud sound of trumpet: all the people who were in the camp were shaken by terror.** Then Moses sent the people out of the camp to meet God. They stood at the foot of the mountain. **Mount Sinai was all steaming, because God had descended on it and its smoke rose like the smoke from a furnace: the whole mountain was shaking a lot.**

The sound of the trumpet became more and more intense: Moses spoke and God answered him with a thunder voice. So God went down to Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain, and God called Moses to the top of the mountain. Moses went up."

Following the path to the southeast, the Israelites arrived at the Sinai desert, whose name perhaps derives from Mount Saniya.

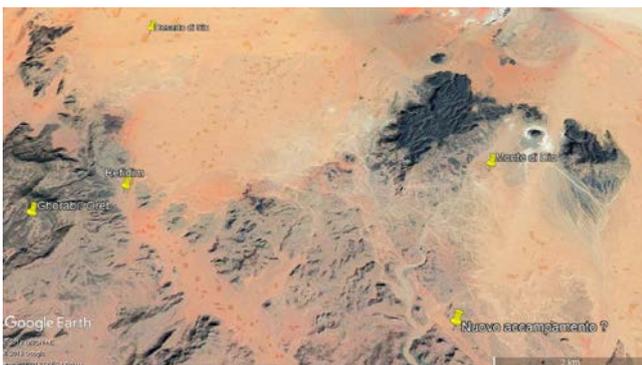


Vulcanic eruption



Lightnings in the volcanic cloud

In the northern part of the desert stands an isolated and conical mountain, an active volcano (the mountain of God). The description of the Bible is precise: thunder, lightning, a dense cloud and a very strong sound, accompanied by an earthquake.



New camp in Sinai desert (Google Earth)



Mount of God – volcano (Google Earth)

Moses climbed the volcano, knowing that this was his definitive opportunity to convince his people of the existence of the new God and to bring him his law. Moses went up with Aaron and other elders of Israel and saw God on sapphire plates.

Confirming the geographical location identified by me, we can consider: the existence of the volcano east of Mount Saniya, its proximity to the logistics area of the mines of Serabit el-Khadim and its proximity to the area of the Sea of rushes, where the cloud from the volcano would arrive, which would help the escape of the Hebrews.

Ten Commandments

Moses went up the mountain again and stayed there for 40 days. The Israelites thought that Moses was dead, they lost faith in the new God and asked Aaron to return to the solar god Ra-Horakhty. Aaron, perhaps out of fear and to gain time, granted them the creation of a golden calf, in memory of the sacred Mnevis bull, which they already venerated in Egypt.

Moses returned to the camp with the tables of the law. The divine commandments, different according to the verses of the Bible, strongly recall the 42 Declarations of Innocence in the Egyptian Book of the Dead. It therefore seems that Moses was inspired

by the Egyptian religion, transforming the Declarations into a series of Commandments. Returning to the camp after many days of absence, Moses saw that the people were no longer in control and worshiped the golden calf. He ordered the Levites to kill those who had denied the new god of the Hebrews and hundreds of men perished that day. The anger of Moses is transformed into the anger of God, so as to justify the terrible massacre and magnify the terror that the people had to bring for the priests, the custodians of the laws of God. Obviously the Levites, who were faithful to Moses, were the Hebrews of his own tribe, the descendants of Jacob's son Levi, the only ones whom Moses could blindly trust.

Exodus - End of the journey

In the second year, the second month, the twentieth of the month, the Israelites left the Sinai desert towards the Paran desert. It is very likely that some areas of eastern Sinai have been indicated with the Paran desert, so the area where Moses arrived should be the closest one, east of the Mount / volcano of God.

The possibility that the Paran desert was very extensive is confirmed by the fact that after having reached, **after three days of walking**, the southern part of the desert, Moses sent some men to explore the land of Canaan. The men returned after forty days and met with Moses in the northern part of the Paran desert near Kadesh. We can therefore assume that as the explorers made their way to the land of Canaan, the Israelites traveled the central and northern parts of the desert in about 40 days.

Moses tried to cross the land of Edom, where the descendants of Esau lived. Despite the brotherhood of the two peoples, the Edomites did not grant permission to cross his lands and Moses had to give up and go around this land.

He arrived at Mount Cor, where Aaron died.

Then the Israelites left Mount Cor and headed for the region southeast of the Dead Sea where the Amorites lived. Even the king of the Amorites did not authorize the passage of the Israelites. Then there was a clash between the two peoples and Israel defeated the Amorites.

Then Moses went north to the land of Moab, went up to Mount Nebo and died.

Bibliography

1. Internet page <http://www.ugiat-antoniocrasto.it/Articoli/Revisione%20della%20cronologia%20egizia.pdf>.

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Pagina web: www.ugiat-antoniocrasto.it

Email: antoniocrasto@libero.it