

THE LEGEND DETECTIVE.

Legends may be legends but they can hold the truth



Is this circular tumuli the resting place of Moses, for he was buried against Beth-Peor. Beth meaning house and Peor meaning opening, is this a cave?

Moses, Exodus until death.

So, they've passed through the sea of reeds and they can still take the road to Canaan by way of the Philistines but Exodus 13:17 says: *Not by way of the Philistines, although that was near, for God said, 'Lest peradventure the people repent, when they see war and they return to Egypt'.* So, what means peradventure, it means perhaps. But God is saying perhaps, which suggests God is uncertain. Perhaps they'll want to go back to Egypt. Now the point is, God shouldn't have to question things, with a perhaps, so is it Moses, who is thinking perhaps, and if so is he's saying we won't go that way, we'll go south.

But before they continue, everybody who is with Moses must now be circumcised, which is as I have suggested, some, if not many, were not originally Israelites. Could they be those Libyan slaves or even captives taken by pharaoh when he vanquished the Sea People?

So south they go, 'And Moses took them into the wilderness of the desert of Shur and they came to Marah (5) but there was no water to drink, for the water there was bitter and the Children would not drink thereof. 'That's what it says, and also that it took them three days to get there. If it did, then I think they were moving fast for they're heading for the Bitter Lakes. In measuring the distance, I find they had to travel about 80 kms. True, it's on the flat, being almost the same route that the Suez Canal takes today and, as we know, all canals are flat. Are we still on course for waters that are bitter to drink, are the Great Bitter Lakes by the name in Arabic, Al Buhayrah al Murrah, the lake of Murrah. Does this appear similar to the place of Marah in the Bible? 'And the Israelites murmured against Moses for they were thirsty saying, 'why have you taken us from Egypt when we did eat and drink our fill?' Not quite the words of slaves but of those that weren't slaves but had to go. Go,

because they'd burned their boats when they smeared their door lintels with lamb's blood. see **Moses: Exile to Exodus.**

Now three days was the time recorded for this 80 km run, so, why was it? I consider they recorded it because they were proud of their achievements. This was a small, insignificant journey but in reality, the most dangerous of them all. Going that way, they had to cut across the road or route that goes directly from Pi-Ramasses to the Canaanite border and the fortresses that Egypt had built to defend herself from the Canaanites or any invader coming from the east. Crossing that would be the same as crossing the Berlin wall, they wouldn't hang about. Again, I'm happy with the place of the bitter waters and the accuracy that's been recorded.

Passing these lakes of bitter water, they continued due south to Port Suez, the opposite end of the Suez Canal, into the wilderness of Sin towards Sinai, which in my estimation is now to the east of Port Suez and heading down the east coast of the Gulf of Suez which, of course, is part of the Red Sea. It is now, when we go into the Torah, that we find it no longer mentions the Reed Sea (Yam Suf) but the Red Sea, (Yam Adom) which is absolutely right.

'And they came to the place called Elim, a place of seventy palms and twelve wells and they drove the inhabitants out and took their fill'. Now going down the eastern side of the Gulf of Suez on the modern-day road, route 185, you come to Wadi Wardan. (8) From the topography, you can see the great rifts in the mountain sides, where the rains rip out the landscape. Oh yes, it rains in the Sinai; here is ample evidence of dried out water courses, carved by the violent rush of water of those winter rains. The problem is that the land is so porous it just sinks straight through. But here at Wadi Wardan it hangs about, just underground, giving life to palm trees and the need to dig wells. It is not surprising, therefore, that even today it is known as Moses Springs.



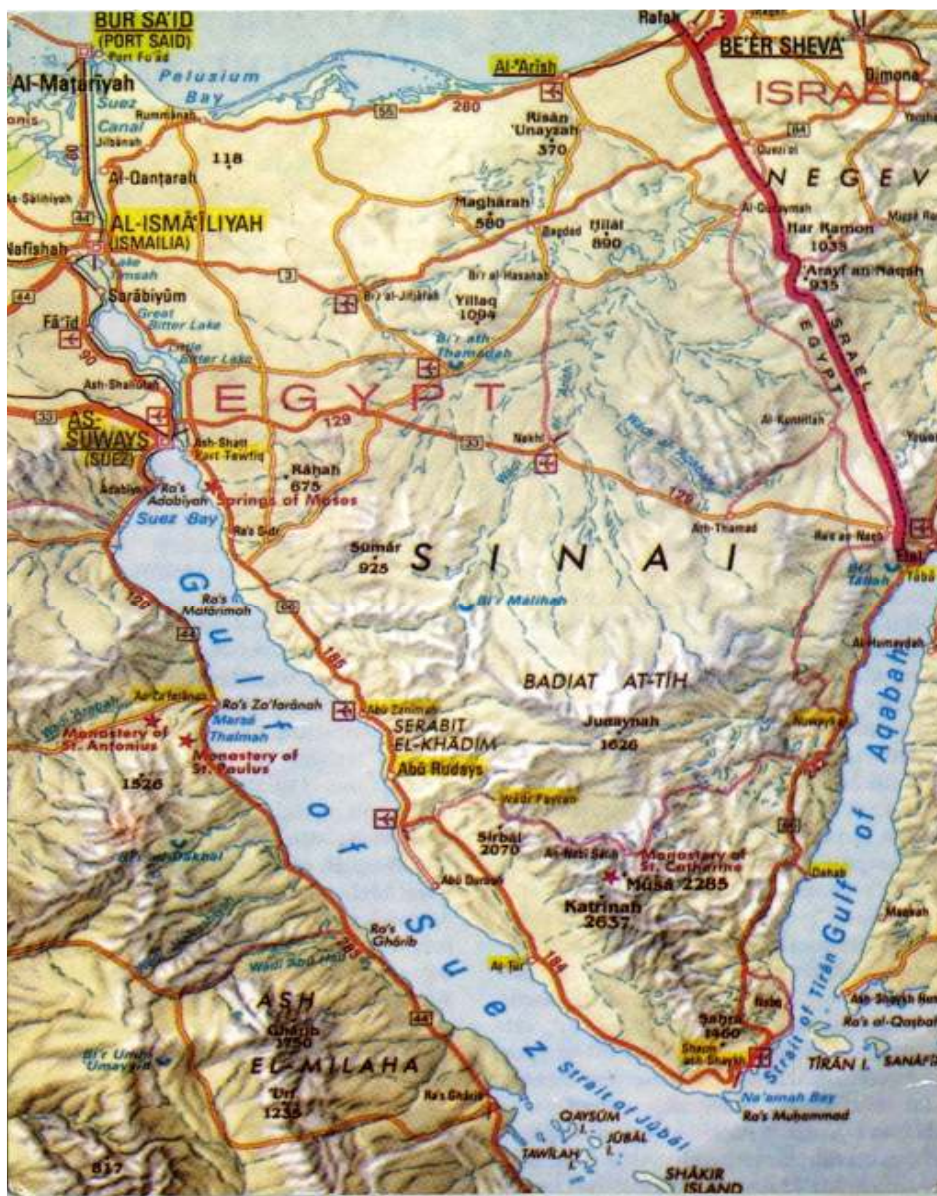
- 1 Pi-Ramasses 2 Succoth 3 Etham 4 Mig-dol and Ball-Zephon
5 Pi-ha-hi-rothth 6 The place where lake Manzilah and the Mediterranean parted
7 The Bitter lakes 8 Elim, known as Moses Springs 9 The fight with the Amalekites
10 Where Moses meets Jethro. 11 Mount Sinai, Jebel Musa**

But Moses hadn't given up hope of getting into Canaan, so he gave the Children and their cattle their fill and they then moved, not south down into Sinai, but east towards southern Canaan. Now whatever route scholars might show for Moses crisscrossing the Sinai, one must ask if these scholars have been there, for if they had, they would have found there were not many routes to choose from. Those mountains have ridge after ridge that are as sharp as a razor. You wouldn't get a Sherman tank over them, let alone a child or your grandmother. Besides, what little greenery there was, never grew far from the base of the mountains. Go ten feet up and there's not a blade of green stuff to feed a

sheep, let alone a flock. In my opinion, Moses went by the way that these modern (not so modern) roads go today, for they go the easy way and even that isn't easy.

So just south of Moses Springs is that road and if you turn north-east you eventually come to Bir Hasanah. If you keep going some 70 kms, you come to the next town of Al Qusaymah, (9) on the Israeli border. This area is as dry as the proverbial 'Witch's Tit' and so barren that I think we're on the right route, for the Children were once again thirsty and starving. Starving so much, they asked Moses to give them permission to eat beetles, grasshoppers and locusts. Permission was given and being given, it must have become 'Kosher,' although I feel there aren't many Jews who rush to taste this meagre fare. But if this was hygienic, then why was pork unhygienic, which goes some way to confirming my theory in **Moses: exile to Exodus**.

Oh, for the want of a tasty dish of sizzling, succulent pork sausages. Bacon and pork chops that will be deigned them for the next 3000 years. Yet in saying that, time moves on and in its moving, things change. There is now a Kibbutz in Israel, which farms pigs, producing hams for those who have tasted the delights of a full English breakfast, bacon, eggs, sausages and beans. Perhaps one day they will discover the pork pie and the Jewish dilemma of, 'A pork pie at half price.'



