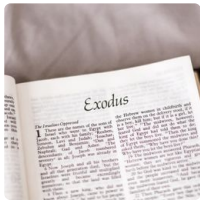


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Exodus Introduction (Part 1)



Exodus - Steve Gregg

The book of Exodus, traditionally believed to be written by Moses, is important in establishing the nation of Israel and is linked organically to Genesis as a continuation of the narrative. Exodus covers the affliction and release of the Israelites from Egypt, their wandering in the desert, and the giving of the Ten Commandments and law at Sinai. Although lacking archaeological proof, there is historical evidence of foreign slaves and workers in Egypt, the involvement of Israelites in building projects, and evidence for rapid population growth. The exact date and identity of the Pharaoh during the Exodus are widely debated among scholars.

Transcript

All right, with this session we're beginning our study of the book of Exodus, and the book of Exodus actually is probably the most important book with reference to the establishment of the nation of Israel. Genesis, obviously, is a very important book with reference to the world and all humanity's interests. You know, the creation of the world, the creation of all of us, the fall and the flood and all of that is in all of our history.

But obviously, in the book of Genesis around chapter 12, the focus of the history began to be on one family, Abraham and his offspring. And by the end of Genesis, they had gone down into Egypt because of the famine that existed in the time of Joseph. And it was actually God's provision for their survival in a period of seven years of famine.

And because God had elevated Joseph to a position of authority and respect in the country, they were able to come and live on the choices of the pasture lands with their flock, which was in the land of Goshen up in the northeastern part of Egypt, up in the Nile Delta, real fertile area. And so that's where they were at the end of Genesis. And the story of this family, which has now become a great, well, I would say nation, but they're not really technically a nation until chapter 19, but they're just a big clan.

It's a big family, which is now millions strong, and they are brought out of slavery in this book and brought to Mount Sinai, where their their history of the nation begins. In a sense, Exodus is as important to Israel as, say, the founding documents of any nation are

to that nation, say that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and the Federalist Papers and so forth related to the founding of this nation. America would be no more important to us than the book of Exodus would be to the Jews because the establishment of their nation was at the Exodus and at Mount Sinai.

It was at Mount Sinai that they became God's people as a nation. Now, because of Abraham and the promises made to him, they were God's people as a family, a family of Abraham. But they were not a nation among the nations of the world until the middle of the book of Exodus.

And of course, the Ten Commandments are going to be given there and the other covenant documents and provisions that God made. And so that's what this book of Exodus is going to be about. It's also a book that is heavily laden with the types of Christ and therefore Christian ideas.

This is something that the New Testament writers obviously observed because they quote from the book of Exodus more than any other Old Testament book, except for Psalms and Isaiah. Psalms is the most frequently quoted Old Testament book by New Testament writers. Isaiah comes in second and Exodus third, which is interesting because when they're quoting prophecies about the Messiah, you'd think they'd mostly quote from the books of the prophets like Isaiah.

But before before any of the other prophetic books, Exodus is more heavily represented in the quotations of the New Testament because the Christians saw in the Exodus a type of Christ and of his kingdom. And we will see why as we go through our studies in the book. Now, the word Exodus is not really the name of the book in the Hebrew Bible.

In the Hebrew Bible, these books have names that are based on the first words in the Hebrew text. The first words in the book of Exodus in Hebrew are, and these are the names. And so in Hebrew, that's well, I shall know.

And that means these are the names. That's the name of the book in the Hebrew Bible, because those are the first words. Shemot means names, and sometimes the Hebrews just refer to this book as names or Shemot.

But we have the book Exodus that has come to the English Bible through the Septuagint and the Vulgate, the Septuagint, the Greek translation and the Vulgate, a later Latin translation. Now, in Greek, the Septuagint, the translators named the book Exodus spelled like our Exodus only with OS at the end. That's the Greek form.

And that's because the word appears in chapter 19, verse one, where it says the third month after the children of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, gone out. The word Exodus in the Greek comes from two words, ex, which means out of, and hodos, which means a road or a way. So Exodus means a road out or a way out, or it has come to

mean simply a departure, a leaving.

And so in the Greek Septuagint, that's the name that the translators gave the book instead of the first words of the Latin Vulgate, which Jerome translated, took the Latin form of that same word, which is Exodus spelled the way we spell it in our Bible. And so that's how we got that name for the book. Now, as with any book of the Bible, we're very concerned about the authorship because authorship has a lot to do with whether a book really belongs in the Bible or not.

There are many good books, historical records and so forth that have been written by the Jews, but are not in our Bible and should not be in our Bible because they're not written by prophets. Now, Moses very clearly was a prophet. In fact, he was greater than the other prophets and that he's God said about Moses in the book of Numbers, if I raise up a prophet in Israel, I will speak to that prophet through dreams and visions and dark stains and so forth.

This is my servant. Moses is not so it's different with him. I'll speak to him face to face.

So Moses was actually singled out above the prophets that God would write about. And therefore, anything written by Moses is authoritative and belongs in our Bible, of course. Now, Moses is the author of this book.

At least that has been the belief of the Jews forever and of Christians through most of forever until about the 1800s, when the critical scholars began to try to find new theories of authorship for many of the books of the Bible, including the entire Pentateuch. And we've talked before in our introduction to the Pentateuch about the so-called documentary hypothesis, which holds that Moses really didn't write any part of the Pentateuch, but that it was a series of traditions orally passed down for hundreds of years later, written down maybe in the time of Ezra. Much like 500 B.C. or something like that, which means a thousand years after Moses time, which means any claim that Moses wrote it was simply wrong.

