

The Sacred History of the Jews

Part II: The Exodus and the Wanderings



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Student Handouts
World History Workbook Series

Introduction

This workbook gives an overview of early Jewish history, covering the lifespan of Moses. Religious tradition holds that Moses wrote the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy), freed the Hebrews from bondage in Egypt, received the Ten Commandments from God, and led the Hebrews through the desert to the outskirts of the promised land.

The text of this workbook combines knowledge from the historical and archaeological record as well as biblical accounts of events. Although adherents

to Judeo-Christian faiths may find this booklet useful in religious instruction, it is not designed as a book to be used for the purpose of indoctrination or instruction.

This workbook is principally aimed at those students raised within other ideological systems, and is designed to familiarize readers with the motifs, stories, and beliefs that permeate so much of western civilization's culture, history, art, and literature. Biblical information and dates for births and deaths are left unquestioned, while supplemental information is included where appropriate.

Sacred History of the Ancient Jews: The Exodus and the Wanderings

The real history of the Israelites as a nation does not begin until their departure from Egypt. Abraham and his descendants were merely nomads, wandering over the promised land, but owning no part of it.

The Israelites remained in the fertile land of Goshen for a period of 215 years, and there prospered in such a marked degree that the family of seventy persons which entered Egypt with Jacob grew to a nation numbering nearly three million people. They formed a nation quite apart from the Egyptians, with their own language, manners, religious worship, and patriarchal government. It is true that they did not preserve the worship of God in its original purity, and had but a very vague idea of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whom they

worshiped, but they never fully adopted the idolatrous rites or religion of the Egyptians. They were ruled by their own proper chiefs, who were, in their turn, directly responsible to the Egyptian government for the collection of the taxes imposed upon the Hebrew colony.

1. Who originally led this group of Hebrews into Egypt?
 - a. Abraham
 - b. Jacob
 - c. Joseph
 - d. Moses
2. imposed:
 - a. asked
 - b. compelled
 - c. delineated
 - d. requested

During this period, the pharaohs of the Thebaid dynasty had succeeded in driving out the foreign Hyksos dynasty and in extending their rule over Lower Egypt, which now became one kingdom. This native dynasty was one of the most glorious that ever reigned in Egypt, and its kings appear to have favored the Hebrew colony.

3. Which dynasty was native to Egypt?

- a. Hyksos
- b. Thebaid

4. dynasty:

- a. lineage
- b. nation
- c. soap opera
- d. territory

This policy was changed when the nineteenth Egyptian dynasty came into power. These kings regarded the Hebrews as dangerous because of their numbers and location, and inflicted upon them a series of cruel persecutions, the object of which was to reduce their power and destroy them as a nation. According to tradition, the king who inaugurated this policy was called Ramses II (who, according to Egyptologists, reigned from 1279 B.C.E. until his death in 1213 B.C.E.). According to Hebrew accounts, Ramses was a great warrior and a cruel despot. He overburdened the Israelites with work, and compelled them to engage, under cruel taskmasters, in the labor of building cities. His efforts were unsuccessful. In spite of their heavy burdens, the Hebrews continued to increase in numbers. Enraged at this, the pharaoh gave orders that all the male children of the Hebrews should be put to

death at their birth. The females were spared, as they would furnish wives for the Egyptians. In this way, the pharaoh hoped to entirely destroy the race.

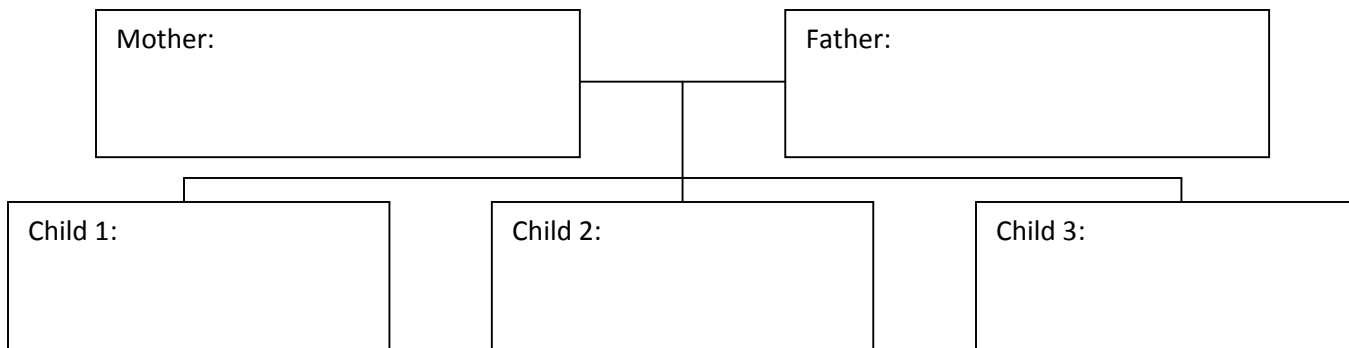
5. Describe what life was like for the Hebrews under Ramses II.

6. inaugurated:

- a. adjourned
- b. assigned
- c. celebrated
- d. commenced

Amram, a man of the tribe of Levi, had married Jochebed, a woman of the same tribe. They had two children, a son named Aaron, and a daughter named Miriam. Soon after the cruel edict of the pharaoh was issued, Jochebed gave birth to a second son, whom she hid for three months from the officers of the king. According to Jewish rabbinic tradition, the birth of Moses occurred in 1391 B.C.E. (which would place Moses' birth, according to the historical chronology of Egyptian pharaohs, at the start of the reign of Amenhotep III of the 18th dynasty).

Complete the following brief family tree of Moses.



Unable to conceal Moses any longer, Jochebed laid him in a basket, or ark, covered with pitch, and placed him among the flags on the brink of the Nile River. Here he was discovered by the daughter of the pharaoh, who had gone down to the river to bathe. The princess was touched with pity, and had the child brought to her. She gave it to Jochebed, who offered herself as nurse, and commanded her to rear the boy as “the son of Pharaoh’s daughter.”

7. Jochebed hid Moses along the banks of what river?

- a. Danube
- b. Euphrates
- c. Nile
- d. Tiber

Pharaoh’s daughter named the child Moses, which means “drawn out of the water.” When the boy was grown, his mother took him to the princess, who caused him to be educated as one of the royal family, in consequence of which he learned “in all the wisdom of the Egyptians,” and was taught military science. There is a tradition that, upon arriving at manhood, Moses held a high command in the Egyptian army in an expedition against Ethiopia.