Gulf of Suez, Aqaba and the Sinai

So, it was, that which was about to come, was bound to come, when a wandering people go into other tribal lands. There was going to be a first fight. This time there was no hiding in the reeds. Somewhere along this route they came into the lands of the Amalekites, and as the good book says, 'They (the Amalekites), 'came at them,' suggesting to me that the Amalekites were having none of these trespassers. It appears they fought all day, ending in stalemate. Naturally, the Children asked Moses why God had deserted them. I have to admit God or Moses came up with some interesting answers. 'The Lord says,' said Moses, 'That from this day forth the Children would always have war with the Amalekites, from generation unto generation.' Which doesn't quite sound like the original agreement that God promised in the first instance, that he would lead them to a land of milk and honey. Someone is changing the contract.

However, we have a much more sensible answer from Joshua who said, '*When we were fighting we didn't know friend from foe.*' So, it was then that God commanded each of them to sew a piece of blue cloth onto their garments. Whether it was God or Moses, the Israelites now had a uniform. They also had a colour, and I wouldn't be surprised, if the blue colour of the Israeli flag hasn't something to do with this event.

But the Amalekites were too much for them and they turned back to the coast of the Gulf of Suez. (6). Back to the coast road route 185, to the Red Sea, and then south down to Jethro country. Moses was now on his patch, that he had known when in exile. But have we still got him? We have, for we have the topography, geography and water to 'nail him down.' To follow Moses, we have to go south, for we read that Jethro was coming up to meet Moses, bringing Zipporah and his two sons, Gershom and Eliezer. It was a true homecoming and if Jethro was coming north with all his people, he was also coming up Route 185. How can I be so sure? Well that road, and about 200 Meters either side of the road, was the only way to go, unless you wanted to go climbing mountains. Any sensible man would take the easy route, especially if his bank balance was on the hoof. The problem was where would they meet? Logically, we should be looking for another Wadi along that coast road, for they would be wanting water. Now this might not have been it, but it stood a good chance; it, could well have been Wadi Fayran, (8) about 140 kms south of Wadi Wardan. I've never been there, but my rather good map of this area shows that there seems to be a permanent small river running down from the mountains to the sea, and I think there would have been enough water here for both the Children and Jethro's clan.

So, they killed a lamb and gathering Aaron and all the elders they did eat and they also talked. Afterwards, Jethro went out to the Children and told them that their God was greater than all the other Gods. This of course made the Children happy, although you may have noticed that Jethro wasn't removing his status as high priest to his God, or even offering his service to the greater God, which gives one cause to reflect. Greatest God or not, Jethro wasn't going to be subservient to Moses. Likewise, Moses' God doesn't get upset by this statement of the existence of other Gods or that Jethro isn't changing his Godly allegiances to the God of Moses. Some will say that Jethro's God was Moses' God. If so then Jethro, being a priest of Midian out ranks Moses. Also, Midian is a long way from the Israelites at Pi-Ramasses. There just can't be any connection between Moses' God and the God of Jethro.

So here we have Moses wanting to show his father-in-law how he passed judgment. One feels that Moses was proud of his system of judgment. Sadly, Jethro did not, and told Moses how he should do it. 'Firstly,' he said, 'Get captains over a hundred men to do the judging and only if they can't do it, then let the claimant come to you. Secondly have a set of laws that the Children can abide by, with rules that if they break, they know what punishment to expect.'

Now I'm trying desperately not to get involved with religion, but here we have a mortal, Jethro, telling Moses what he should do, with not a word from God. Here we have Jethro out-thinking and out-planning Moses' God. But we mustn't be disappointed, for it was not to be long before God realised he should come up with the same idea.

Next, we read that Moses and Jethro parted company, and from that I gather Jethro went south to his own lands, leaving Moses to either go back north, or east into the Sinai. Fortunately, the Bible comes to our rescue, saying that Moses went into the Sinai. Once more I've got him. If he turned east going from Wadi Fayran, there was only one minor road, leading through the passes in the mountains to...guess where? To the Mountain of Moses, Jebel Musa. (9) You can almost detect the spot where they came to; it's where four roads meet and to show its importance, there's an old ruin of a fort there.

Again, these roads will be almost identical to the routes the ancients took. But is there water? Most probably, for forts hold men, and men need water. Also, from here, Moses had three forward-going routes to choose from. How convenient that the route going south some 15 kms, went directly to the Mount of Moses. The highest mountain in the Sinai, and it's almost a certainty that Moses was here in his youthful exile.

Another route went directly east, 80 kms to the Gulf of Aqaba, to the present-day town of Dahab, whilst the third, was north east, 120 kms to the Gulf of Aqaba, but higher up, to the town of Mina Nuwaybi. Whichever way they went, or wherever they wandered in the Sinai, one day they would eventually come to Mina Nuwaybi, simply because when entering into the land of Edomites, those were the only two ways to go. And when you go through Mina Nuwaybi, you come to the present-day luxury holiday resort of Eilat, the very Eilat that is mentioned in the Bible. (see Elat which is written on the modern road map of the Sinai) There is only one way, unless you're back to climbing mountains and if you are then you'll need ropes and crampons for Granny and the kids.

Interestingly, the mountains come right down to the coast road at the port of Eilat and from here it is just 200 meters wide to the Red Sea. Without doubt, Moses passed through this bottle neck. But this has yet to come; for Moses was settling down in the Sinai **to wait**.

The Sinai

Waiting for what? So here we have Moses in the most barren of places. We know that when the Israelites tried to take more fertile lands, if you could call the land of the Amalekites fertile, they could expect trouble. But there was one good thing about the Sinai, nobody wanted it, so you could very well wander around there for the next 38 years without being forced, daily, to fight off the competition. I say 38 years because we can see from the distances that they had not travelled far. So here, in the mountains and desert around this fort, I think is where the Israelites stayed. Another reason why they stayed so long in this barren land might be found if we read Deuteronomy 2: 14, which says they stayed there for 38 years because: 'All the generations of the men of war were wasted out from amongst the host.' Whilst in Numbers 32:13 the Bible states, 'And he made them wander in the wilderness forty years until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the Lord were consumed.'

Scholars have always assumed this 'Host' was the Israelite host. But this doesn't make sense, because what Moses did need, was men of war, not dead men. This host wasn't the Israelite host, it was the host of the Philistines and the Sea People, who had conquered Canaan. Moses wanted his fighting force to come up against the third generation of the Philistines, who hopefully wouldn't have the same fire in their bellies as their Granddaddies or Daddies had. Imagine a young fighting man of the Sea people, moving into Canaan in the year 1189 BC, the year before I say the Exodus took place. He'd be about 18

years of age at that time, but after 38 years have passed, this guy would have been 56. By now, he'd have a belly, no teeth, no hair and two sticks, but more likely he'd be dead. But he would be a father and possibly a grandfather. Now this old guy, when he was young, was looking for a homeland, because he hadn't got one. So, he was going to fight because he was hungry. But then he came to this land of milk and honey and tasted it. Then his son grew up in the home of his father's conquests and he, too, has had that life of that milk and

honey, plus a woman or two, as well as a drop of that red stuff that comes in bottles. He in turn would be about 35, old enough to be thinking of putting his feet up, whilst his son would be out there, 'Strutting his stuff.' Of course, his grandson would have fought for the home of his fathers, but did he stand firm when the shield wall began to buckle or did he run? For it was now this young lad's time to fight, to fight men, as hungry as wolves. He was going to have to fight Israelite wolves, men as hungry as his Grandfather had been. I think we can say that at the first shiver that runs through the ranks, this young man, fed on milk, honey and the good life, would have been thinking of the safest way to run. And that, gentle reader, was a bad thing for a soldier to think about. Could those that had done evil, be the Sea People who had already taken Moses' Promised Land?

So now we must wait for the 38 years to pass whilst the Children wait in the Sinai. Let's see what they got up to. There's nothing we can archaeologically find, except in their reasoning. Now it

was that something Jethro had said about rules and judgment to Moses when they last met, which jogged God's mind. It was now Moses was told by God to go up in the mountain, for God to give him the rules of the law in the Ten Commandments.

So, Moses left the Children behind to go and see his God, and had warned them not to follow him as this was God's mountain, with the added incentive that no man can look on God and live.

The Commandments

So up Moses went and, having been there myself, it was a hard climb. We read that Moses was up in the Mountain for 40 days and I suspect that Aaron the high priest, was not so important now that Moses had learnt Hebrew. For God once spoke to Aaron and Moses, now God spoke only to Moses. Aaron, I feel, was losing his authority. So, Moses was away, and what do mice do when the cat's away? Aaron went for the Boss's job. He got the Israelites to give him the gold and silver they borrowed from their Egyptian neighbours, and made an idol of a golden calf. Then Aaron got everyone to dance around it naked. Was that a test of control? Did they, or didn't they? They did. Now, I see no reason to disbelieve it, for it sounds like a good party; certainly, a party, political or otherwise, that would instantly hold your attention.