However, it's also possible that the critical scholars are the ones who are wrong. After all, they disagree with the book itself. And they disagree with the New Testament writers assessment and the evidence within the book is supported.

So there's really no excellent reason to question Moses authorship of this. He was certainly the man most qualified to write it when you consider the material, what its contents are. The contents of the book are really, they begin pretty much with the birth of Moses and they have to do with the first 80 years of Moses life.

He would be the world's greatest expert about those matters because that was his life. He also was literarily trained. He was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, it says in Acts 7.22. Because he was raised in Pharaoh's court, he was given a formal education,

which would include education, mathematics and reading and writing and many other subjects.

The science was known at the time. And so, as it says in Acts 7.22, that Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. He's probably the most educated Jew of his generation since all the other Jews were all slaves and probably weren't educated at all.

He'd be far more qualified to write the records of their experiences and of his own life than anyone else at that time. And of course, we might say, well, somebody at a later time perhaps wrote it, but they wouldn't be more qualified than one who went through it. So, I mean, certainly Moses would be the most qualified person to write it.

He'd also be the one who had the motivation to write it because he was the leader of the nation and these are the founding documents of the nation. This is the documents that tell what the nation's laws are going to be, what its definition as a nation is going to be, what its purpose is. They also have, the book of Exodus has a detailed description of how the tabernacle is to be built, since this would be built in the wilderness before the conquest of Canaan.

And therefore, we'd say during the lifetime of Moses. It would be Moses who would have an interest in making sure that these things were written down for the people. And he would have the information more than anybody else at a later generation would.

And a person at a later generation wouldn't be interested, at least wouldn't have as much interest in describing how to build the tabernacle, since in any later generation, the tabernacle would already be built and wouldn't be needing to be built. So, certainly Moses stands as the most natural candidate to be author of the book and there are several parts of the book that mention him writing at least portions of it. Scholars do not necessarily agree that the entire book was written as one continuous narrative, all in one sitting or some people believe it's put together from various documents written at different times, perhaps all by Moses.

But we know that Moses wrote at least some of them in chapter 17 of Exodus, verse 14. Then the Lord said to Moses, write this for memorial in the book and recounted in the hearing of Joshua that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek under heaven. Now, this does not necessarily refer to the writing of the whole book of Exodus, but writing out this this curse upon Amalek.

But we see that Moses was literate that he that God authorized him to write this particular information and there's no reason to believe that he would not have written all the other information to that was even more important and to his contemporary situation in chapter 24 at the end of the reciting of the laws that used to make up what's called the Book of the Covenant. Chapter 24 and verse 4. It says, And Moses wrote all the words of Yahweh and he rose early in the morning and built an altar to the foot of the

mountain. Now, all the words of Yahweh would be all those written from the Ten Commandments on Ten Commandments in chapter 20.

And then you've got chapter 21, 22, 23 are what we call the Book of the Covenant. That's what is being referred to here. That's what Yahweh had spoken and Moses wrote them down.

Now, again, that doesn't refer to the entire Book of Exodus, but it means that Moses did write the law down, which is the central part of the book. Also in Exodus chapter 34 and verse 28. It says, So he was there with the Lord 40 days and 40 nights.

He neither ate bread nor drank water, and he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant. The Ten Commandments. So we have a record of Moses writing at least portions of the book and in saying that these statements tell us that he wrote these portions.

They're not in any sense denying that he wrote the rest as well. We're not told that anybody else wrote the rest. And so the only author of any part of the book that the book itself testifies to is Moses.

And if he wrote the significant portions of it that are mentioned, then there's no reason to doubt the Jewish tradition that he wrote the book as a whole, or that was essentially his book. That was also confirmed by Jesus and the New Testament writers in Mark chapter seven and verse 10. Jesus said to the Pharisees for Moses said, Honor your father and your mother and he who curses father or mother.

Let him be put to death. These are actually two verses from Exodus. The first is obviously from the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 20 and verse 12. The other one is from the next chapter is 21 verse 17. And Jesus said, Moses said this.

He means Moses was the one who brought that information, who wrote it. He recognized that as words that came from Moses, as opposed, for example, from some later generation of scribes, creators of the story in Mark chapter 12 and verse 26. It says, but concerning the dead that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob.

Now, this was, of course, when God met with Abraham, I mean, with Moses at the burning bush in Exodus three, six. And Jesus says that's recorded in the book of Moses, presumably implying that Moses was the author. Certainly he knew that's how his listeners understood it.

And Jesus seems to be confirming that those books are books from Moses in Luke

chapter 24 in Luke chapter 24, verse 44. After his resurrection, it says he was meeting with his apostles in the upper room. He said to them, these are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms concerning me.

Well, the law of Moses, no book, although the whole Pentateuch is considered to be the law. There's no book of the Pentateuch more centrally qualified to be called the law than the Ten Commandments and the book of the covenant found in Exodus. Obviously, Jesus is confirming that Exodus is a book of Moses in John 7, 19.

Jesus said to the Jews, did not Moses give you the law and yet none of you keeps the law now again, Jesus confirms that it's Moses that gave law. We have, of course, almost an endless number of New Testament passages that make reference to Moses in connection with the writing of the Pentateuch. I'm just giving you a sampling to see the kind of testimony that the New Testament gives.

Those were all the testimony of Jesus to give the testimony of another writer in Hebrews chapter nine and verse 19. It says, for when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats with water, scarlet wool and his seven sprinkle both the book itself and all the people. Now, it says that Moses, the one who spoke every precept to the people, according to the law, and that would include, of course, the vast majority of the contents of the book of Exodus.