In spite of his own fortunate lot, and of the favor he enjoyed at court, Moses felt keenly the wrongs against the Hebrews. He brooded over their sufferings, and often went among them to cheer them. One day he saw an Egyptian cruelly beating a Hebrew; his indignation was aroused, and he killed the Egyptian. This coming to the ears of the pharaoh, Moses was obliged to fly for his life. He took refuge in the Peninsula of Sinai.

8. Why did Moses flee to the Sinai Peninsula?

9. indignation:

- a. displeasure
- b. happiness
- c. joy
- d. rectitude



Pharaoh's daughter finds Moses hidden along the banks of the Nile River.

One day, Moses found himself in the territory of the Midianitish tribe, whose chief and priest was named Jethro. Moses was enabled to render a service to

the daughters of Jethro by defending them from the violence of some shepherds who sought to drive them away from a well where they were watering their flocks. Jethro, hearing of this, invited Moses to his home, and urged him to remain with him. Moses consented to do so, and Jethro gave him his daughter Zipporah as a wife.

Moses remained forty years with Jethro, and during this time, a new pharaoh mounted the throne of Egypt. He pursued towards the Hebrews the iniquitous system of his predecessor. In their sore affliction, the Hebrews besought the assistance of the god of their fathers, and he heard their prayers.

10. What daughter of Jethro did Moses marry?

11. predecessor:

- a. panderer
- b. precedent
- c. precursor
- d. successor



Moses is startled by the sight of a burning bush.

One day, when Moses had led his flock to a remote part of Mount Horeb, he was startled by seeing a bush burning with a bright blaze, but without being consumed. He approached it to ascertain the cause of this strange sight, but was checked by a voice from the midst of the bush, which told him that he was standing in the presence of God himself. This voice made itself known to Moses as the god of his fathers. It informed him of his purpose to bring the bondage of the Hebrews to an end, and to lead them into the land which he had promised Abraham should be the home of his descendants. He revealed to Moses his purpose to make him the leader and the divine mouthpiece of this great movement.

12. What plant does Moses see burning without being consumed?

- a. apple
- b. bush
- c. flower
- d. tree

13. ascertain:

- a. circumvent
- b. contradict
- c. determine
- d. invalidate

The timid nature of Moses shrank from this position, but God reassured him, and familiarized him with his brother Aaron, who was to be his spokesman to the Egyptian king and to the Hebrews. The entire plan of God was made known to Moses, who was commanded to reveal it to the elders, or chiefs, of the Israelites. God directed him to return to Egypt, assemble the Hebrew elders, and make known his mission to

them. Then, having secured their obedience, Moses was to go before Pharaoh and demand permission for the Israelites to leave Egypt. God told Moses that Pharaoh would not grant this demand, but that God would show his power over Egypt and avenge the wrongs against his people by a series of punishments such as Egypt had never known before.

14. Who is to serve as the spokesman for Moses?

Moses at once set out on his return to Egypt. On the way, he met his brother Aaron, who had been directed by God to seek him. The two brothers returned to Egypt. Summoning the elders of the Israelites, they laid before them the message of God. The people agreed to submit themselves to the divine will, and promised to execute faithfully all the commands of the god of their fathers.



Moses and Aaron before Pharaoh.

Having secured the adhesion of their people, Moses and Aaron next sought the presence of the Pharaoh, “to demand leave in the name of Yahweh, the god of Israel, for his people to hold a feast to him in the wilderness.” This was the extent of the first demand, as it had been the extent of what God had enjoined on Moses: “Ye shall serve God in this mountain.” It was to be a solemn festival, shared in by all the people. As a nomadic race, they would of course travel with their flocks and herds. When they reached the sacred mount, they would be at the disposal of their god, to lead them back or forward as he pleased. Moses claimed of Pharaoh that the Hebrews should be placed at his disposal, without telling Pharaoh of their further destination, which had been long since revealed to Abraham, and lately made known to Moses.

15. solemn:

- a. advantageous
- b. austere
- c. frivolous
- d. informal

The demand of Moses and Aaron was contemptuously refused by the Egyptian king, and the burdens of the Hebrews were redoubled. In their sore distress, the people reproached Moses and Aaron for adding to their hardships. Moses, greatly disheartened, complained to God that his effort had only brought sorrow upon his countrymen. But Moses was encouraged by the prediction that, though Pharaoh would steadily refuse for a time, and steadily increase the hard tasks of the Hebrews, yet God would break the stubborn pride of the king, and

compel him to consent to the departure of the Israelites.

This contest between Pharaoh and God was considered necessary, not only to punish the king for his treatment of the Hebrews, but as a proof to the latter that God was able to fulfill his promises to them, and that their god was more powerful and glorious than all the false deities of Egypt. The Hebrews had been so long exposed to contact with the religious system of the Egyptians that such a display of power by God was necessary to convince them that there was “no virtue in the idols of the Nile.”

Moses and Aaron renewed their demand upon the pharaoh repeatedly, and were as often refused. God punished the refusals of the king by sending upon the land of Egypt a series of terrible plagues, or afflictions. What made these plagues miraculous was their extraordinary violence, and the promptness with which they made their appearance at the call of Moses. They were ten in number, and are thus related in the Bible:

1st The waters of the Nile, the sacred river of the Egyptians, and the chief source of their water supply, became red like blood, and so putrid that they became offensive. Unable to use them, the Egyptians were compelled to sink wells along the shores of the river for water to drink.

2nd Frogs, which are always numerous and troublesome in Egypt, multiplied to such an extent as to become a terrible pest to the Egyptians.

3rd Swarms of lice covered the land, causing severe suffering to both man and beast. These insects were a terrible annoyance to the scrupulously

clean Egyptians, and were also a religious defilement.

4th Clouds of flies, or beetles, most probably of the great Egyptian beetle (*scaraboeus sacer*), covered the country, swarmed in the houses, and ate up the harvest and shrubbery. The beetle was an object of worship to the Egyptians, who were thus, in religious terms, scourged by their own gods.

5th An epizootic disease made its appearance among the cattle, and carried off vast numbers of them.

6th A grievous affliction of boils and blains broke out on the bodies of the Egyptians and their beasts. It also rendered the Egyptians religiously unclean.

