

A. Authorship

1. Old Testament
 - a. Exodus 24:4: “Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD...”
 - b. Exodus 17:14: “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua...’”
 - c. Exodus 34:27: “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.’”
 - d. Deuteronomy 31:9: “So Moses wrote this law and gave it to the priests...”
 - e. Deuteronomy 31:24 states, “It came about, when Moses finished writing the words of this law in a book until they were complete.”
 - f. Other OT authors referred to the first five books of the Bible as “the book of the law of Moses” (Joshua 8:31, 23:6; 2 Kings 14:6; others)

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A. Authorship

2. New Testament
 - a. In John 5:46 Jesus said, “For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.”
 - b. In Mark 12:26 Jesus quoted from Exodus and refers to it as “the book of Moses”
 - c. Romans 10:5: “For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.”
 - d. Like the OT, the NT repeatedly refers to the first five books of the Bible as “the Law of Moses” (Luke 24:44; Acts 13:39; 15:5; 28:23; 1 Corinthians 9:9; Hebrews 10:28)

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B. Date and Purpose

1. ~1446-1406 BC (time between the Exodus and Conquest)
2. Written for the post-wilderness generation as a historical record and instructions for when they entered the land of Canaan

C. Structure

1. Chapters 1-18 cover the Exodus from Egypt to the arrival at Mt. Sinai
2. Chapters 19-40 cover the establishment of the covenant, giving of the Law, and the plans for the Tabernacle
3. Common ways to summarize the book:
 - a. Deliverance from submission to their captors in Egypt (1-18) to submission to their God (19-40)
 - b. From being the servants of Pharaoh (1-18) to becoming the servants of God (19-40)
 - c. Rescue from human bondage (1-18) and rescue from bondage to sin (19-40)

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D. Main Themes

1. Some of the themes are summed up in Exodus 6:6-8:
 - a. Knowledge of Yahweh: “Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, ‘I am the LORD’” (repeated in 7 and 8)
 - b. Freedom from bondage: “and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage.”
 - c. Redemption: “I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.”
 - d. God’s covenant with Israel: “Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your God; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.”
 - e. The Promise Land: “I will bring you to the land which I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will give it to you for a possession; I am the LORD.”

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D. Main Themes

2. Other themes:
 - a. The necessity of holiness and obedience (seen in the giving of the Law):
 - 1) Exodus 19:5: “Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine”
 - 2) Exodus 20:20: “Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin.”
 - b. God’s sovereignty and omnipotence: prolific in the plagues
 - c. God’s presence among His people
 - d. God’s holiness (keeping distance from the mountain, rules related to the tabernacle, etc.)

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E. Date of the Exodus

1. Early Date ~1446 BC: most widely accepted among Evangelicals
 - a. Relies upon 1 Kings 6:1: “Now it came about in the four hundred and eightieth year after the sons of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the LORD.”
 - 1) Solomon became king in 970 and started temple in 966
 - 2) 480 year prior to that would be 1446 BC
 - b. Further support is found in Judges 11:26: “While Israel lived in Heshbon and its villages, and in Aroer and its villages, and in all the cities that are on the banks of the Arnon, three hundred years, why did you not recover them within that time?”
 1. Jephthah lived ~1100 BC and wrote that Israel had been living in the land 300 years
 2. So, 1100 + 300 years in the land + 40 years in wilderness = 1440 BC

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E. Date of the Exodus

2. Late Date ~ 1250: less common (mostly liberal scholars)
 - a. Relies mostly on Exo 1:11: “...and they built for Pharaoh storage cities, Pithom and Raamses.”
 - 1) They claim that the name Raamses is similar to the name Ramses which wasn’t used by pharaohs until the 1200s BC so the Exodus would have had to have been after that
 - 2) However, the names Pithom and Raamses here could be anachronisms (changes by later editors to replace older names with more modern ones to help readers identify them)
 - b. Proponents also rely on references to Israel in the Merneptah Stele:
 1. It dates to 1207 BC and records the conquests of Pharaoh Merneptah over people in Canaan and claims “Israel is laid waste, bare of seed”
 2. They claim Israel could not have lived in the land for 200+ years because the stele only refers to Israel as a group of people rather than a nation with fortified walls, etc.
 3. They claim Israel had to be small at this point in order to have been defeated by Merneptah
 4. The problem with these claims is that Egyptian conquest records are highly unreliable, often filled with embellishments diminishing their enemies and even recording defeats as victories

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F. Archeological Evidence for the Exodus

1. Most ANE scholars claim there is no evidence for the Exodus

“Archeological evidence directly confirming the biblical Exodus (a mass migration of 600,000+ men) is nonexistent, with most scholars viewing it as a foundational myth with a potential, much smaller, historical core. While no, direct evidence exists in Sinai or Egypt for the specific, massive, 13th-century BCE event, indirect archaeological data supports that Canaanite slaves lived in the Nile Delta, and that a, largely, indigenous, highland, population, formed in, Canaan, during the, Iron Age.” (Gemini AI)

2. Why do critics deny the overwhelming evidence?

- a. They completely reject the Bible as an accurate historical record of past events
- b. When the archeological evidence aligns with the Biblical record, they reject it because it doesn’t fit their timeline or chronology

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F. Archeological Evidence for the Exodus

3. Examples

- a. Evidence of large Semitic population in Egypt's Nile Delta
 - 1) This is the area of Goshen
 - 2) Time period was 1700-1500 BC (~300 years before the Exodus)
 - 3) Abrupt abandonment that coincides with migration into Canaan