So we've got the direct references in Exodus to Moses writing, we've got the Jewish tradition, we've got Moses qualifications and motivations for writing it. We have the New Testament writers and most importantly, Jesus himself. And we also find it's an integral part of the Pentateuch and connected organically to the book of Genesis.

Now, in the New Testament, every book of the Pentateuch, I was going to say every book of the Pentateuch is attributed to Moses, except Genesis. I think maybe not numbers. I'm trying to remember that.

Certainly, Exodus, Leviticus and Deuteronomy are all mentioned in the New Testament as being written by Moses. The book of Genesis is not specifically said to have been written by Moses, but it's hard to ignore the fact that Exodus is the continuation of the book of Genesis and is connected to it as if it's one narrative by the same author, because actually in Exodus, in the Hebrew text, the very first word is and. In the New King James, it's translated now and it can be translated now, but most scholars prefer and as the translation of that first word.

So and, these are the names, is really how the book begins, which makes it very clear that when you begin a book with and, you're following up off something previous. And what is previous is clearly the book of Genesis. The book of Genesis closes essentially with the migration of the children of Israel into Egypt.

And that's where Exodus begins, finds them there. Also, the book of Exodus presupposes the knowledge of the book of Genesis, because in Exodus chapter one, we read in verse eight of a new king in Egypt who rose, who did not know Joseph. So the assumption of the writer of Exodus is that the readers have knowledge of Joseph.

In fact, we would expect the history related Joseph to be in near proximity prior to this, because it's now in relationship to Joseph that the events are chronologically related. And of course, the last part of Genesis was all about Joseph. So it seems to certainly presupposes that people know Genesis.

They know the story of Joseph. Likewise, when God meets with Abram at the burning bush and says, I am the God of Abram and Isaac and Jacob, it obviously presupposes knowledge of those men, the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, which are found in Genesis. They're not found anywhere else in literature.

Obviously, the book presupposes that the readers have read Genesis and are familiar with it. And it seems by the very beginning of it with and these are the names that it's simply a continuation of Genesis. And that means that since Moses is the author of the one, he is the most likely author of both Genesis and Exodus.

Now, I want to survey with you the contents of the book, and then I want to talk about a number of other important issues related to Exodus. The book of Exodus begins with Israel being brought under affliction in Egypt. And that's what chapter one is about, how that they had come into Egypt really as a favored group of immigrants.

And they settled there in the time of Joseph, while their brother Joseph was really the most important man in Egypt, apart from the pharaoh himself. That made them important, that gave them privileges, that gave them prosperity, that meant that they got to do what they wanted to do. One thing they wanted to do was reproduce, and they did.

They had a lot of kids, and they grew into a great number of people, and they became settled in. And, of course, when the famine ended, there was no reason to leave Egypt. I mean, Joseph was going to be there permanently.

He is ruling in Egypt. And so they stayed there. Jacob died there.

But the brothers of Joseph had settled in, and they had raised families. And so they were there until Joseph died. And once he died, there didn't seem to be any obvious reason to leave either.

And so they just stayed. And remember, God had told Abraham, back in Genesis chapter 15, that his seed would be in a land that was not their own for 400 years, and that he would bring them back into the promised land, and they would inherit it. That's found in Genesis 15, verse 13.

Genesis 15, 13, God said to Abram, Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them 400 years. And also the nation whom they serve I will judge. Afterward, they shall come out with great possessions.

Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace. You shall be buried at a good old age. But in the fourth generation, they shall return here.

For the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete. So this is probably at least 100 or 200 years before the children of Israel went into Egypt. God said they're going to spend time in a land that's not theirs, and they'll be afflicted there.

And apparently the affliction was a necessary part of God's bringing them back. They were comfortable in Egypt. Why should they go back to the land of Canaan, where there were occasional famines? There were hardly ever famines in Egypt, because the denial largely prevented that.

And so, I mean, just staying in Egypt made sense to them. But God wanted them back in Canaan, so he made it uncomfortable for them to stay in Egypt. I'd like you to look at Deuteronomy chapter 32.

This is one of Moses' sermons near the end of his life, and he's reminding Israel of God's dealings with them in their recent memory. Actually, 40 years earlier. But many of his listeners have been old enough to remember these things.

In Deuteronomy 32 and verse 11, he says, As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, so Yahweh alone led Israel. And there was no foreign God with him. Now, it says that what God did in establishing Israel was he, like an eagle, stirs up her nest.

What this refers to is the fact that eagles, you know, when they're laying their eggs, they have their nests made up of twigs and branches and so forth, that they line them with feathers and down, so it's real soft. So when the baby eaglets hatch out, they're comfortable. They're in a nice little feather bed.

But they're almost too comfortable, and they don't want to leave the nest, especially since they're up on a real high, craggy rock, usually, and leaving the nest looks like dangerous stuff to do. And once the mother eagle knows that the baby eagles are old enough to fly, but apparently reluctant to do so, she begins to stir up the bottom of the nest. She begins to remove the feathers and break the twigs up so that their ends point upward so that the eaglets are unhappy there.

They're not comfortable there anymore, and they have incentive to leave the nest. And that's what it says God did with Israel. He stirred up their nest.

They were comfortable in Egypt. It was time for them to fly. It was time for them to go back to the promised land.

But they were too comfortable. So God stirred up the nest. He broke up the twigs under them and made it uncomfortable in Egypt.

In their case, that meant putting them under affliction, under bondage. And that affliction is recorded in chapter 1. In chapters 2 through 4, we have the birth of Moses and the early years of Moses. By early years, we mean the first 80 years.