7th A terrible hail storm, accompanied by thunder and lightning, swept over the country, destroying the crops, and killing men and beasts.

8th Swarms of locusts spread over the land, and devoured all that the hail had left.

9th An extraordinary darkness enveloped the land of Egypt, and for three days the gloom was so dense that the people were unable to see each other, or to pursue any of their avocations.

10th The firstborn of all Egyptian families (and animals) were killed.

16. Which of the first nine plagues do you feel was most harsh, and why?

17. avocation:

- a. advocate
- b. hobby
- c. job
- d. profession

None of these visitations extended to the land of Goshen, in which the Hebrews dwelt. Exempted from all these evils, they beheld with awe the fulfillment of the divine promises in the sufferings of the Egyptians. More than once, Pharaoh, terrified and humbled, sent for Moses and Aaron, and besought them to obtain from God a cessation of the afflictions of his people. But no sooner did the plague cease, than the stubborn pride of the king returned, and he refused to let the Hebrews depart from Egypt.

18. besought

- a. asked
- b. elaborated
- c. pardoned
- d. relinquished

19. cessation

- a. beginning
- b. commencement
- c. preponderance
- d. termination

It now remained for God to bring the extraordinary contest to an end by striking the last terrible blow which should humble Egypt in the dust. Moses was commanded to institute the Feast of Passover, which, as it marked the beginning of the national history of the Hebrews, was made the commencement of their year. Minute directions were given as to the manner of celebrating the feast, from which no deviation was permitted. The feast was ordered to be made an annual celebration, a perpetual memorial of the deliverance of the nation from Egyptian bondage.

God made known to Moses and Aaron his purpose to destroy the firstborn of the Egyptians. He commanded the Hebrews to mark their houses by sprinkling the doorposts with the blood of the animals slain for the paschal supper. All houses so marked would be passed over by the destroying angels. The Hebrews were ordered to make ready for a hasty departure, and to set out the moment the command to march was given. All these preparations were carried out in the clear light of the land of Goshen, where there was no darkness.

20. Why were the Hebrews ordered to place animal blood on their doorposts?

At sunset on the third day of the darkness in Egypt, the Hebrews began to prepare the paschal supper. Having finished it, they awaited in awful

suspense the commands of God. At midnight, God slew the firstborn in every house in Egypt, from the palace of the king to the humblest hut, and the firstborn of all the animals of the country. "There was not a house where there was not one dead."

Pharaoh was completely conquered by this terrible blow. He sent in haste for Moses and Aaron, and urged them to take their people out of Egypt without delay. By the command of Moses, the Hebrews asked the Egyptians for jewels of silver and gold and raiment, and their demands were instantly complied with. The Egyptians were eager to get the Hebrews out of the country, as they were fearful that any delay would result in further suffering to them.

21. paschal:

- a. parochial
- b. patriarchal
- c. pertaining to Passover
- d. related to Saint Patrick

At the command of Moses, the Hebrews set out upon their march, taking with them the embalmed body of Joseph. They numbered 600,000 men on foot, besides the women and children. These, with the mixed multitude which followed them, and consisted doubtless of people of Asiatic descent, nomadic in habit, who were glad to take this opportunity of escaping from Egypt, swelled the number of the Hebrew host to nearly three million people.

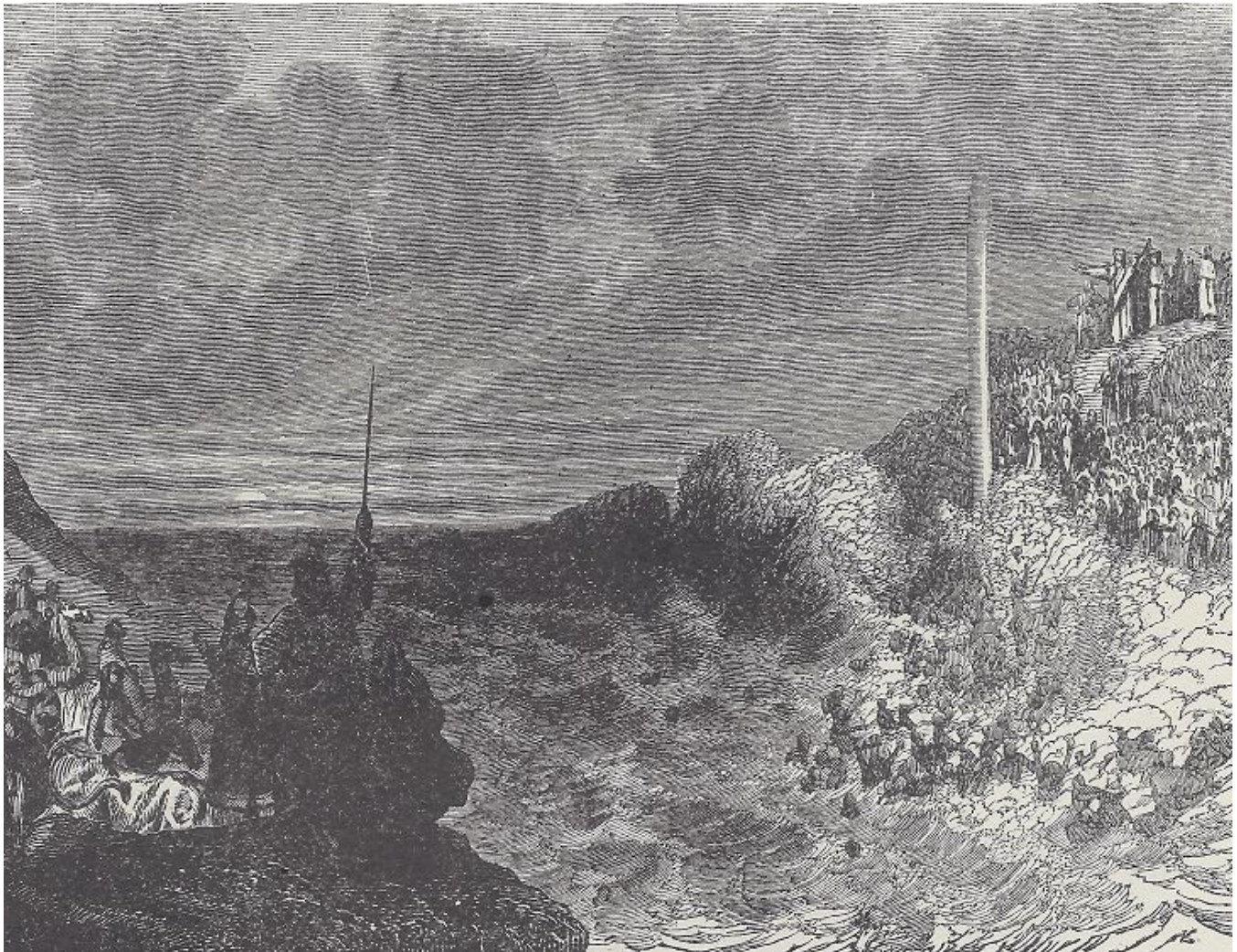
22. Whose embalmed body did the Hebrews carry out of Egypt?