Moses returned down the mountain, after being up there those 40 days and we read that his face had a radiance. Was it a radiance from being in the sun for 40 days, or was it a radiance from being in God's presence? He came down with his stone tablets of the Ten Commandments which, we are told, were written by God in his own hand. Now Moses, on seeing this dancing business, became angry. And so, did God. So much so, that Moses smashed the tablets to pieces, completely unread. If God knew this was going to happen, would he have written them, taking 40 days to do so?

But Moses was in a sticky position; would they follow Aaron, or would he still keep control? So, Moses gathered the tribe of the Levi about him and put the question point blank to them, 'Are you with me or against me?' They were with him, so he made them his bodyguard and with these stalwarts behind him, told the Israelite men to kill off their brother or their neighbour. He then confronted Aaron, who was terrified of what he supposed would happen. He was so terrified he called Moses 'Lord,' a definite statement of subservience and the only time he used it. Of course, Aaron, being the instigator, should have shared their punishment, but after some grovelling, Moses let him off. The question is, why? Was it because he couldn't just kill off the only other man who had been talking to God? After all, Aaron was the high priest. Shatter that concept, and you will shatter other beliefs. Apart from the Children's continual grouching about the lack of food this was Moses' first serious revolt, but it wasn't his last.

But the interesting continuation to this was that Moses still wanted his laws. Could he afford to go back up the mountain, leaving Aaron in charge? My guess is that he couldn't, for he then sat down and carved out those commandments in stone himself. These commandments were not written by God, but would go into the Ark of the Covenant as if they had been.

So, Moses, not God, appointed the Levites to be Moses' bodyguard and for their reward, they were excused from manual work. But how would they eat? They ate as Moses and Aaron ate; they partook of the flesh of the sacrifice. The grilled lamb, goat or beef was theirs, whilst God had the sweet savoury that rose up from the offering.

An Error of Translation

There is another interesting situation and, although not directly affecting the history of Moses, it should be mentioned as it is in itself history. Thanks to Mrs Gila Kadmon and her fluent knowledge of Hebrew, we can deduce an error in translation from the Torah to our Bible.

On Moses coming down from the mountain, we read that Moses' face had a 'radiance.' The Hebrew word is Karan, but the vowel A is written in the form of a cluster of three small dots under the first letter of the word, in this case, the K and the R. But when the Catholic Bible was written, this word Karan was read as Keren, which meant 'Horns.' In the latter case, the vowel E was written as a small capital T under the K and the R. So here is a case of miss-translation. Somebody probably let the ink run to make those three dots look like a T.

Consequently, in early Catholic paintings and sculptures of Moses, we see him depicted with horns coming out of his head. Fortunately, when the Protestant Bible was written, the error was rectified and Moses got his radiance back. However, before we depart from this error, I would like you to remember vowel change for later, when I will demonstrate that the naming of the Red Sea is also an error of translation, and should be of another name.

Moses' Praetorian Guard

Now history has a wonderful way of repeating itself, for I am reminded of the Roman Emperors who put their safety in the hands of the Praetorian Guard, only to find they wanted better pay, or else. Some emperors refused to pay and never saw the dawn. Others paid, only to find that it was not enough. It was a case of the 'tail wagging the dog,' even to the extent that the Praetorian Guard at one stage in Rome's history, put the position of emperor up for auction.

So, we read that Moses has set up the tribe of Levi as his Praetorian Guard and, lo and behold, a certain Korah, a Levi, together with Dathan and Abiham stirred up the populous and rose up against Moses, saying, *'Why do you lift yourself up above the congregation when we are all holy? It is a small thing that you brought us out of the land that floweth with milk and honey (Egypt), to kill us in the wilderness, except thou make thyself altogether a prince over us.'*

We read that negotiations took place and that God consumed them into a pit and it covered them alive. We read that the congregation fled in terror. Yet we next read that on the morrow, the congregation returned and murmured against Moses and Aaron saying, 'Ye have killed the people of the Lord.' Personally, if I'd just seen the earth open and swallow up Korah and company, I don't think I'd be murmuring at Moses. Furthermore, murmuring sounds quite timid. I suspect they were very angry; so angry that this could easily have become a lynch mob. One of their grievances seemed to be that they didn't want Aaron to be the high priest. They were demanding another from one of the other tribes to be selected. One wonders why God didn't consume these to the pit, but nevertheless Moses was still in control; he still had their respect, for he said he would let God choose.

The test was that each tribal leader brought forth a stick with his name on it and placed it in the tabernacle, including Aaron's stick. As it says, on the morrow they all went to inspect their sticks, their rods. When they did, one was found to be not only in bud, but also to be bearing the fruit of almonds. It was Aaron's rod, and so ended the competition. Now every gardener will tell you that you can take a stick, especially a willow stick, and place it in water and it will bud. True, you will need more than a day or two, but a week should be enough. As for it bearing fruit, then that is indeed a miracle. But from this we see everything was not well with the Chosen People; they remembered the fish, the cucumber, melons and other fine dishes they ate in Egypt, again belying their status as slaves.

Now I have been to the Mountain of Moses. The desert and mountains are awesome. When God finished making the earth and, having rested on the seventh day, I suspect that on the eighth day, he dumped all the leftovers in the Sinai. When I was there searching for rocks that, like slate, would easily split into tablets, there weren't any; the rocks there would have shattered into many chips if ever hit by a hammer and chisel.

However, it was at St Katherine's monastery that I found a man as serene as Jesus. He was a Bedouin carrying a little clear plastic bag that contained three tomatoes, a luxury in this land. His teeth were brown and his garment, to the floor, was white...very white, and he spoke English without an accent. That face that was so calm. He had learned his English from tourists and he was off to his little stone, one-storey hut. We spoke and, as a Godless man, I must say I appreciated those few minutes we talked. How easily he could have become a prophet or a meek and mild Jesus.



But during our talk he pointed to a pile of rock slabs that were stacked behind the monastery. Like Cotswold stone, they were so easily split. Those, he told me, came from over there. Over there seemed to be the other side of the mountain. The slabs were ideal for splitting and carving on...ideal for making those tablets of God's laws.

As we talked the local Bedouin children gathered about us, obviously holding him in great esteem. But then he was gone and I was left with the children, Abram and Mamud and three others, whose primary task was to get me to take their camel up the mountain and cadge some cigarettes for Daddy. One I could have sworn was a girl, but in boy's clothing. The boys asked me, again in perfect English, from whence I came. 'Listen to me,' I challenged their bright minds. 'Where do you think I come from?' 'From Greece,' they all replied. I knew why, for most tourists were from Greece, for the Byzantines had given Greece her Christian religion, that of the Greek Orthodox Church, and St Katherine's monastery had been built by the Byzantines in the 8th century. Eventually Abram wiggled it. 'You're English,' he said and was promptly rewarded with a cigarette. We talked and eventually it came down to business. Would I take a camel, his camel, up to the halfway mark of the Holy Mountain? His camel never budged an inch, except for his eyes which stared into mine. I could almost hear the camel saying, 'I won't hurt you if you don't hurt me.' So, the camel and I came to an agreement and I made my apologies to Abram with five cigarettes and the excuse of my size... and such a small camel. Besides, halfway up was halfway up and Abram had put me off by saying it was another one hour's hard climb after that. So, God... if there is a God, I'm sure you won't mind waiting a few more years to meet me. By now my water had run out. It was time to leave and time to think.

Could the Israelites Write?

Now it is a known fact that if you write to someone, that someone has to be able to read it. My first reaction was that Moses, as an Egyptian Prince, must have been able to write Egyptian hieroglyphics, but could the Israelites read hieroglyphics? I doubt it. Nevertheless, I consider the Israelites in Egypt were keeping oral records because the story of Noah and Abraham seems to have been remembered prior to Moses' birth. Why remember Abraham and even Noah, whose flood appears true? See **Noah puts to sea**. Although it's possible Aaron was literate in the Egyptian language. Not only were the doings of God and Moses being recorded, but also day to day trivia. So, were they being recorded verbally? Those scholars, who say Moses existed, say it was Moses that wrote the Exodus but if he did, what script would he have used. What would come naturally to him, would it be Egyptian? If there was a Hebrew script then this would be unnatural to him and I doubt if he'd have bothered with all the trivia that was being recorded. I can well believe

Moses wrote out the Ten Commandments on stone, just as every pharaoh had done before and after him. Strangely, my feelings are that the so-called books of Moses were not written down by Moses. From what we read, we can almost feel the presence of some insignificant person, mentally jotting down things as he hears them. Call him, or her, a shorthand secretary, as one would find in a High Court. Whoever he was, he was taking notes of things that Moses wouldn't think of writing down. I'd even go so far as to say, things that Moses would not want to be recorded, as you will gather from the lost gold story later in this chapter. So, did the Israelites have a written language?

Now we know the Minoans had their Linear A script, that to date has defied translation, but we also know the Mycenaean Greeks of c1450 BC, had their Linear B script which is an early form of the Greek script of Homer's time. But did these Mycenaean Greeks who had invaded Crete take their script from Linear A. Can we find a connection between Linear A and B with Phoenician script? If so, is there a connection with the Phoenician to the Jewish script? It seems to be established, in the academic world, that Phoenician and the later Hebrew script are based on the Semitic script. Archaeological finds of the 10th century BC, show the early Hebrew script bears a strong resemblance to the Phoenician. This script is known as the Paleo Hebrew script and remarkably it is written from top to bottom, not right to left. I say remarkable because this is exactly how Egyptian hieroglyphics were written. We know that by the 10th century BC the Phoenicians had strong trading connections with Egypt and it is my suggestion that with this Pe'ot hairstyle of the Phoenicians could make them kinfolk to the Israelites. But could this top to bottom script be connected to Moses, who would have found, being an Egyptian, that this was his natural way to write.