It doesn't sound like only early years, but we have essentially the first 80 years of his life covered over in these chapters, at the end of which time we are reading about God meeting him at the burning bush and commissioning him to go back to Egypt and to confront Pharaoh. And so he does. And chapters 5 through 13 then record the confrontation between Moses and Pharaoh, or perhaps you should say between God and Pharaoh.

God is confronting Pharaoh, and this includes the demand that he let the people go from their slavery. And Pharaoh's obstinance, and therefore God's bringing 10 plagues upon Pharaoh, on Egypt, at the end of which Pharaoh finally agrees, and the Jews are permitted, I should say Israel, they were not called Jews yet, but Israel is permitted to leave their land, the land of Egypt I should say, and to go to the promised land. So the Exodus takes place, chapters 12 and 13, and 14, actually they leave in chapter 14, so we have the Exodus.

The Exodus simply means they're going out of Egypt, and they're wandering through the desert to Sinai, and that is recorded in chapters 14 through 18. Once they get to Sinai, they stay there for about a year, and the rest of the book of Exodus takes place there at Sinai, and it begins with God making a covenant with them and giving them the laws that are related to their obedience to that covenant. And that would be chapters 19 through 24.

They arrive at Sinai in chapter 19, and he gives them the Ten Commandments in chapter 20, and then a lot of other laws in chapters 21 through 23, and then in chapter 24, the covenant is enacted with the shedding of blood and sprinkling and so forth. So the covenant is enacted and the law is given at Sinai in chapters 19 through 24. Then we have in chapters 25 through 31 instructions about how to build the tabernacle, and the instructions are gruelingly detailed, somewhat difficult to read through with avid interest, because of the details being, some of them, a little difficult to quite picture in your mind, and some of them just not seeming to be all that important to a modern reader.

It was very important to them, because God said Moses should make everything in the tabernacle exactly according to the pattern that was shown to him in the mount, because, as the book of Hebrews tells us, this was a pattern of heavenly things, and so

all the details had to be accurate. And so the details are given in chapters 25 through 31. Then we have a little historical interlude about the golden calf incident in chapters 32 through 34.

Israel makes a golden calf, there's a judgment that comes upon them, the Ten Commandments that God gave Moses are broken, the stone tablets are broken, Moses has to go back up, and God gives them another set of the Ten Commandments. At that time, God actually promises Moses, or says to Moses, I'm going to wipe all these people out, I'm going to make a greater nation than them out of you and your family. And Moses is not favorable toward that, and he intercedes for Israel to God, and as a result, God spares them and gives them another chance.

That's what chapters 32 through 34 are about. Then finally, the last six chapters, 35 through 40, are about the building and the erecting of the tabernacle. And obviously, the details of the tabernacle and describing how it's built are pretty much a one-on-one correspondence to the description of how they were supposed to be built.

And therefore, you have a repetition of what is the most tedious part of the book of Revelation, the most tedious part of the book of Exodus. Which was chapters 25 through 31, is now repeated in detail. And therefore, the latter half of the book of Exodus is somewhat more difficult for most readers because of the number of chapters devoted to the description of the tabernacle.

However, the amount of attention that is given to the tabernacle is one of the proofs that the book is written in the time of Moses and not some centuries later, because the documentary hypothesis, which is, of course, against the Mosaic authorship of the book, holds that the book was written a few hundred years before Christ. Why would people a few hundred years before Christ have any interest in the tabernacle? They had been worshipping in Solomon's Temple for years, centuries. Why would they care about a tabernacle? Why would they fabricate an idea of a tabernacle? All these details.

It just doesn't make any sense that the book would be so heavily weighted with all this information of the tabernacle unless it was written at a time when it was relevant to the Jews, when they needed to know how to design, how to build the tabernacle. So, all that tabernacle detail is, in a sense, one of the ways in which the early authorship of the book is confirmed. Now, that brings us to the next logical point, and that is the historicity of the Exodus, the actual events.

Did they really happen? We sometimes hear that there is no external support for the fact of the Exodus. I mean, think about it. If Exodus is true, if the book is true, there are something like two or three million Israelites who have been slaves in Egypt for centuries and who escaped.

And in the course of their escape, the nation of Egypt was essentially destroyed. I mean,

temporarily, anyway. They lost all their crops.

They lost their livestock. They lost their fighting force in the Sea of Reeds, or the Red Sea, as it's usually translated. They lost the firstborn of every family.

The nation was just wiped out. It recovered eventually, but it was in that particular time the nation suffered probably the most terrible devastation that any nation in ancient times did. Now, you'd expect, they say, there'd be evidence of this.

There'd be, we would hope, records of this in the contemporary histories, in the annals of Egypt. You'd expect to find, they think, archaeological evidence for the Israelites, for any, you know, that number of people moving through the wilderness and camping at a mountain for a year and so forth. And so we are sometimes told there just isn't any of that.

There isn't any secular external evidence for this historical phenomenon. And based on that claim, many people believe the Exodus is simply a fiction. Now, it is said, for example, that there's no mention in the Egyptian records of this event.

But that really is not very surprising to fair-minded persons looking at the data, because the histories of Egypt, as with most pagan nations, were very propagandistic. They were very favorable toward their own country. They did not record the embarrassments and humiliations of their kings.

This is true not only in Egypt, but the Assyrian records and other ancient records of the pagan land. You find that instead of recording the embarrassing things, they just leave them blank, or they redo them. There was one of the pharaohs had a terrible defeat in a battle at a much later time than this, than the Exodus.

And the records in Egyptian history show that he had a great victory. But more commonly, they simply leave out, in pagan historical records, they leave out the whole years that things happened that were embarrassing to the nation. You know, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, spent seven years insane.