They set out under the leadership of Moses, but their route was chosen for them by God. God guided them by a bright cloud, which moved before the host by day, and a “pillar,” or cloud, of fire, which performed the same office by night.

The march of such a large body was necessarily slow. The Israelites were three days in reaching the head of the Red Sea (or, by some scholarly accounts, the Reed Sea).

In the meantime, Pharaoh had recovered his courage. Regretting the

permission he had given the Israelites to depart, he determined to pursue them and compel them to return to Egypt. Pharaoh set out at the head of a large army, and by a forced march came up with them as they were encamped near the sea. In a military sense, the Israelite position was a false one. In front of them was the sea; on their left and in their rear, the king of Egypt disposed his army so as to cut off their escape. Without divine aid, the Israelites were lost.



The Israelites are given passage through the sea.

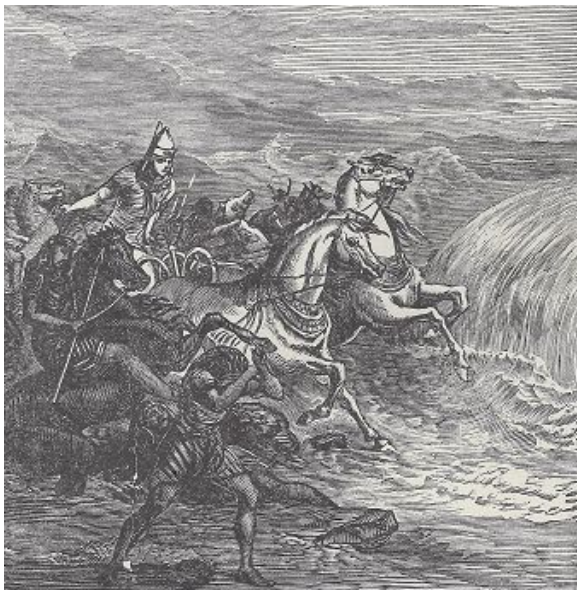
In this emergency, God came to their assistance and opened a passage for them across the sea to the Arabian shore

by causing the waters to recede in a miraculous manner. The Israelites crossed over by the path thus opened.

The Egyptian army, detecting the movement, at once gave pursuit. The sea instantly flowed back at the command of God and destroyed the Egyptian host. The Bible does not tell us that the king was drowned with his troops, nor do its assertions justify such an inference. That part of the army that made the pursuit, and not the pharaoh, was drowned. According to Jewish tradition, the pharaoh of the Exodus was Merneptah (who, according to historians, reigned from 1213-1203 B.C.E. after the death of his father, Ramses II).



Ancient Egyptian statue of Merneptah, the purported pharaoh of the Exodus.



The destruction of Pharaoh's army.

23. How did the Israelites cross the sea?

24. inference:

- a. agreement
- b. conjecture
- c. delusion
- d. report

Having reached the opposite shore of the sea, the Israelites moved down the Sinai Peninsula towards the mountain of that name. Had it been the design of God to conduct them at once to the promised land, he would have led them by the direct route which lay among the shore of the Mediterranean, past the modern El-Arish and Gaza. This would have exposed them to the risk of destruction by the Egyptian army, which was accustomed to use this route in its expeditions to Asia. Even had the Israelites escaped this danger, they would have been obliged to encounter the warlike tribes of the seashore of Canaan. To protect them from these dangers, the route by way of the Red Sea was chosen.

25. Why was the route by way of the Red Sea taken by the Israelites?

There was, however, another and a higher reason for this choice. The Israelites were deemed not fit to enter upon their inheritance. They were to be carried through a course of instruction and discipline, which should make the truly a nation. They were to be taught a system of religious and civil legislation which was to constitute their national strength, and in which was to be found their national and individual salvation. They were to be purged of the taints which had clung to them from their long contact with the people and customs of Egypt, and to be made a peculiar people, separate and distinct from any of the nations by whom they were to be surrounded. They were to be endowed with those traits which should enable them to preserve forever their peculiarity, upon which their whole future depended. No better place could be chosen for this work than the sublime solitudes of the Sinai Desert, to which they were now conducted.

26. peculiar:

- a. adamant
- b. characteristic
- c. customary
- d. same

From the first, God provided for the temporal wants of his people. He sweetened the bitter waters of the region through which they were marching, made water to come out of a rock for their nourishment, and sent them food, first in the form of quails, and finally in the shape of manna. This manna fell with the dew every morning in the camp. Only a day's supply was permitted to be gathered, except on the sixth day, when

enough was gathered to last for two days, in order that the people might scrupulously observe the Sabbath day (*Shabbat* in Hebrew and Yiddish). This supply from heaven continued every day for forty years, or during the entire sojourn of the Israelites in the desert.

27. temporal:

- a. earthly
- b. heathen
- c. otherworldly
- d. spiritual

28. sojourn:

- a. allegiance
- b. move
- c. tarriance
- d. truth

29. What food fell each day with the morning dew?

Upon reaching Rephidim, which is believed to be identical with the Wadi Feiran of modern times, the Israelites were attacked by the Amalekites, who sought to check their advance into the peninsula. The Hebrew army was led by Joshua, the future conqueror of Palestine, and was victorious. From Rephidim the Israelites moved to Mount Sinai, and encamped in the plain and in the ravine in the vicinity of the sacred mountain.

30. Who led the Israelites into battle?

A short season of preparation was given the Israelites. Then, God descended upon Mount Sinai with a sublime display of his glory, and in the hearing of the whole people, spoke the leading precepts of his law, which he called the Ten Commandments. The people, on their part, made a solemn covenant with God, in which they pledged themselves and their posterity to worship and serve him.