Now for some history and detective work for art lovers and a suggested visit to the National Gallery, London, there to gaze at Rembrandt's painting of 'The feast of Belshazzar' and the writing on the wall theme, from the Book of Daniel. Here on this painting is shown a hand appearing mysteriously from nowhere, to write on the wall of Belshazzar's palace, the mysterious words, Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin. Nobody could decipher them, so Belshazzar had Daniel the Israelite, brought to him to find the meaning. So, it was that brave Daniel gave him the bad news, saying, 'Thy kingdom is in the scales and has been found wanting and will be given to the Medes and Persians'. In short, a prophesy of doom and destruction.

Now Rembrandt being a true artist wants accuracy and so he's painted these words onto the canvas, in the Hebrew language but with a difference and a difference that helps us.

When my trusty companion Mrs Gila Kadmon and I, first saw it, she could see the Hebrew letter but it didn't make sense, because she was reading it, as all Hebrews do, from right to left. But then she saw it. It was Mene, Mene Teket Upharsin alright, but written from top to bottom'. But how could Rembrandt, a Dutch painter, know this? How could he even know Hebrew? But there is one possibility, we read Rembrandt had a learned friend, a friend by the name of Isaac and yes, you've guessed it, Isaac was a Jew, steeped in the ways and beliefs of his people. Was Isaac assisting our artist by calling on his ancient knowledge of how the Jews first wrote down their script, the Paleo Hebrew.

But back to this business, could the Israelites read and write. We next read that Moses went up the Mountain of God and after 40 days Moses returned with the Commandments, which weren't written for nothing. They were written, because they were meant to stop what the Israelites were already doing. They were laws and meant to be read. The Israelites were coveting other men's wives and they were stealing from their neighbours. You don't make laws for people if they do right; you only make laws to stop them doing wrong. And doing wrong, was what they'd been doing and the only being to stop it, was not the strong arm of the law, because there wasn't one.

Now I believe Moses came down from the mountain, I believe he had written down those Ten Commandments and whether God wrote them doesn't matter, for Moses in his anger seeing Aaron has got the Children to dance around the Golden calf, smashes them unread. It is later when he has subdued this revolt by Aaron, to usurp his position that we read he actually write them out again, by himself. So, from this I believe Moses could write and by now with some help from Aaron, write in Hebrew but then who could read it? I don't think any of them could. Strange as this may seem, we must remember that until the laws of England were translated from Latin into English few of us could read them. We had to rely on scholars, high priest of the High Court. In fact, even when in English, few can understand their full meaning.

Now here's an interesting snippet and more detective work. We read when Moses returned from that mountain he is confronted with Aaron making a bid for power. The story I will unfold, is with regard to that idol that Aaron had set up, the Golden Calf, made with the gold borrowed from those good, generous, Egyptian neighbours. We read that Moses took the image of the calf and burned it in the fire, and then trod it into the ashes of the fire with his foot. From this we can gather it was not solid gold, for otherwise he'd have needed a blast furnace to do. If it was solid gold then he wouldn't have been treading on this molten ingot, unless he wanted to burn through his shoes to his feet. Even then, that wouldn't break up a block of solid gold. We read that he then took up the ashes and sprinkled them onto water for the Israelites to drink the bitter taste, as a punishment. There's an emphasis on the word sprinkle as against throw, drop or cast. Sprinkling separates and breaks up the material. As for the water, it couldn't have been a stream, because the stream would have taken it away immediately, and, being in the desert, it couldn't have been a puddle. So, someone had to bring a basin of water. It will now be obvious, as any gold panning miner will tell you, that when sprinkling a mixture of dirt, ash and gold flakes into a bowl of water, the gold flakes will immediately sink to the bottom, as fast as lead, and the water will immediately separate the three, for the dust and ash will float, dirt and the gold flakes, will sink immediately to the bottom of the basin. So, Moses told the Israelites that as a punishment they must drink the filthy water, which they did. But in doing so, there couldn't have been many of them, even if it was a very big basin. But what happened to that gold bearing residue? We are told they drank the water, but we are not told they ate the residue. One could say it was thrown away but this seems unlikely, considering all the effort to get that gold off the Egyptians, I can't believe Moses didn't notice the gold

But who was the person who brought in that basin? For whoever it was, must have been the one who also took it away. So, what happened to it? I can't believe the gold wasn't noticed by that carrier. Was the gold reclaimed? If so, who recovered it? Was Moses privy to it? I think he was, for it was he, who did that all-important sprinkling. Let's be fair, if Moses wanted to just punish the Children he could have thrust the ashes into their mouths, pushed their heads into the dust, have them throw the ashes over each other. I think you'll agree sprinkling the residue, which must have had the gold flakes into water, was a very cunning idea of getting that gold back, without God or the Children knowing about it. We can further read that Moses was keen on this gold, for directly after this, he demands off the Children, the remainder of the gold and silver they borrowed off their generous trusting Egyptian neighbours.

But the puzzle is that word sprinkled, this indicates to me that it was written down then. For if you give it a year or two, it would have been remembered as cast, thrown or dropped. It's far easier to remember cast or thrown than sprinkled. Sprinkle is a delicate movement of the fingers rubbing together. Therefore, I do consider someone amongst the Children was recording these events, and in this instant, I don't think Moses would have wanted this recorded. Better still, because this word sprinkled has remained until this day, I consider the one recording it knew exactly what had taking place but apart from that word sprinkled, he wasn't telling.

Therefore, I conclude some of the Israelites could read and write. And that the method they used was an early form of Hebrew but because of Moses natural method of writing was written from top to bottom, would 150 years later became known the Paleo Hebrew text.

The Sabbath

It was also after Moses was confronted by Aaron's disloyalty that he commanded each man to kill his brother or his neighbour. You will have read that on Moses finding Aaron is trying to take over Moses' job, he instantly demands to know who will stand by him. The Levi's do and with this power base Moses now goes on the rampage, with this killing order. Imagine you are standing next to someone and this order goes out. This someone, friend or brother looks at you and you at him. In an instant, you're fumbling for your sword for he who hesitates is lost. What an order.

So, the killing stops and Moses can now mollify the people and as a fob brings in the law of God – that each man shall labour for six days and rest on the seventh, the Sabbath. It would seem a kind and humane thing to do. But we must consider what were the working rules in Egypt, before they left. Egypt's rules were that you worked nine days and the tenth day was yours. Can we assume therefore

that Moses, a one-time Egyptian, was, after his terrible chastisement, giving the Children a ‘Sweetener’? Was he reducing their working time?

Now for a little diversion, if I may. What I’m about to write doesn’t help in finding Moses but perhaps it does help to get into his mind. We are told that when Moses said they would work six days and rest on the seventh, he named this day the Sabbath day. Except that he didn’t; the Sabbath is the English name and comes from the Jewish word, Shabbat and, as far as I can see or read, Moses was the first to use it. It was a completely new word. Of course, we read in Genesis 2:3 that God rested on the seventh day, but we must remember the Torah wasn’t written down as a complete book until c 700 BC. Also, God didn’t make it a law, Moses did, and it’s quite possible that this seventh day was put into Genesis later, to conform to Moses’ new laws. Now this is just a thought, but whilst exploring the British Museum’s Egyptian section, I came across objects which the Egyptians called Shabti. So, before going on to what they were, we must establish that Moses would have had a thorough Egyptian upbringing. He would have understood Egyptian ways, for this world and that of the after-life.

As to Shabti, it’s an Egyptian word and it’s not the spelling that counts, but the way it is spoken. Shabti were the small figurines of people that were put into your tomb with you. For the Egyptian thought was that there must be work to be done in the after-life, so how to get out of doing this? It seems the only way was to have these figurines put into your tomb, to do whatever work there was. They would do this labour whilst you rested in complete comfort in the after-life. Is it possible that once Moses created this day of rest, he needed to find a name for it? Is it possible he hit upon the idea of the Shabti? it’s not a great leap of the imagination to go from Shabti to Shabbat, and they’re both of the principle of rest and repose. I agree it’s nothing important, just a thought, but was it Moses’ thought? Either way, thoughts are always important. Thoughts for scholars who dismiss Moses as a myth, yet can’t answer the question who thought up the word and the day of rest, the Shabbat, for the Children, if it wasn’t Moses. Surely if it had been King David, he’d have laid claim to it.

As for that permanent rest, called death, it was about now, whilst the Children were in the desert of the Sinai, that a man, the son of an Israelite woman, Shelomith, daughter of Dibri, whose father was an Egyptian, blasphemed the name of the Lord by informing Moses that his God wasn’t God at all. Here is some proof that Egyptians had joined Moses band. Could he have been one of those dwelling in the reeds? One that showed the Israelites how to make reed huts? As for what happened to him, Moses had him stoned. RIP.