And the Babylonian records just leave that part of his history, there's gaps in the history of Nebuchadnezzar. There are some ancient records that mention him having a strange sickness or being possessed by some god, as the Babylonians thought. But for the most part, they just leave out all reference to Nebuchadnezzar's conditions and leave those years of his life are really not recorded.

And so also, this Exodus, if true, would be one of the most humiliating chapters in the life of the pharaoh. And we would expect him to forbid any record of it to be put down. And so, you know, it's not too surprising that the Egyptian records don't tell us about it.

They say there's no archaeological remains in Goshen, which is the area that the

Israelites lived in, in the Delta area of Egypt. But the likelihood is great that since they were slaves, they lived in mud huts, as people often, the poor often do in that region. And that's in the Nile Delta.

That would be subject to much flooding over the years, over the centuries. We're talking about something that happened 3,400 years ago. And the flooding in that area would have been, would have happened probably hundreds of times.

And any mud buildings would have been washed away and left very little trace. We wouldn't expect to find too much there going back that far, except for maybe permanent things made of stone, which apparently the Israelites did not live in such stone buildings in Goshen. Also, of course, you'll often hear from the History Channel or from places like that, that there is no record of the great number of Israelites traveling through Sinai and camping there.

But once again, they were camping. They weren't building buildings and leaving permanent traces for historians thousands of years later to discover. They were moving through.

I mean, you expect to find their wrappers from their fast food or what? What do you want to find there? There's not really anything to find. You might find a few weapons, arrowheads or things like that. But it's not surprising that you don't really find traces.

Their footprints wouldn't still be there. It's just, it's kind of unreasonable to demand that we would find firm evidence of people who were camping out and moving through between 3,000 and 4,000 years ago. And so those arguments against the Exodus being historical are not really very compelling to a fair minded person, it seems to me.

Now, in favor of it being historical are a number of arguments. One, and it's often pointed out, and I think this is quite strong, is that if this didn't happen, then it means the Jews made this up. Someone made it up.

If this isn't the actual history of the founding of their nation, then it's a fictional history of the founding of their nation. And there aren't any nations we know of that would be proud to create a history of their nation where the founding of it was a bunch of runaway slaves. I mean, there are nations that have that kind of background.

For example, Liberia, an African nation, was founded from freed slaves from America, for the most part. Australia was originally a prison colony of England. And that's, I mean, that's a fact.

And Israel was originally a slave population that came out of Egypt. Now, those things, if they're true, they're recorded in history. If they weren't true, no country would make those things up about themselves.

Because countries want to make up more glorious stories of their origins, generally speaking. And so, you know, we have to say that if this isn't the historical record of how they really got started, how did they get started? And why did they make up such a, as it were, inglorious background that their ancestors were all slaves for hundreds of years in Egypt? We know from what is known from ancient historical records in Egypt that there were a lot of foreign slaves or foreign workers, at least, in Egypt from a number of countries that were involved in the building projects of Egypt. Some of the pharaohs were very avid builders, and they either hired or enslaved people from other countries to make their bricks and to build their buildings.

That is known from historical records. Whether the Hebrews were among those that did so is not necessarily confirmed, but it's quite consistent with what is known of the time in Egypt. So, there's really no reason to doubt that the Hebrews were among those who also were involved in those projects.

There is a stela, which is a stone slab with historical information inscribed on it. There's a lot of these found in the ancient world. Archaeologists find them.

And there was a stela found in Egypt from the pharaoh Merenptah. I don't know how to pronounce that. Merenptah.

There's a P and a T together there. And that dates from about 1209 BC, and he speaks of his own invading Israel in the land of Canaan. Now, 12-something BC would be during the period of the judges, and there were lots of invasions of Israel during the period of judges by foreign powers.

But what this proves is that the Israelites were in Canaan at that time, and we know that they weren't always. I mean, archaeological remains in Canaan show that there were Canaanite civilizations in there in ancient times. So, we know that at this particular time, therefore, he mentions Israel in the land of Canaan that he invaded and conquered.

And so, it confirms in general that the Israelites had sometime prior to that settled and become established in Canaan. There's also, depending on your view of where Mount Sinai is, there is some archaeological evidence of Israel having been encamped in Midian. This is not the traditional site of Mount Sinai, but it is an alternative site that many scholars have come to feel might be the true Mount Sinai.

And there are Jewish inscriptions on stones and things like that at the foot of this mountain, which would, if that is the true Sinai, that would be archaeological support for Israel having been there. Anyway, we don't depend on external support. Like I said, we really would not be surprised if there was no archaeological support for this traveling.

These people were just passing through. They weren't building cities. They were walking on foot, living in tents with their families and their cattle and so forth.

And they were only staying a few weeks at a time in each location in most cases. And therefore, the main historical information we have for it is the Book of Exodus itself. And there's no reason to doubt that it's historically accurate.

As I said, if it's not the true story of the founding of the desert, why would they make it up? Why would they suggest that their ancestors were slaves? That's not the most the most prestigious origins for a nation that one could imagine if they wanted to make up a fake history. Now, there's a number of issues related to this historical issues that for which different views exist, and we may never be able to totally settle them. For example, the question of how long was Israel actually afflicted in Egypt? That is, how long was it after the time that Jacob's family migrated into Egypt before the Exodus? Now, there is a number given which can be interpreted two different ways.

That number is in chapter 12 of Exodus and verse 40, where it says, Now, the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. Now, at face value, it appears that they lived in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years. And therefore, many scholars believe that from the time that Jacob and his family migrated into Egypt at the end of Genesis until the Exodus was four hundred and thirty years, the majority of which time the Jews were afflicted, the Israelites were afflicted by the Egyptians.