31. The law of God, given to the Israelites on Mount Sinai, is known as what?

The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17)

Then God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

1 "You shall have no other gods before Me.

2 "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing loving kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

3 "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord

will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

4 "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

5 "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

6 "You shall not murder.

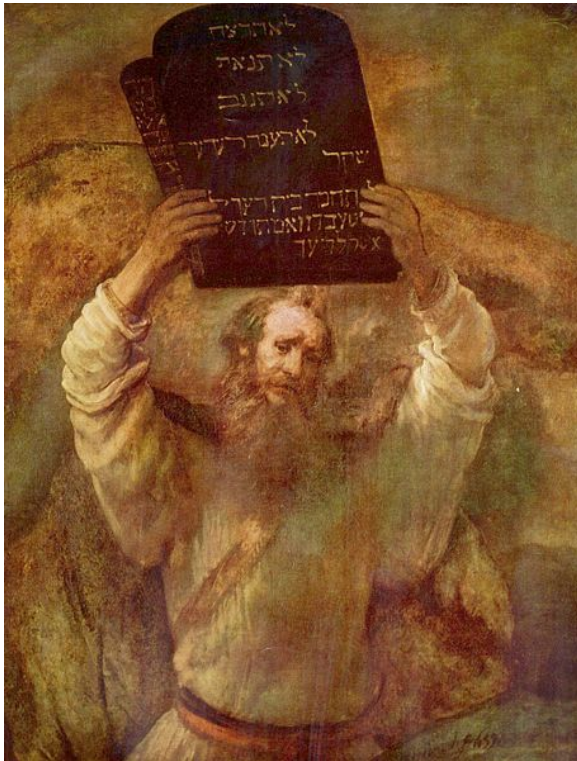
7 "You shall not commit adultery.

8 "You shall not steal.

9 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

10 "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

32. Which of the Ten Commandments are part of the governmental law where you live?



Painting of Moses with the Ten Commandments by Rembrandt.

Moses was then called up into the mountain and remained there for forty days, during which time God revealed to him the minute directions which he afterwards embodied in the code which is today termed the “law of Moses,” and which constituted the religious and civil systems of the Hebrew nation. The Ten Commandments were engraved on tablets of stone by the hand of God.

Unable to account for the long absence of Moses on the mountain, the Israelites fell off from their covenant with God. They compelled Aaron to make a golden image of a calf, in imitation of the Egyptian god Apis. They gave themselves up to the worship of this idol. Moses, upon coming down from the mountain, found them so engaged. His anger was overwhelming. Rallying the tribe of Levi, he fell upon the idolaters with the sword, slew a great number of them, and

destroyed the idol. The people acknowledged the justice of their punishment, and promised to do better. For their zeal in the cause of the faith upon this occasion, the Levites were made the sacerdotal (priestly) class of the nation.



The Israelites create a molten image.

33. What tribe was made the sacerdotal class of the Israelites?

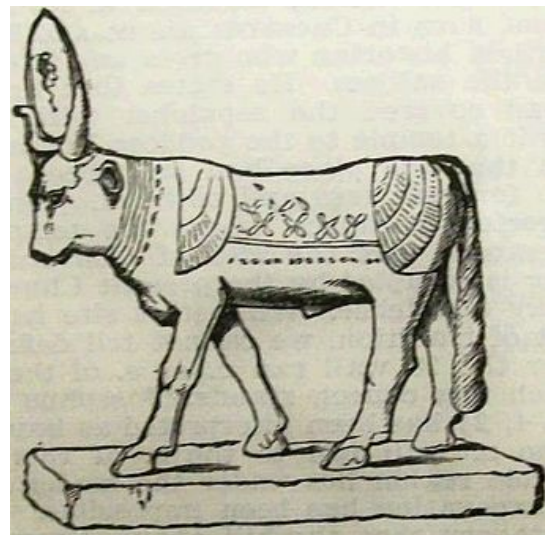


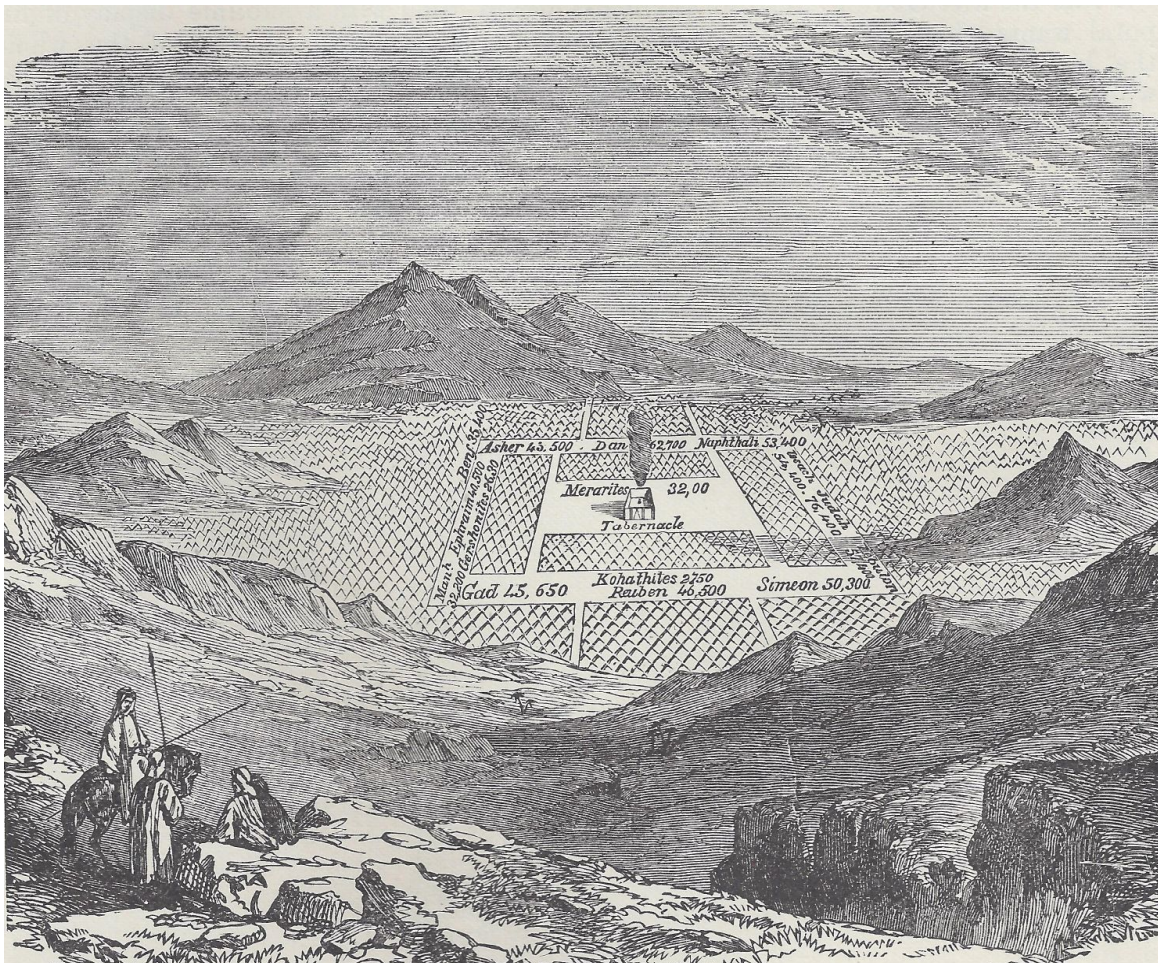
Illustration of an ancient statue of the Egyptian bull deity Apis (also called Hapis or Hapi-ankh).