The Tabernacle

But this gold business had got Moses all worked up and he decided that he wanted all of that Egyptian gold and silver that the Children still had. Once he had it, he then started on the construction of the Tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant. As to the building of the Tabernacle, we are not told where this took place, but we read it was after Moses had returned from the mountain and had acquired that Egyptian gold and silver. Therefore, it must have been while they were in the barren Sinai, building up their strength of numbers. There is great detail recorded on the making of what, in reality, was a very fine and luxurious tent. We read that Moses used his two best craftsmen, Bezaleel and Aholiab, that curtains were made, together with cushions, for this would be the abode of God. It would also be the abode of Moses and if I have proved my point that Moses was of the royal household, then Moses was used to luxury. But we’ll never find the place where they made the Tabernacle, for even this stately tent was continually on the move. Although I think I know the name of the place, for it says they encamped at Rephidim. Once again, Israeli humour comes to the fore; names that conform with what they did, for Rephidim means ‘Linings and cushions.’

One further point we read in Numbers 9:15 that as the tabernacle was reared up there was a cloud covering the Tabernacle and at night the appearance of fire within until the morning. A cloud rising above, that the Israelites read as being the cloud of the Lord who was in residence in the Tabernacle. That when the cloud disappeared from above the Tabernacle, the abode of Moses, the Children knew it was time to journey on.

From my observations of the Bedouins, modern day travellers of the desert, they did their cooking outside of their tents. So where does this cloud come from? One thing about the Sinai, in the day it’s hot and at night it’s very cold, in winter time it’s not hot until midday. True presence could

have been in that cloud but I see it as a cloud of smoke and when the Tabernacle was set up Moses had the Egyptian foresight to have a brazier of hot coals within to warm him during those cold nights. It goes without saying where there's smoke there's fire so at night until the morning one would see the light of a fire. That cloud of smoke and the presence of fire at night could be what they saw and what they interpreted as the presence of the Lord within. When there was no fire, there was no smoke and that meant the brazier was not lit and they knew from that, that Moses was going to move on that day.

The Ark of the Covenant

We read that Moses commanded Bezaleel to make a cabinet to house the tablets of the laws that Moses had carved. A strong cabinet made of Shittim wood, two cubits and a half long and a cubit



and a half wide and the height of which was a cubit and a half. In short, 1.3 Meters long and 0.8 Meters in height. This was the Ark of the Covenant. If you consider these sizes, you'll find it's the size of a throne. We're told there was a 'Mercy seat' upon it. But what is of interest is that the two Cherubim's, one on either end of this seat, are looking in towards the middle. They are described as kneeling angels with spread wings pointing forwards, covering their bowed heads and looking in to the middle of the covenant. If they're looking inwards, they're looking to whoever is seated on the 'Mercy seat.'

Now I've seen these beings, or rather these Goddesses before. I've seen the exact same items in most large museums. Each one represents the Egyptian Goddess Ma'at, the Goddess of Truth. To the Egyptians they were the Goddesses who would know if you were telling the truth or not, presumably with suitable punishments if you weren't. We know that Moses was brought up as an Egyptian, therefore, he must have known Ma'at and what her duties were. If this throne with its 'Mercy seat' was a seat of judgment, then what better image than having this Goddess looking in to the judge on that 'Mercy seat' to advise the judge whether or not the defendant was telling the truth. What would the accused think?

In our present-day Law Courts, the court Usher will hold out the Bible and get you, the accused or witness, to place your hand upon it and swear, 'by Almighty God, to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me God.' Today, this oath is no more than a formality, but only 80 years ago it had power over your soul. Nevertheless, this Cherubim thing may have worked better for Moses than the latter-day Bible. However, it begs the question: did Moses still have beliefs in the Egyptian Gods of his youth?

Now I'm indebted to Professor Tudor Parfitt, who had the courage and conviction to go and see if he could find the Ark of the Covenant. I salute him, not for his findings, which I consider to be flawed, but for being an adventurous soul, for there are too many of us that sit and wait for God, when we could go off adventuring. He it was, who interviewed Doctor Kelly Krause, an archaeologist, who happily agreed with him that it was impossible for Moses to have made the Ark of the Covenant in the Sinai, because they hadn't got the technology in that remote region. Doctor Krause said they would have needed to carry large lumps of gold with them. But surely it needn't have been large lumps of gold; it could have been small pieces of gold, carried by many people. Had they forgotten how Aaron made that golden calf? But the professor was getting warm. He had

associated the ark with the chest in the Cairo museum that was covered in gold leaf, even to the two carrying poles that the priests would have carried on their shoulders as they paraded the God Anubis amongst the Egyptian populace. This chest had on its top the reclining figure of the God Anubis, the God of embalmers, rather than the Cherubim's as described in the Bible. He even got nearer to my speculation when he pointed out the figure of Ma'at upon the side of this Egyptian chest, only to call it a winged monster, whereas Ma'at was a beautiful Goddess, worthy of the front cover of *Vogue* magazine.

Did he find his Ark of the Covenant? Well who am I to say he did or he didn't, but whatever he found looked remarkably like a drum and he found it in Africa.

The Menorah

Likewise, Moses commanded them to make a golden candlestick with seven branches to give light to the sanctuary. which from that day forth, would be sacred to the Children...the Menorah? Look up to the Triumphant Arch of Titus in Rome; there you will see it being brought back to Rome as the spoils of war from the Jewish revolt, as written about by Tacitus. Except it couldn't have been a holder of candles, as I'm relatively certain that candles would not have been invented in Moses' day. In any case, how do you make candles in the Sinai desert? I would suggest this was made of clay and, most probably like the Aaron's calf made of clay covered in gold leaf. Either way it was a mutli lamp.

Yet is there something else to be gleaned here? What made Moses suddenly invent this multi-lamp item? Could it have been from his own imagination, or could it have been of Hebrew design from those days of Noah? For I put it to you: in many large museums you will find the Minoan kernos. The kernos is an artefact upon which that jury of scholars is still out with regard to its use. In design, the kernos is either a straight bar or a circular hoop, like a wagon wheel, made of pottery, and has positioned on it, many small pots. Some say it is for offerings, but I feel the pots are too small. Besides which if you put offerings in these pots then you have to turn them upside down to get the contents out. There's generally a larger centre pot, which to me is a reservoir of oil for topping up the smaller pots. Could it be a multi lamp? Fill the pots with oil and a wick and, indeed, you have many lights. True, there are no soot deposits around the edges but the Egyptians had already found ways of making smokeless lamps. I consider these to be lamp-holders, seven lamps being more powerful than one. Was this the forerunner of the Jewish Menorah? If so, what is a Minoan artefact from Crete, doing in the Israeli' hands, when the Jews are supposed to have originated in Mesopotamia? Incidentally, the Jewish Menorah needn't be a seven-branched candlestick; it can be seven candlesticks on a straight bar.

Now, in the Tel-Aviv museum, there are two crude seven-pot kernoi, dating from the 12th century BC, just the right time for Joshua to have been there. Although, to be fair, they could be of Philistine origin for they also came from Crete. But then again, seven pots definitely gives it an Israelite flavour of the time of Moses.

But one question to answer is, why does Moses want more light in the tabernacle? Could it be he was writing?

However, I'm now indebted to the Museum of Archaeology in Syracuse, for they definitely identifying a kernos as being a multi-lamp holder. For there, on display, is a cluster of six clay lamps on a clay ring. One would be forgiven for thinking each lamp to be of Roman design, but they are in fact of Greek origin, dated c 6th century BC, when Sicily was a Greek colony, long before the emergence of Rome. If this Greek artefact known as a kernos is a multi-lamp, then it stands to reason that the Minoan kernos was performing the same function for the idea to continue. As to how the Greeks of the 6th century BC came to be using it, it could only be from their ancestors, the Mycenaean Greeks, who acquired it after their conquest of Crete. We know this design is pure Minoan, therefore those Mycenaean Greeks got it from the Minoans. Let's face it, what a wonderful invention – no

longer one single, spluttering flame, but many. Your dwelling is now full of light. Logic therefore suggests Moses' Menorah comes from this artefact.

There is also another clue. Again, browsing through that fine British Museum, I came across a multi-lamp in the Phoenician section. Scientists had managed to go one stage further, for they say the Phoenicians used a multi-lamp, because in their analysis of the soot it was found that the oil was fish

oil and, because it didn't burn so well as olive oil, they were forced by necessity to make more than one light source.

But what was the clue? The clue was that the Phoenicians lived in fortified sea ports, where fish were abundant. The Minoans of Crete also lived on this island coast where fish were abundant.

But the question still remains: did the Israelites have this kernos, this multi lamp when they dwelt in Egypt, or did the idea come from the Libyans, who we know were in Egypt as captives and were kinfolk to the Minoans? It might be of interest for future Egyptian archaeologists to seek out in the area of Pi-Ramesses for broken and discarded pieces of pottery that would make up a kernos. If these pieces were to be found in a part of this lost city, indicating that the area was once slave quarters, then I suggest the influence is Libyan. If they were found in a more select area of houses and shops, then I think we have the part of Pi-Ramesses where the Israelites were.