If so, that's a really, really long time. That's like almost twice as long as America has been a nation, you know, that they were slaves in Egypt. And it's not impossible that that would be so, although not everyone agrees that that's the necessary way to understand this information.

Now, we do know that when they went into Egypt. In the time of Jacob, that there were 70 adult males or at least 70 males, heads of families that went in, including Jacob and his sons and grandsons. And when they came out of Egypt, there was a census taken where there are approximately six hundred thousand males over 20 years old of Israelites.

Now, however long they were in Egypt. We have to allow that they the population grew from 70 heads of families to essentially six hundred thousand adult males. Now, that's adult males.

If you add the women, that makes it over a million. If you add a couple of children per family, you've got over two million. And probably more than a couple of children per family.

And so there could have been between two and three million people, maybe even more than three million. But how long does it take for 70 families to grow into 600,000 families? Well, many people feel like 430 years is necessary for that. And it said that the population would have to double every 25 years.

You can do the math. If you double the population, start with 70 and double it every 25 years, then in 430 years, you're going to have. That many people there and yet there's another theory, and that is that they were actually afflicted in Egypt for a much shorter time.

If you look at Exodus 12 and verse 40, the verse we saw, it says the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was 430 years. Now, it doesn't say they lived in Egypt for 430 years. It says they sojourned for 430 years.

We're talking about the children of Israel who also who lived in Egypt at the time of this story. But it doesn't say that their sojourn was in Egypt all of that time. And many have felt that actually their sojourn in Egypt was only about half that long, because the 430 years is thought to include the first time that Abraham came into the land of Canaan.

And we know he went down into Egypt in Genesis chapter 12, right after he came in the land of Canaan. So that the covenant with Abraham. At the beginning of our story of Abraham would be the beginning of that 430 years and that it was 215 years after Abraham's promise was made to Abraham.

215 years later, Jacob and his sons went into Egypt and they spent 215 years there. Of which some of that was not afflicted because Joseph was still alive for a portion of that time. And then the afflictions came when a later Pharaoh came up.

Who knows how much later? Maybe two or three Pharaohs later. We don't know. Who didn't know Joseph.

So the children of Israel may have only been in Egypt for 215 years and may have been afflicted for maybe only, you know, who knows, maybe a century at that time. In fact, there's a number of reasons for believing that they'd be in Egypt for only that long. One of them is that we saw already in Genesis chapter 15 that God told Abraham that in the fourth generation they will come out and come back to the land of Canaan.

Well, if you read the genealogy of Moses, which is found in Exodus chapter six or chapter six, we've got this genealogy of Moses and he's descended from Levi. OK, here we go. Chapter six, verse 16, these are the names of the sons of Levi, according to their generations, Gershon.

OK, now, verse 17, the sons of Gershon were from Kohath, isn't he? Let's see here. Yeah. OK, the son of Levi was Kohath, verse 16.

And then verse 18, the sons of Kohath were Amram. Well, that was that was Moses' father. It says in verse 20, Now Amram took himself Jacobite, his father's sister, his aunt, and she bore him Aaron and Moses.

So we've got Levi, we've got Kohath, we've got Amram and we've got Moses. That's four

generations. It is thought that 430 years is a long time for four generations.

Usually a generation turns over every 25 years or so. And so it seems like 430 years is too long. But also, we've got a more important testimony from Paul in the book of Galatians.

Yeah, 317. Actually, if we look at Galatians 3, 16 and 17, now to Abraham and his seed, the promises were made. OK, then verse 17.

And this, I say that the law, which was 430 years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before God in Christ. Now he's saying the law was given 430 years after God made his promise to Abraham. So according to Paul, the 430 years measures from the time God made his promise to Abraham, to the Exodus.

And that means that when Exodus 12, 40 tells us the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was 400 years, it just means that the family were sojourners for 430 years. They weren't in Egypt that whole time. They did live in Egypt at the time that this statement is made, but they were sojourning also in the land of Canaan before they were sojourning in Egypt.

Abraham and his family had left their home in Ur and were sojourners, that is, visitors passing through Canaan and Egypt. So that if this is so and Paul seems to confirm this in Galatians 3, 17. Then the 430 years is not the amount of time that they were afflicted in Egypt, but the whole period of time from Abraham to the Exodus.

And that would, if you do the calculations of the age of Abraham when Isaac was born and his age when Jacob was born and the age of Jacob when the Exodus took place, I should say when Jacob's family went into Egypt. You'll find that that was 215 years, which is exactly half of the 430 years. The 430 years was divided into two halves, 215 years in Canaan with occasional visits to Egypt because Abraham did go to Egypt.

But 215 years after the migration of Jacob and his family into Egypt. So the total time they were in Egypt living there seems to have been only 215 years, not 430. And of course, you have to take out of that the number of years that Joseph lived.

Let's say he was 30 to 37 when they came down into Egypt, something like that. It was 39, 39 in Libya, 110. So we're looking at about 70 years into that, Joseph dies.

So you've got then another pharaoh has to come up who forgets about Joseph. So you may have them only in in affliction for about 100 years or so. We don't really know the exact number of years.

We don't know which pharaoh put them under bondage, but it wasn't exactly that they suffered in affliction for 430 years. At least that is that is another option. Now, the question then becomes, how could 70 heads of households become 600,000 heads of

households in 215 years? That'd be very rapid population growth.

But that's exactly what Exodus said happened. Very rapid population growth. You can see in Exodus 1, 7, the children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly and multiplied and grew exceedingly mighty.