The Israelites remained at Sinai eleven months and twenty days, and during this time, the second celebration of the Passover was held. The long halt constituted one of the busiest portions of the life of the nation. The people had arrived at Sinai an unorganized mob, without institutions, without laws, almost ignorant of their god, and with no prescribed mode of religious worship. During the sojourn at Sinai, the mob was fashioned into a compact and firmly established nation, with a code of laws which has excited the admiration of all succeeding generations of humankind, and which remained substantially intact through the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in the early years of the Common Era, and subsequent Diaspora.

34. substantially:

- a. considerably
- b. fervently
- c. insignificantly
- d. slightly

The tabernacle, or sacred tent, was constructed according to the pattern prescribed by God, and all the details of the religious ceremonial were carefully arranged. The priesthood was organized, and the succession to the sacred offices definitely arranged. The fundamental principle of the whole system, civil as well as religious, was the supreme authority of God over the Israelite nation (a political system known as *theocracy*).



The Israelite camp in the wilderness.

35. system of government in which a deity is held to be the supreme civil ruler:

- a. monarchy
- b. monotheism
- c. plutocracy
- d. theocracy

God was, in the literal sense of the word, their sovereign; and all other authority, both in political and civil affairs, was subordinate to the continual acknowledgment of his own. The other powers were instituted by God to administer affairs in accordance with his laws, but were not ordinarily chosen among the priests, descendants of Aaron, nor from the tribe of Levi, consecrated to the various functions of public worship. Each tribe had its civil authorities,

although certain causes were reserved for the supreme central tribunal. But the unity of the nation was, above all, founded on unity in faith and worship, on the mighty recollections recalled each year by the solemn feasts: the Passover, or Feast of Unleavened Bread (commemorating the Exodus from Egypt); Pentecost (the promulgation of the law); and the Feast of Tabernacles, or tents, also known as Sukkot (the sojourn in the desert).

36. promulgation:

- a. agreement
- b. annotation
- c. proclamation
- d. reinstitution

Match each holiday feast with what event it commemorates.

- 37. _____ Passover
- 38. _____ Pentecost
- 39. _____ Sukkot

- a) Promulgation of the law
- b) Sojourn in the desert
- c) Survival of the tenth plague and Exodus from Egypt

The one tabernacle, where the solemn sacrifices were offered, and where was deposited the ark, the symbol of the covenant made between God and his people and in which were held the tablets of the Ten Commandments and pieces of manna, was equally the political and religious center of the nation. The Mosaic law presents the spectacle, unique in the history of the world, of a legislation which was complete from the origin of a nation, and subsisted for long ages. In spite of frequent infractions and differing

interpretations regarding particulars, it was always restored.

40. What did the Ark of the Covenant contain?



THE HOLY PLACE OF THE TABERNACLE.

Nineteenth-century illustration of the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. The large, seven-branched lampstand, made of gold and known as the Menorah of the Temple, can be seen on the left.

All things being arranged, Moses, at the command of God, took the census of the males of the nation, from the age of twenty years and upwards, capable of bearing arms. The census was taken on the first day of the second month of the ecclesiastical year from the epoch of the Exodus (Iyar, also called Jyar or Ziv, roughly equivalent to mid-April to mid-May), and placed the number of fighting men at 603,550. The host was divided into four camps, one of which was placed on each of the four sides of the tabernacle, which stood in the center of the whole camp.

41. ecclesiastical:

- a. pagan
- b. religious
- c. secular
- d. sinful

Thus organized, a nation and an army, the Israelites broke up their camp at Sinai on the twentieth day of their second year, and resumed their march. They were led by the pillar of cloud, which had guided them since the memorable night of the Exodus, and which was to conduct them to the borders of the promised land. Thus, divinely guided, the Israelites went into the Wilderness of Paran.

After several halts, the Israelites reached Kadesh Barnea, near the borders of Palestine. From this place, Moses sent twelve men, one from each tribe, into Palestine to examine the country and report the character of the people, their means of defense, the strength of their cities, and their numbers. The spies were absent forty days, during which time they explored the country from the Dead Sea

to the slopes of Mount Hermon. Returning to Kadesh Barnea, they reported to Moses and the Israelite leaders that the land was exceedingly fertile, but that its conquest by the Israelites would be impossible since its inhabitants were men of gigantic size, who dwelt in strongly fortified cities.

This unfavorable report greatly excited the people. In vain did Joshua and Caleb, who were of the spies, declare to them that their colleagues had exaggerated the difficulties of the conquest, and endeavor to encourage them with a more favorable report. The people were panic-stricken, and the next morning, broke into open mutiny and declared their intention to choose a chief who should conduct them back to Egypt. In vain did Moses and Aaron fall on their faces before the people. In vain did Joshua and Caleb repeat their assurances of victory and conquest, and urge them not to rebel against God.