Finally, Professor Finkelstein and Professor Cline are adamant that Moses was a myth, that he never existed. So where did this famous Jewish symbol come from. This seven-branched candle holder is still used to day. I put it to them if Moses didn't create it, who did? This symbol is so important, if it had been done by Joshua or later King David or King Solomon then surely, they would have broadcast this event to their glory. This also applies to that work rule of six days labour and one day's rest, the Shabbat. Sadly, I received the reply of silence.

Moses takes a second wife.

Now Moses, a healthy male of about 40 years, is no doubt remembering the joys of a good woman. In the early days, we heard from Josephus Flavius that the reward Moses received for his pacification of Ethiopia, or in those days Nubia, was Tharbis, the daughter of the king. If Moses was about 17 at the time, we can assume that Tharbis would have been 13 to 15 years old. Could this be true, for it is not mentioned in the Torah? If it did happen, could it be that Moses remembered Tharbis, whom we presume, if this story is correct, he must have brought back to Thebes on his return? For one does not upset a King by giving his daughter back after a night or two of marital bliss. If he did bring her back, then it must have been a shock to Tharbis to find young Moses had fled. Likewise, I think she'd have been treated properly, as the last thing pharaoh would want to do is cause strife in southern Nubia.

We read from the Bible, that Moses now, in the Sinai, took a wife, an Ethiopian. We also read that Aaron and his sister Miriam were not happy with him doing so. So much so, that Moses made Miriam leprous and had her shut away for seven days. Was this leprosy the plague that God taught Moses when he was in exile and staying with Jethro in Midian? In this case, Moses most certainly could get Miriam to put her arm into his bosom, his cloths, and bring it out white and leprous looking. Something he could not have got Pharaoh to do. Whatever it was, she didn't die from it and if it was a magic trick, then after seven days the white stuff had probably worn off.

From the discord with Miriam and Aaron, I think we can assume that Moses had never told Aaron or Miriam of this union, for on fleeing to Midian he took Zipporah as his wife, the wife that Aaron and Miriam had met with Jethro in the Sinai. If it was Tharbis, it would have been relatively easy to get her from Thebes to the Sinai. If Moses was 40, then Tharbis would have been about 36 to 38. To me, this seems to be on the old side for those days. And knowing men, generally like them beautiful and the age of 36 does not suggest this. So perhaps this Ethiopian woman was not her. Whoever she was, we never hear of her again.

However, this Ethiopian business draws me back to what Tacitus said. 'Many assure us that the Jews are descendants from the Ethiopians who were driven by fear and hatred to emigrate from their homes when Cepheus was king.' I doubt if Cepheus was the King, for in legend he lived before Moses' time.

Whilst Herodotus makes it quite clear that in 450 BC, he visited Ethiopia and that their capital was at Merowe on the Nile. This being so, then Ethiopia was present-day Nubia, and Nubia is southern Egypt. Likewise, we know that the old name for present-day Ethiopia was once Abyssinia. We also know that the religion of present-day Ethiopia is Judaism, the religion of Moses. Could someone have driven them from Nubia to Abyssinia, and why have they got this same religion when Nubia and Abyssinia are far far away from the Jews of the Mediterranean? This puzzle I will have to leave to others.

Osiris and the Resurrection

I was taking breakfast at the Veteria Hotel in Catania, with my trusty companion, when it suddenly struck me that Moses would have been most familiar with the Egyptian belief in the after-life and the great need almost from birth, to start on your tomb that would take you into eternity. If Moses was, as a youth, a true-blue Egyptian, he also would have set to and by the age of 10, have had a tomb hewn out, if not yet decorated and if so it would still be available to take his mortal remains on the journey with Ra to the land in the west. I think I have demonstrated that Moses was of the royal household and destined for greater things, therefore there should be a tomb in the Valley of the Kings that was started but never finished, a tomb with vacant possession, if you will. Yet if there's one thing about a tomb, it is that it will be used by the person that started it, for to every man upon this earth, death comes soon or late. That is, of course, if the person it was meant for comes back. Of course, there were many reasons why a person couldn't come back, but dying in some distant land, wasn't one of them, for an Egyptian's worst nightmare was not to be buried in his tomb on the west bank of the Nile, no matter what state his body may have been in, or in what distant land he died. He would do everything in his power to be taken back and buried across the Nile. Missing parts, say a lost leg or arm, presented no problem to the embalming priests, who made the missing part in wood and so on their resurrection, they were once again whole. To add substance to this, there was one case where a body had been recovered from the Nile, having been mostly devoured by crocodiles. So much so that the priests were not too sure whether the corpse was male or female. Not to be deterred, the body was given a vulva and a penis, as well as breasts. Now one couldn't complain about the services these embalmers offered. So, the question arises: is there a vacant tomb?

There is, and it's called the Virgin tomb, known as KV 61, discovered by Harold Jones in 1910. On finding the entrance, they discovered it had been built up with stone to stop the sand coming in, but when clearing it, found absolutely nothing...not so much as a shard of pottery. But as Jones remarked, the anticipated burial never took place. As to its date, that, too, is a mystery. But all this was not the purpose of my thoughts, which were: why hadn't Moses introduced this wonderful concept to the Children? Whether or not they still retained a one-God religion did not stop God giving them a paradise after death, especially as the very same God's son Jesus, is going to give it everyone some 1000 years later. Then it struck me. Moses couldn't give them that idea, even though he was incorporating the Egyptian Goddess Ma'at into his design, for the Ark of the Covenant and the mercy seat. He couldn't give it to them, because they could only have this if they were taken over the Nile to the west. As we know, Moses was travelling eastwards, further and further away from that great river; the river that divided the living from the dead. The river that I can show would become the River Styx of ancient Greek mythology, where Charon the ferryman, met the departing souls from this world and charged them those two important copper coins, to ferry them over, a fee that all tourists have to pay, if they want to go over and stare at the wonders of Egypt. An act remembered by the Victorians, who laid two pennies over the eyes of the deceased as a sort of hedging your bets. A remembrance we still have of the Grim Reaper, with his cowl-covered head, as he beckons you towards him and that river that separated the living from the dead, the river Styx... the river Nile. Remembered but unknown, in that American hymn which goes, *'And we gathered by the river, the glorious, the glorious river, that runs past the throne of God.'* Those that gathered there were the dead and the river was the Styx but the God in those distant days was Zeus. I wonder if Moses ever thought about that paradise, that after-life he'd lost? Was he buried in the Egyptian manner? He could have been, for he could see the Dead Sea from Mount Nebo, it was not even a day's march there and back. How easy it would have been to have gathered up that salt to pack his body in. Salt that would have preserved him, just as well as the Natron salts preserved the Pharaoh that sought to slay him.

Mount Nebo and Death

So, there we have it, Moses or God, after 38 years of waiting and breeding, now felt strong enough to take on the opposition, the Sea People, who with the Philistines had taken over Canaan. Yet in thinking that, we mustn't forget, that after 38 years in the wilderness, Aaron has only one year to live and Moses, at 75, has two more years to go. Logic suggests this idea of going forth to war was

not God's or Moses'; it was most probably Joshua's. Moses would have been living in his well-furnished tabernacle and, I'm sure, being waited upon, having little incentive to rough it on a military campaign. Joshua must have been the one who was hot for it, for he was about 58 and looking for promotion. If politics are the same then as now, it was called wanting to be the Boss. You can almost hear Joshua saying to Moses, 'If you don't give the go ahead, I will, and you know what that means'. It meant a power struggle, and may the youngest man win.

At last God told Moses to move out, and the Israelites started heading north to the land of the Edomites, for God would give the Israelites the lands of Sihon, King of Heshbon and others, for it says, 'This day will I begin to put the dread of thee and the fear of thee upon the nations that are under the whole heaven.' As one comes up out of Sinai, there's only one route to take, the coastal route along the western side of the Gulf of Aqaba. Squeezing through that bottleneck at the present-day port of Eilat, you come to the Negev desert.

Having been there, I can describe what I saw. Eilat is at the end of the Great African Rift which continues down the Red Sea into Africa. Due north of Eilat is a vast flat expanse. To the left and to the right are sheer cliffs. Here was either the beginning or the end of that geological formation known as the Great African Rift. A rift in the earth's crust, from the Sea of Galilee down to the south through the Dead Sea, and down to Eilat and Aqaba, even the Red Sea itself went into this great sinking of the earth. Even then it turned westwards into Africa, the Great Rift, as it is known to geographers. All due to that vast continent of Africa, moving away from India. In reality, the whole area was once a plateau; it is the middle portion that has sunk some 500 meters.