And the land was filled with them. Some of the verbs used here are verbs that are usually used of animals like teeming fishes and teeming frogs when there's a plague of them. The idea is these people multiply very rapidly.

And they could. I was calculating this last night. And if if the average young couple by age 21 had three children.

Now, presuming the young women got married about 13 or 14 years old and they didn't use birth control, of course, it'd be easy for the average couple to have three children by age 21. In fact, probably they'd have more, but there'd be a certain infant mortality, but maybe not. Maybe maybe God was supernaturally decreasing their infant mortality rate.

There'd be a certain attrition from older people dying, but they wouldn't die every 21 years. They you know, every 21 years, there could be three new kids or more in the family and maybe every 80 years someone would die. It's hard to know exactly the rate of growth, but the thing is.

I figured out that it's not at all impossible if the average young adult got married and had kids when they were in their teens and had three kids by the time they're 21, not counting the attrition rate from the death of older people, which would have to be made up for with a slightly larger birth rate than that. You could have this kind of growth and it'd be quite exceptional growth. But the Bible actually tells us that it was.

So I'm of the opinion that the 215 years is the right number between the migration of Jacob's family into Egypt and and the Exodus. Now, what is the date of the Exodus and who is the pharaoh? Scholars do not agree on that either. They certainly don't agree on who the pharaohs are.

There are at least three pharaohs in the book because you've got the pharaoh that that was there when the migration took place. Then you've got a later pharaoh who didn't know Egypt and then he died while Moses was in exile. Another pharaoh came up and he was the pharaoh of the Exodus.

And so we've got at least three pharaohs in the picture and their identities are not known. Many scholars of the conservative sort believe that the pharaohs of Joseph's time were of the Hyksos dynasty. The Hyksos pharaohs were actually not Egyptians.

They were Semites. They were invaders. They invaded Egypt and they ruled for about 150 years in Egypt.

And they were much resented by the native Egyptians. And once the Hyksos were driven out, the Egyptians kind of took their vengeance on Semitic people. And this may have a partial means of explaining why the pharaoh of Joseph's time was so generous to him.

Joseph was a Semitic guy. If that pharaoh was one of the Hyksos pharaohs, then that might explain why he was so friendly with a Semitic fellow who gave him such power. And if the pharaoh of the oppression in Moses' day was, you know, one of the pharaohs that had overthrown the Hyksos pharaohs, then they hated Semites and they didn't want to be overthrown and invaded again.

The what's called the 18th dynasty pharaohs overthrew the Hyksos and they actually invaded Palestine and actually captured the land all the way up to the Euphrates River because they wanted to create a buffer so that foreigners could not come into Egypt again and invade it. Now, the Israelites were a fast growing group of Semites up there in the northeastern boundary of the country, which is where invaders would come from. And the pharaohs were afraid that if anyone tried to invade, these Israelites would simply take the side of the invaders.

And that's said to be the reason that the pharaohs were afraid of the Israelites. And so there may be something of that history that's there, but no one knows which pharaohs were in charge at any one time, partly because the year of the exodus is widely disputed. There is the, I guess what we can say, the more traditional date of the exodus would be around 1446 B.C. Now, I checked with Nolan Jones and he puts it a little earlier, like 1490 something B.C. But I was, yeah, I was trying to figure out his reasoning.

I was reading his book and I think I caught a flaw in his reasoning. I'm not I'm not sure, but we'll talk about that sometime out of class. But almost all conservative Bible scholars traditionally understood the exodus take place around 1446 B.C. The reasons for that would be a number of things.

First Kings six one is a very important indicator of when the exodus took place. First Kings chapter six and verse one is when Solomon was building the temple in the fourth year of his reign. Now, most scholars place the fourth year of Solomon's reign at 966 B.C. And in First Kings chapter six, verse one, it says, and it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel had come out of the land of Egypt in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel in the month of Ziv, et cetera, et cetera.

Now, this four hundred eighty years is an important chronological marker, obviously. And I think one of the differences between the traditional date and what Nolan Jones comes up with is he has a different date for the fourth year of Solomon's reign. But most scholars believe that the fourth year of Solomon's reign was in 966 B.C. So four hundred eighty years before that would be 1446 B.C. And that would be the year of the exodus.

By the way, it's interesting that the book of Exodus does not give us exact year markers.

It gives exact month and day markers. And in fact, the date of the exodus is considered to be very important, like the fourth of July for Americans.

And, you know, in chapter 12 of Exodus in verse two, it says this day will be the beginning of days, the beginning of months in your year. It's like every year they would remember this day and this month is there. It's like their fourth of July.

But but there's no indication of what year it was. And so the date is important, but apparently the year was not important for them to record. And that's why we have people who have disagreements, although first King six one seems to record the year.

Because it mentions it was four hundred eighty years before the temple began to be built. There's other confirmation for that early year, Jephthah writing probably about eleven hundred B.C. and in the book of Judges in Judges chapter 11 and verse 26 made this chronological statement, Judges 11 and verse 26. It says, while Israel dwelt in Hezbon and its villages in a row and its villages and all the cities and the banks of Arnon for three hundred years.

Why did you not recover them within that time? He's writing to the the oppressors of Israel. He's going to fight them. But over some over the over the land, he says, why didn't you try to recover your land from the Israelites in the last three hundred years that they've been here? So around eleven hundred B.C., Jephthah makes reference to Israel having been in land for three hundred years.

Now, if you go back three hundred years from his time, that's about fourteen hundred B.C. And there was that season also of the conquest under Joshua. We don't know how long that took, but it certainly puts the date of the exodus somewhere around the 14th, 14th something B.C. And therefore, again, a confirmation that that is so. Also, Ruth, Chapter four, verses 21 through 22, makes it this is difficult because it makes it like five generations from Judah.