- b. Royal Palace/Villa at Avaris (city in Goshen)
 - 1) Architecture is a combination of Egyptian and Semitic styles
 - 2) One end is supported by 12 large pillars (
 - 3) 12 tombs in the garden, 11 normal and one pyramid style royal tomb
 - 4) When the tombs were excavated, each of the 11 contained remains, but the royal tomb contained none
 - 5) In addition, the remains of a large statue were found depicting a royal Semitic figure in a multicolored robe

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F. Archeological Evidence for the Exodus

3. Examples (cont.)

- c. Egyptian Records
 - 1) Hieroglyphics depicting Semitic slaves in Egypt
 - 2) Anastasi Payyri and Papyrus Leiden both mention of a group called the "Habiru" working on construction projects in Egypt
 - 3) Papyrus Brooklyn (found in Thebes) which records the names of Egyptian slaves, over thirty of which are Hebrew names
 - 4) Two inscriptions on a temple of Pharaoh Amenhotep III (reigned after the Exodus during the conquest) which refer to land east of Egypt (Canaan) as "the land of the nomads of Yahweh"
 - 5) Merneptah Stele: records the conquest of three Canaanite cities by Pharaoh Merneptah 200 years after the Exodus, but Israel is the only people group named suggesting they were the largest ethnic group

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F. Archeological Evidence for the Exodus

3. Examples (cont.)
 - d. Evidence from Jericho
 - 1) Known today as Tell es-Sultan and it's composed of five distinct layers, called "cities", covering five different time periods
 - 2) One of these "cities" shows destruction that matches significant details in the Bible
 - a) Walls which fell outward (not inward as with most attacks)
 - b) A burn layer indicating the city had been burned
 - c) A section of the wall with residential housing that survived (where Rahab might have lived and survived)

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G. Duration in Egypt and Population of Israel

1. Duration: two most widely accepted durations are 430 years and 215 years
 - a. Support for 430 years:
 - 1) Genesis 15:13-16: "where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years"
 - 2) Exodus 12:40-41: "Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. 41 And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt."
 - 3) Acts 7:6: Stephen said, "but god spoke to this effect, that his descendants would be aliens in a foreign land, and that they would be enslaved and mistreated for four hundred years."
 - 4) The argument against this view is that the genealogy in Exodus 6 only appears to allow for about four generations (but God described the 400 years in Genesis 15 as four generations)

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G. Duration in Egypt and Population of Israel

1. Duration cont.

b. Support for 215 years:

- 1) Galatians 3:16-17 seems to suggest the 430 started when God made his promise to Abraham, not when Israel entered Egypt: "Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ. What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise."
- 2) It appears Paul was relying upon the LXX of Exodus 12:40-41 which is different than the Hebrew translation: "Now the residence of the sons of Israel during which they dwelt in the land, Egypt, and in the land of Canaan was four hundred and thirty years. And it happened after four hundred and thirty years that all the host of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt during the night."

c. My opinion: the explicit statement in Exodus 12:40-41 as well as the large population size of Israel at the Exodus favors the longer duration

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G. Duration in Egypt and Population of Israel

2. Population: estimates range from 2.4 million to as few as 30,000

a. Support for 2-2.4 million:

1. Exodus 12:37: "Now the sons of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children."
2. This aligns with the census of all the tribes of Israel in Numbers 1 (Levi wasn't included)
3. Adding estimates for the women and children brings the total to between 2-2.4 million
4. The main objections to such a large population are:
 - a) Various passages in Deuteronomy state that the Canaanites were more numerous than Israel, but most scholars put the largest ANE Canaanite civilizations at less than 200-300,000 people
 - b) Egypt's population at the time is estimated to have been between 3-4 million so how would they subjugate and enslave a population of 2-2.4 million?

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G. Duration in Egypt and Population of Israel

2. Population cont.

b. Support for only 30,000:

- 1) The Hebrew word for “thousand” can also mean group, tribe or clan which would bring the total down to ~6000 men plus women and children
- 2) 30,000 could survive in the wilderness for 40 years but not 2-2.4 million
- 3) 30,000 could gather around to listen to Moses but not millions
- 4) The main objections to this view:
 - a) It doesn't line up with the census in Numbers 1 which seems exceptionally precise and lines up with the 600,000+
 - b) If the population was only 30,000, how could 50,000 have been killed by three different plagues in the wilderness (Numbers 16:49; 25:9; 1 Corinthians 10:8)

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G. Duration in Egypt and Population of Israel

2. Population cont.

c. Evangelical opinion favors the larger number:

- 1) Exodus 1:7 is deliberately emphatic: “**But the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them.**”
- 2) We should take Pharaoh's own words at face value (Exodus 1:9): “**Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we**”
- 3) According to Microsoft CoPilot, 70 people could grow to over 400 million over 400 years at a growth rate of ~2.6% per year; this is “**mathematically sound, demographically realistic in historical context, and consistent with know population model**” (CoPilot)

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H. Pharaoh of the Exodus

1. Ramses II is favored by most liberal and secular scholars (because they favor a late date to the Exodus (as depicted in Cecil B. DeMille's 1956 movie The Ten Commandments
2. Most Evangelical scholars favor Amenhotep II or Neferhotep because they believe in an early date for the Exodus (1440-1446BC)
 - a. Criteria:
 - 1) Must have reigned during the date of the Exodus (1440s)
 - 2) Predecessor must have reigned for at least 40 years: Moses was 40 when he fled the pharaoh and returned 40 years later shortly after the pharaoh died (Exodus 2:23; 4:19)
 - 3) He could not have been a first-born son because he would have died during the 10th plague (Exodus 11-12 states "all" the firstborn which logically would have included children as well as adults)
 - 4) His successor could not be his firstborn son because he would have died during the 10th plague
 - 5) There are only a couple pharaohs who meet all four of these criteria