But this land is not devoid of water, as can be seen from the deep Wadis. These Wadis weren't carved by wind or ice, they were carved by water, rushing, gushing water, with the power to rip boulders and rocks aside. Yet all is barren rock, why? Because the land is either so hard or so porous, that as soon as the water loses its power, it just disappears into that porous soil to sink down and down, where the roots of plants can never reach. But look again, here and there is a solitary bush or a stunted tree. Look further over this valley to where these Wadis are, and at the end of them you will find a green oasis of trees. It is in these places that the rock strata hold the water back near to the surface, near enough for plant life to survive and a small farmstead to provide a livelihood. These have been there long before Moses. Where you will find human life; you will find water and human life will fight to the death to keep their water. However, it is about here that I



geographically lose the Children. There seem to be two versions in the Torah of what happens from when they get to Eilat. One version, (Numbers 13) reads that Moses sent out 12 spies, all named,

including one, Oshea, the son of Nun, who was in fact Joshua, together with Caleb, into the western part of Edom as far as Kadesh, to spy out the land, its military strength and the fruitfulness of the land. How, on their return, they brought back clusters of grapes that needed two men to carry. But on reporting back to Moses, all the spies except Joshua and Caleb, reported that the land was filled with giants, much to the anger of Joshua, Caleb and Moses. Once again, the Children revolted against Moses (Numbers 14) and wanted to appoint their own captains and return to Egypt. Moses successfully put down this revolt and we read that the 10 spies who spoke out against going to Kadesh, died from the plague, whilst Caleb and Joshua survived. It is not my business to interpret God's doing, but getting rid of your political opponents, is an old remedy, carried on to this day.

However, there is a problem with this scenario. It says in another version that all the Israelites went to Kadesh and it was here they stayed for 38 years, rather than the other version that they stayed in the Sinai for 38 years. So, what did happen? Personally, I think they stayed all this time in Sinai, for it was the safest place, giving them 38 years to multiply and build up their military strength. As we have read, they left Egypt with 600,000 men, not counting the women, children and cattle. If this is true, then 38 years later they would have multiplied to some 12million people.

In my opinion, the number of fighting men leaving Egypt would have been about 150, and give them 38 years in the wilderness of the Sinai and they could have raise another 150 fighting men every year after the 18th year. So, after the next 20 years, you could possibly be in the region of 6,000 men. But would the Sinai be able to sustain this host? Nevertheless, it is quite possible that on leaving the Sinai to Eilat, they did send out spies but decided not to go. So, I will leave the host at Eilat, and on their return with reports of giants in the land, they decided to turn eastwards to the mountains of Edom.

If Moses was heading into the land of the Edomites then he would have passed through Eilat and on through Aqaba for there was the opening in those eastern mountains of the Great Rift. It looks good, for if he wants to die at Mt Nebo he's got to get up these mountains somewhere and here's one route. But you've got to think of the Misses and the kids. So, I'm going to go the easy way that is straight north from Eilat up this flat plain the Negev desert, flat and easy walking, with the odd bit of greenery to feed your flocks.

Today drive up this northern route and 40 kilometres north of Eilat you come to the Oasis of Yolvata. Today it sustains a herd of some 400 cows and is well known for its dairy products. Go one mile in any direction and it pure desert. Now this name is new since this land became Israel but it is mention as the old name that Moses journeyed to. I consider they, like me realized this could only be that Oasis that Moses came to and so gave this place its ancient place name. People might move over time but Oasis don't. Then still going north some 60 kilometres, you come to the Oasis of Paran. A place as big as my local town of Chinnor, Oxfordshire. But these dwellings are not for human habitation but covers for the vast areas of bananas, tomatoes and other vegetables destined for Israel's cities to the west. Again, Paran is part of Moses route but if as he says he sends out spies, he'll know he can't get up those eastern mountains. One must assume that as an Oasis is fixed by the geology and can't move, so must mountains remain fixed. So, there is only one way up and that is back tracking some 30 kilometers to a Jordanian village of Gharandal where there is a track leading up those mountains to Dilagha and a modern day secondary road. This would be in the land of the ancient Edomites. Besides, one feels from the scriptures that the Children were on the top of this plateau when they were confronted by the Edomites.

Consequently, on meeting with the Edomites, Moses was going to have to fight or negotiate for his water. This again conforms to the scripture, for Moses didn't want a fight, and we read that he asked permission to march through these lands, paying for whatever they would sell, without his cattle grazing their crops. As he said, 'We will stay with the way, neither turning to the right or to the left'. The answer was a definite 'No'. No water meant a fight. It seemed that the Children bettered the Edomites but moved on northwards to the land of the Moabites.

If we follow this secondary road some 30 Kilometres we come to a Wadi by the wonderful name of Wadi Musa, 'Moses' Wadi'. Yes, I know it's a coincidence but a coincidence I like. As we pass over this Wadi we come to the ancient road that scholars have associated with 'The way' that Moses mentioned. This ancient way is still called the Kings Highway. From here on, we are entering Moabite territory.

Once again, we read that Moses had to take drastic action, action against his own people, for the Moabites had a cunning plan. It was a plan you will have heard of in the 60's of our own time: 'Make love not war.' For the Moab men didn't want to fight and encourage their wives and daughters to mollify these warlike men with good old-fashioned sex. We read that all the Moabite women enticed the Israelite males to try sex and not war, as well as forsake their God, for the God of Moab. Indeed, the reaction of Moses to this new method of warfare was terrible to behold. He could obviously see it was working. His men were having a great time. Moses could see he was going to lose his authority. Aaron and his son, now as high priest, could see that they too, would lose their status, whilst Joshua would lose his inheritance. Firstly, Moses hung some of his men who had succumbed to the charms of the Moabite women, and then he instructed the faithful to kill all the Moabite men, women and children, except for the girls that had never known a man. These, he said, you keep for yourselves. Of course, this was a long time ago; nevertheless, as history has shown, man's humanity to man, for all the passing of years, has not improved. For call it what you will, this is still genocide, brought down upon God's creation by Moses' God himself.

Of course, the period we are exploring is the Bronze Age and man's inhumanity to man was as casual as wringing a chicken's neck. If you were going to rule, you ruled by whatever way you could, and religion and fear went hand in hand in assisting you. So, did Moses have a soft spot? Interestingly, I think he did, for one of his laws on the preparation of food was rather strange and, as far as I could see, had no connection to hygiene. For he said, 'Thou shall not stew a kid in its mother's milk.' Here he could see how horrific it was for a goat to produce a kid and then, to add insult to injury, once you've killed and skinned, you then cooked it in the milk of its mother. This is called getting into Moses' mind, but see how you understand it.

But the Children were still in trouble, for on top of this mountain ridge was a fertile plateau. Fertility meant people, and strangers meant a fight. Moses marched ever northwards, knowing this was not going to be a place to put down roots. So, they travelled northwards to Mount Nebo, some 50 kilometres southwest of Amman, the capital of Jordan, whose name still reflects memories of its ancient people, the Ammonites, who lived there in Biblical times.

So, it says that Moses climbed to the top of Mount Nebo, even to Pisgah. Now to those that know, Pisgah is not a place, it's a Hebrew word, simply meaning, 'To the top,' and climbing to the top of Mount Nebo, was just an easy walk. Today there is a Byzantium church, as a memorial to Moses, open to the public, free of charge. For Mount Nebo is not a mountain. Millions of years ago, it would have been just a mound on a flat plateau. But as is the wont of things, the earth began to shift and slowly, the land before Mount Nebo began to sink, sink...and sink. As you amble up to the edge of Mount Nebo, you look down to a virtual precipice. A precipice that any climber would have pulled a face at. Yes, Mount Nebo was a mountain but only one side of it, as it sat precariously on the edge of this great rift. To the left and right of it are two valleys. As you look out to the west, there below is the Dead Sea. Dead, because at 400meters below sea level, it will never flow into the sea, although one day, in another million years, the Red Sea will probably flow into it, as the earth sinks further. Beyond that, to the west, is Israel, the promised land, and if you have a fine day, you'll see Jericho and possibly Jerusalem, just as they are described in the Bible. It is here, we are informed, that Moses died, and he was buried in a valley of Mount Nebo in a secret place opposite Beth-Peor.

Now It was Beth-Peor I'd gone to find. What was Beth-Peor? It means in Hebrew, 'The house with the opening.' House, I understand this as in Beth-lehem, but what of Peor, meaning opening.



Could this have been a cave 3000 years ago? It was with this question in mind that I went there. I asked the curator of the Byzantium church if there were caves in the area. I received a positive 'No.' So, I went down the south valley and found he was right. Undeterred, I went down the north valley and found he was wrong. There on the north cliff was a cave and, below, a deep Wadi and on the Mount Nebo side of the Wadi was the greenery of a small oasis and a farmstead. Better still, the locals called this area, where the water came out of the strata of the cliff, Moses Springs.

Why, I asked, should the Ammonites still remember it? One obvious answer that came to his mind was that the tribe of Reuben were experts in the rearing of cattle and it was they who begged Moses to let them stay here, for it was good cattle country. True, not as good as English pastures, but better than those cattle ranches of Texas. So, Moses gave his permission and the tribe of Reuben tarried here. We are told that the Israelites camped on top of Mount Nebo for 30 days whilst they mourned the death of Moses. Plenty of time to build his sepulchre, his tomb especially as it would have been down there that they could collect their water.

So, could Moses have been buried within those grounds? If so, I suggest he was buried in a peculiar sort of way. My first thought was that he may have been mummified in the Egyptian way. Old ideas, especially if they incorporated a living forever clause, were strong inducements to anyone. The Dead Sea, easily reached in a day, would furnish all the salt you would need to dry out the body, so perhaps he was. But a peculiarity with Jewish funerals was that those who came to pay their last respects placed a stone on the stone lid to the grave. Where did this come from? If you ask, nobody knows, except that it's the thing you do. Let me try to suggest an answer.