No, not from different Solomon to David. Now, Solomon was one of those who participated in the conquest of the land. He married Rahab.

Solomon was in the invasion generation. And Ruth, Chapter four, verse twenty one, twenty two, say there's four generations from Solomon to David. And David is, of course, at the end of that time.

That would make those generations rather long, actually, five generations for four hundred and eighty years or something like that, four hundred forty years. But, you know, it's not impossible to spread them out that long. Our archaeologists found something they call the Amarna tablets or the Amarna letters.

This is a lot of correspondence, hundreds of tablets that were found of letters written by chieftains in Canaan to the Egyptian pharaoh of the time. Who was Pharaoh Akhenaten.

Akhenaten was actually one of the unusual pharaohs in that he was a monotheist.

He rebelled against the polytheism of Egypt at the time. He's not one of the pharaohs in the Bible, but he's a well-known monotheistic pharaoh. And his reign was from 1352 to 1333, 1336 B.C. And these Amarna letters are written by Canaanite chieftains asking Pharaoh Akhenaten to come and help them militarily against some invaders that were coming against them.

And these invaders are called the Hebrew. Now, the Hebrew sounds like Hebrew, and scholars are not really agreed as to whether it's the same people as the Hebrews or not. But Hebrew is a very similar sounding word, and it's not as I say, many scholars deny that the Hebrew are the Hebrews.

Something they might be, but it's interesting that they that the Canaanites are seeking to throw off the yoke of these invaders. In the 1300s B.C. This would be about 100 years after the exodus, probably, which would be about right. If the exodus took place in 1446 B.C., then 40 years later, they enter the promised land.

That'd be 1406 B.C. Then they've got the conquest under Joshua going on, maybe for usually thought to be about 25 years. But if we extend that to closer to 40 or 50 years, then you've got about the right time frame for these invasions of Canaan to be confirmed by the Amarna letters. Now, the other view and one that's held more popularly, even among many conservatives today, is a much later view of the exodus.

Then they place it about 1270 B.C. Obviously, almost 200, a little more than 200. No, not quite. Not quite 200 years later than the traditional date.

And the reason they do that is because largely of the city of Ramses or Rameses that the Israelites are said to have built in chapter one in verse 11 of Exodus. It says they built the treasure cities of Pithom and Rameses. And it's thought that Ramses or Rameses, which is pronounced both ways, I mean, spelled different ways, two different ways, is a reference to Ramses II.

That he is known to have done many great building projects in Egypt in his time, and it seems like the city of Rameses might have been named after him. But his reign was from 1279 to 1213 B.C., much later than the traditional date of the exodus. And therefore, it is sometimes argued that the exodus must have happened more later in his time.

To support this, many archaeologists say that as they've excavated Canaanite cities, there's a layer in the 13th century B.C., which would be around the time of Rameses or Rameses, where lots of these things have been burned. And they assume that this burning took place when the Canaanites, when the Israelites invaded Canaanites and took their cities, Joshua. And therefore, they try to place the exodus at this later time and

the conquest of Canaan at that later time also.

One of the problems of this particular argument is that the Bible does not teach that Israel burned the cities of the Canaanites. There are three cities that they did burn. They were told to burn them and they did burn them.

But most of the cities they wanted to inhabit, they didn't go in and burn down all the cities. They went in and basically took over the cities and inhabited the houses and so forth. So all these burned cities at a later date could be from some other situation, possibly invaders that came in during the period of judges and burned these cities once the Israelites were in them.

That is to say, if we find in the late 13th century B.C. evidence that a lot of the cities of Canaan were burned, that doesn't mean the Israelites did it when they conquered Canaan. It could have been somebody else conquering them during the period of the judges. They were conquered many times.

Now, the argument for this, I mean, those who hold this later date are numerous. Many evangelical commentators take this later date of the exodus for these two reasons I mentioned. And then they have to deal with this 480 years.

This 480 years from the exodus to the time of the building of Solomon's Temple would be greatly reduced down to 300 and something years. And they say, well, maybe 400 years is a figurative way of speaking. Maybe it's a way of saying 12 generations, because many times a generation seems to be spoken of as 40 years in the Bible.

I mean, think about it. Almost all the judges judged Israel for 40 years, not a year more or a year less, but just 40. And then they died.

The first king, King Saul, reigned for 40 years. The next king, David, reigned for 40 years. And the next King Solomon reigned for 40 years, not a year more or less.

Many people feel that that is not chronologically exact, but that the Hebrew historians simply had a way of counting a generation to be 40 years without counting the exact number of years. I'm not saying that's true, but this is what these other scholars are saying. They're saying that the term 480 years might simply be a shorthand way of saying 12 generations.

But 12 generations could easily have been a much shorter time than 480 years. 12 generations could have happened in 300 years or something like that. And so that's the argument for a later Exodus.

I personally am not impressed with it. I'm not sure what to say about the city of Ramses, to tell you the truth. I'm not familiar enough with the history of Egypt to know whether there was some reason there could have been a city named Ramses before the time of

Ramses II.

There was a Ramses I earlier, but even he was a little late for the Exodus. So it's possible that the city named Ramses existed and then some kings were named after the city at a later date. I don't really know.

All I do know is that it does seem like the chronological information given by 1 Kings 6.1 and by Jephthah points to an Exodus around 14 something B.C. Now, we need to take a break here and then we're going to come back and finish our introduction. To the book of Exodus. So we'll stop right there.