42. Why did ten of the twelve Israelite spies warn against attacking the people of Palestine?

43. endeavor:

- a. align
- b. attempt
- c. disincline
- d. misappropriate

The people took up stones and were about to kill the faithful four, when the glory of God suddenly blazed forth from the tabernacle, and brought the rebels to their senses. God spoke to Moses, declaring that he would disinherit the rebellious nation and choose as his people the descendants of Moses. The great lawgiver earnestly interceded for his countrymen, and at length obtained their pardon. But, in pardoning them, God declared that he would punish the rebels.

44. Who were the “faithful four”?

God informed Moses that, with the exceptions of Joshua and Caleb, not one of the men of the nation, from twenty years old and upward, should enter the promised land. They should all die in the wilderness, in which the tribes were condemned to wander for thirty-eight years longer. Their children should enter upon the promised inheritance.

Upon hearing this doom, the Israelites were seized with remorse, and were eager to be led into Canaan. But the divine decree was irrevocable. The people persisted in their determination and, in spite of the warnings of Moses, who refused to accompany them, endeavored to force their way through a mountain pass which was held by the combined armies of the Canaanites and Amalekites. The Israelites suffered a bloody repulse, and were driven back into the desert.

45. irrevocable:

- a. changeable
- b. flippant
- c. remedial
- d. unalterable

46. How does God punish the Israelites for their timidity in refusing to attack the natives of Palestine?

For thirty-eight years the Israelites led a nomadic life, roaming through the desert which lies north of the peninsula of Sinai, to which the Arabs have given the name of *Et Tih*, or *Tih Beni Israel* (the Wanderings of the Children of Israel). Their range extended from Kadesh Barnea on the north to the head of the Elanitic gulf (Gulf of Akabah, or Aqaba) on the south. They do not appear to have been troubled by any of the neighboring tribes. During this time the males of the nation, from twenty years upward, died. The generation which succeeded them consisted of men trained to fatigue and war, hardy and courageous, and accustomed to freedom; a generation superior to that which had been reared in bondage in Egypt, and had suffered from the taint of that slavery.

47. From a militaristic point-of-view, how did the years of hardship spent in the desert help the Israelites in their conquest of Palestine?

At the beginning of the fortieth year after the Exodus, Aaron, the brother of Moses and the high priest of the nation, died at Masera, in Mount Hor, at the age of one hundred twenty-three years, and was buried there. Mount Hor was on the border of the territory of the Edomites, the descendants of Esau. Moses requested of the Edomites a free passage through their country for the hosts of Israel, offering to respect the property of the inhabitants, and to pay for even the water which his people used. This request was refused, and the Hebrews, who were forbidden by God to attack their kindred, turned southward. They marched to the head of the Elanitic gulf, and turning the range of mountains, moved northward again, east of the territory of Edom. The Canaanites of Arad undertook to bar the way of the Israelites, but were defeated. The Edomites allowed the Israelites to march past their territory without molesting them. Moses was forbidden by God to attack the Moabites and Ammonites, who were descended from Lot.

The Hebrews had now reached the Arnon (Wadi Mujib), a small stream which falls into the Dead Sea on its eastern side. This stream formed the southern boundary of a new kingdom, which Sihon, an Amorite adventurer, had conquered from the Ammonites and Moabites. The Jabbok (known today as the Zarqa River) formed the northern boundary of this kingdom, and Sihon had established his capital at Heshbon.

Moses sent a peaceful embassy to Sihon, asking for a free passage through his territory, promising to keep his people to the highway on their march, and to pay for everything they used. Sihon

insolently refused this request, and marched with his army to attack the Israelites. He was completely routed, his capital was taken by storm, and his kingdom became the prize of the Hebrews.

48. Why did the Israelites attack the Amorites, but not the Moabites and Ammonites?

49. routed

- a. appeased
- b. disenchanted
- c. left behind
- d. overpowered

Og, the gigantic kingdom of Bashan, whose territory extended from the Jabbok to Mount Hermon, and who was also a successful Amorite adventurer, now took the field to avenge Sihon. He was defeated and killed, and his kingdom was conquered by the Israelites, who by these victories became masters of all the country east of the Jordan, from Mount Hermon to the Dead Sea.

The Israelites now encamped on the fertile plains opposite Jericho. Balak, the king of Moab, alarmed at the presence of so powerful a nation on his borders, made an alliance against them with the Midianites. Not deeming himself strong enough to attack the newcomers, Balak endeavored to induce Balaam, a famous diviner from the country of the Ammonites, to lay a curse upon the Israelites and devote them to destruction.

Instead of cursing the chosen people, Balaam was compelled by God to bless them, and to predict to Balak their future triumphs.

This scheme having failed, the allies undertook to seduce the Hebrews from their faith by inducing them to take part in their worship of Baal-Peor. This design succeeded so well that Moses was obliged to resort to severe measures to check the evil. All the Hebrews guilty of this sin were put to death. A plague broke out in the camp and carried off 24,000 men. A war of extermination was begun against the Midianites, their armies were defeated, their country ravaged, and an immense booty carried off.

50. Who was compelled by God to predict the victories of the Israelites to Balak?

51. extermination

- a. cessation
- b. eradication
- c. fortification
- d. mortification

A new census of the nation was now taken, and showed that there were 601,730 fighting men in the host.

The country that had been conquered east of the Jordan was very fertile and was admirably adapted to grazing purposes. Pleased with the region, the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half-tribe of Manasseh asked permission of Moses to take this country

as their inheritance, as they had numerous cattle. Moses sharply reproached them for sowing the seeds of division in the nation; but consented to the arrangement upon receiving the promise that they would only leave their families and their cattle in their new homes, while their fighting men would cross the Jordan with the other tribes and assist in the conquest of the promised land.



This statue of Moses, sculpted by Michelangelo, is located in Rome, Italy.

The tribe of Reuben was given the southern part of the country east of the Jordan, from the Arnon to Mount Gilead. The tribe of Gad was assigned the country north of this, including Mount Gilead, to the southern end of the Sea of Chinneroth or Gennesaret (the Sea of Galilee). The half-tribe of Manasseh received the country north of Gad as far as Mount Hermon. The two and a half tribes kept their pledges to their brethren and rendered good service in the conquest of the country west of the Jordan.