If you've been wandering in the Sinai desert for 40 years, a lot of people have died. How would you bury them? I suggest you'd scrape a hole in the sand, lay in the corpse, and those that loved you would come and bring stones and rocks and place over the grave. They would do it for the same reason that those who live in frozen lands do it – to stop scavenging animals rooting for the corpse. If this is right, then I think the place to look for is a spot with a higher than normal number of rocks.

But then I saw that farmstead opposite the house with the opening, the cave. Could Moses be below ground under that farmstead that my photo shows as the remnants of a circular mound? I looked at that farmstead again; it was in a direct straight line to that cave opening. Buildings by necessity must pop up from somewhere at some time but it is the buildings that are built on them, covering the history below. Go to Italy and you'll come across many churches, such as St Thomas supra Minerva, St Thomas above Minerva. The Christians were good at stamping out the pagan religion by building a church above, in this case, the temple of Minerva. The church in the Roman city of Silchester is directly over the old Roman temple. The temple of Roman Canterbury has never been found, even though most of the city has been excavated. It doesn't take much thought to suggest it will be found under that great cathedral itself. So, did that Jordanian farmstead start life as some

shrine... a shrine put up by the tribe of Rueben, after Joshua and the Children had crossed over the Jordan... a shrine to old Moses?

Now it wouldn't be difficult to patrol that small area of land, including inside that farmhouse, with one of archaeology's sophisticated weapons, the GPR (Ground Penetrating radar) which will penetrate the earth and show up if the earth has ever been disturbed. Sophisticated but simple and two days should do it. Perhaps I'll never know, for carrying a spade and trowel in this area is not good if you don't want to be confronted by rifle-carrying Jordanians, but at least here is a case for the archaeologists of Jordan and Israel to put their minds to. After all, Moses was the back-bone of both their religions, and to find Moses

would indeed be another Tutankhamen. So, I put my thought cum theory to the head of archaeology at the University of Jordan. I was gratified to find I was correct. Correct in that I received no reply.

Back on my mountain, I gazed once more towards the land of Israel and Palestine and, in the words of William Shakespeare, 'Upon your imaginary forces work.' For if you want to be an archaeologist, you'll find imaginary forces to be a great tool. So, in my imagination I looked and thought. Which way did Joshua take the Children, when at last the Promised Land was before them? It was then that I saw a car snaking its way up from the valley below, no doubt heading for Madaba. Of course, the route they took had to be this road, for once again the steep gradient made this the only route.

So, there they were, the young men and girls, the old and sick and the cattle, almost running down this steepness. There in the van was Joshua and his men of war. They were going over. Over to meet and make war with the Philistines, who were already there. The same Philistines, who were vanquished by Pharaoh from Egypt, in the year 1189 BC. The same Philistines who gave Moses an opportunity to make a run for it, a run that became a bestseller, 'The Exodus.'

But great scholars have doubted that the episode we know as the Exodus ever happened, believing that Moses was a myth. But if we think about it, if it was a myth, whoever thought it up, must have had intimate knowledge of Egyptian history, geology, and have been a great traveller, to have travelled the journeys of this myth, putting in the exact geographical places as well as getting the topography right as he went. So clever was this myth maker, he even found the sea that parted and named it. Named it so accurately, as to fit the conditions required, to comply with the sticky situations that Moses so often found himself in. Surely the continual coincidences, happening in sequence and within the right date frames, must be considered archaeological proof? So, I say unto you who say it didn't happen, put your proof into the balances, for verily I say unto you, they will be found wanting.

So as Ra, the great God of Egypt and once the God of Moses, sank below that horizon that Noah once saw but never knew, I gave the royal salute to a Pharaoh that never was. Old Moses, he who had captivated my interest for all these years. As I turned away, I heard upon the wind a whisper: 'So God was wrong, then,' said the ghost of Moses, 'It wasn't the Amalekites that would be Israel's enemy from generation unto generation, it would be the Philistines.'



A view looking towards Jerusalem from Mt Nebo

When was the Red Sea not the Red Sea?

The first recording of the Red Sea is in Moses' Exodus out of Egypt. So, we can assume he was the first to name it. But was the name he gave it, the Red Sea? I think not, for although Biblical scholars try to substantiate this by saying the mountains surrounding it gave off a red light, or that there was a red coral in the waters, it doesn't detract from the fact that every time I've seen it, it's been a delicious blue.

So what name did Moses give it? It sounds complicated, but I feel those that read this will have the powers to see what I saw, or rather what my trusty companion, Mrs Gila Kadmon saw, with her knowledge of Hebrew. You will remember that Moses fled from Pharaoh to Midian. In doing so, he crossed over or went down the coast of this Red Sea, as we know it today, but unfortunately, he didn't name it. Yet this sea would have been familiar to the Egyptians, for Queen Hatshepsut sent trading expeditions from the ancient Egyptian port of Quseir, southwards down this sea to trade in the land of Punt.

The next step is to realize that Moses had no map to view his world. He had no way of knowing the Gulf of Suez or the Gulf of Aqaba were connected to the Red Sea proper. I think we can say that after the Exodus had begun, when Moses left the Reed Sea of Lake Manzilah and headed south to the Bitter Lakes and then on to present day Port Suez, he had no idea that this Gulf of Suez was in any way connected to the Red Sea we know today, or the sea he crossed when fleeing to Midian.

So, when he left the Port Suez area and went south along the coast, for there was no other way, except via jagged mountains, he would always have had a sea to the right of him. One could say that he was naming it already in the Torah as the Red Sea. To this I would agree, but I'm saying that at this stage of his Exodus, he was certainly seeing it, but he was not at that time naming it. To understand this, you have to get into Moses' mind and I do that by getting into my own mind, for I know, as you do, that youths don't start writing their history until they're mature. Memories are purely for the old, especially if you want to record all of them. I therefore think Moses at 36, had no time to dot his I's or cross his T's of his history at that stage. He had too many things on his mind and a whole adventure waiting to happen. It was enough for him to remember they were by the sea.

Eventually they reached the Sinai desert that would be theirs for the next 38 years. They had time to wander to and fro within the Sinai to realize that the sea they noticed when they came down, was the same stretch of water that would accompany them when, after 38 years, they started to travel

north up the coastal route to present day Elat. By this time Moses was old and the adventure was nearly over and this was the time to record it in detail.

As they came to the towns of Elat and Aqaba, they were then in Edomite country, the land of Edom. It was here, for the first time, that Moses could name it. I suggest he was told by the Edomites that it was their sea, the Edom Sea. So, he recorded it as the Edom Sea.

At first hand, there appears to be no comparison between the names Red Sea and the Edom Sea. But remember, the Red Sea is in English. So, what is the Hebrew for red, it's Adom. Now there is a comparison: change the first vowel from A to E and you have Edom.

You will remember in my findings of Moses coming down from the Holy mountain, having in one translation, a radiance, whilst in another having horns (Karan or Keren). The same error is turning up again, both with the same vowels, A and E. The vowels in Hebrew are as follows: A =is denoted by a T under the first letter. E =three dots in the shape of a T under the first letter. I = one dot under the first letter. O = one dot over the first letter. U = three dots in a diagonal line under the first letter.

From this you can see there can be no confusion with the vowels I, O, U. So how could an E be turned into an A, or vice versa? One is a slip of the pen to make the three dots form a T. A crease in the papyrus will do likewise, or a run of the ink. Fading and ageing will reduce the T to three dots and, of course, not forgetting human error.

Therefore, in my opinion, the Red Sea was originally named and most probably by Moses as the Edom Sea and not the Red (Adom) Sea.

But then a revelation came to me, for the Edomites are the descendants of Easu because he ate red pottage. So, I go one step further and suggest the name Edomites was never their name, it was always the Adomites.

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The Author Don Cox

Mrs G my trusty companion

It was in the parish of Kidderminster on the 26th March 1935 that a beautiful boy was born. “It was I,” says the author. Educated at Seabright School, Wolverley, between 1946 and 1952, he was considered good at skipping, having skipped most things – until he was introduced to history, maths and geography. Destiny beckoned him into the worlds of the military, the farmer and the explorer. He became a professional soldier in 1953. He went on to try his hand at farming, but found himself too much in sympathy with the animals, and so became an engineer, studying at chance Technical College, Birmingham. He spent his holidays on archaeological digs or historical explorations. In the hope of living forever, he became a father in 1970, and a grandfather in 1995. His cup has been full, sometimes to overflowing but now that Charon the ferryman is beckoning him to come aboard, it is time for him to record his findings – and here some of them are.

Further reading.

	Place	Timeline
The date and the birth place of God	Crete	1660 BC
The Phaistos Disc	Crete	1400 BC
The day Noah puts to sea	Crete	1435 BC
Moses from birth to exile	Egypt	1224 BC
Moses from: Exile to Exodus	Egypt	1196 BC
Moses from Exodus to death	Sinai	1188 BC
Is this the face of Memnon killed by Achilles at Troy	Egypt	1192 BC
Hades and Odysseus found	Egypt	1189 BC
Noah’s ark not what it seems to be.	Palestine	500 BC
The day the sun changed places in the sky.	Africa	600 BC
Found the fabled Mountain to the Moon.	Africa	70 BC
Found Kind John’s Lost Treasure	England	1216 AD
The End of our World	England	2017