The work of Moses was now completed. He had brought the children of Israel to the border of the promised land at a point where they could easily enter it, and he was warned by God that his death was at hand. Both he and Aaron had been refused permission to enter the land, because of the failure of their faith when God had commanded them to speak to the rock in Kadesh to give water to his people.

52. What groups of Israelites were granted permission to settle just outside of the promised land?

Moses assembled the entire nation, recited the law in their hearing, bestowed upon them a prophetic blessing, foretelling their future glories, named Joshua as his successor, and exhorted the people to remain faithful to God as the indispensable condition of individual and national happiness. He then took an affecting farewell of the nation. At the

command of God, Moses went up into Mount Nebo, from which God showed him the whole of the land which was to be the home of the Hebrews. And so Moses died there in the land of Moab. God buried Moses in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor, and no one has ever known the exact spot of this burial. The Israelites spent thirty days in mourning the death of their great leader. Traditionally, authorship of the Torah (the first five books of the Christian New Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy) is attributed to Moses, despite the text describing Moses in the third person, as well as relating the death of Moses.

53. Where did Moses die?

- a. Canaan
- b. Egypt
- c. Mount Nebo
- d. Mount Sinai

54. bestowed:

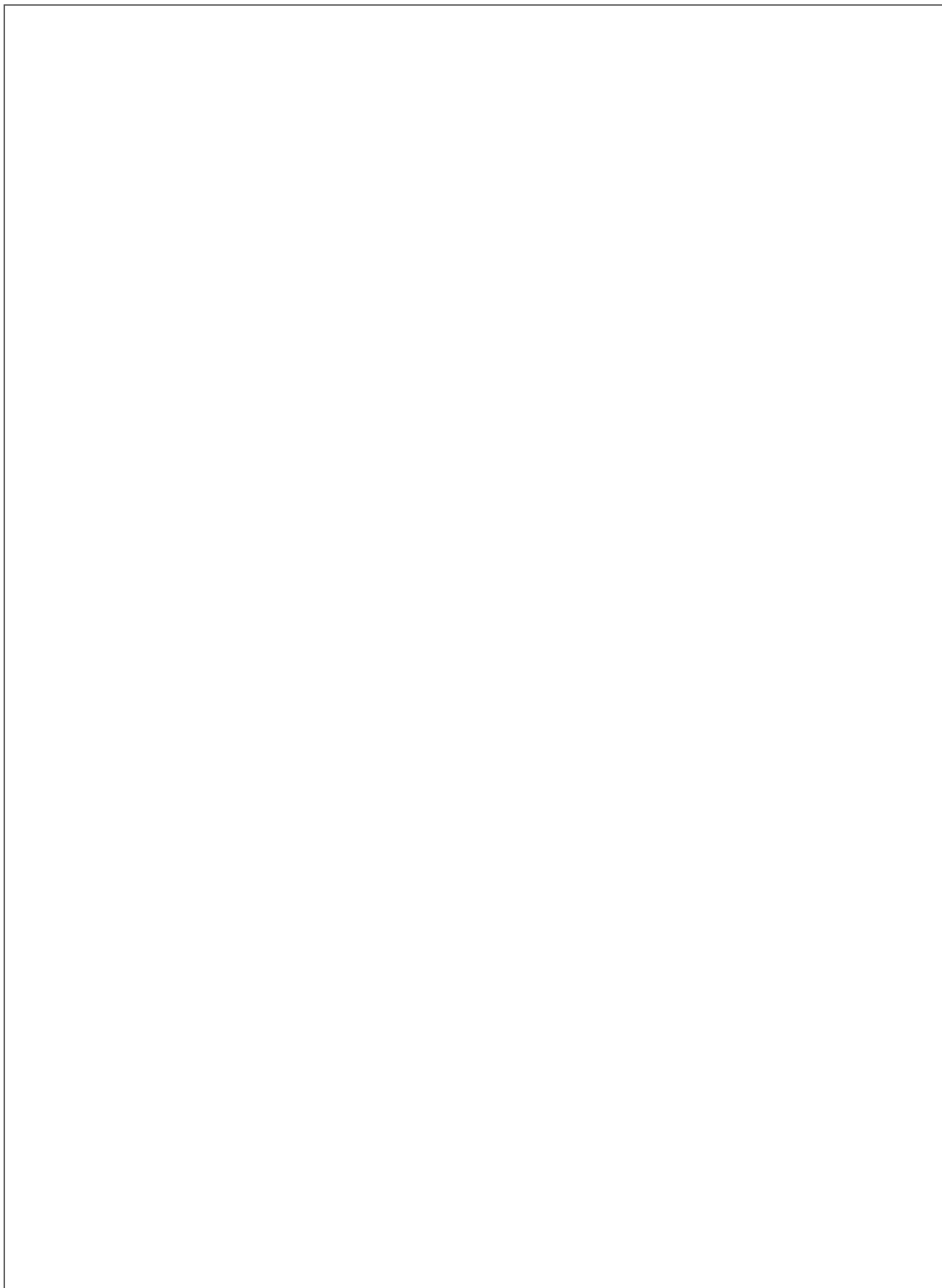
- a. accorded
- b. deprived
- c. enamored
- d. restored

55. prophetic:

- a. divinatory
- b. doubtful
- c. equivalent
- d. philanthropic

56. Imagine that you are Moses. What might you do differently, and why? Explain your answer.

Illustrate a scene from the life of Moses.



Vocabulary Review: Match each term, used in the text, with its synonym (the word closest in meaning) or definition.

- 57. ____ ascertain
- 58. ____ avocation
- 59. ____ besought
- 60. ____ bestowed
- 61. ____ cessation
- 62. ____ dynasty
- 63. ____ ecclesiastical
- 64. ____ endeavor
- 65. ____ extermination
- 66. ____ imposed
- 67. ____ inaugurated
- 68. ____ indignation
- 69. ____ inference
- 70. ____ irrevocable
- 71. ____ paschal
- 72. ____ peculiar
- 73. ____ predecessor
- 74. ____ promulgation
- 75. ____ prophetic
- 76. ____ routed
- 77. ____ sojourn
- 78. ____ solemn
- 79. ____ substantially
- 80. ____ temporal
- 81. ____ theocracy

- a) accorded
- b) asked
- c) attempt
- d) austere
- e) characteristic
- f) commenced
- g) compelled
- h) conjecture
- i) considerably
- j) determine
- k) displeasure
- l) divinatory
- m) earthly
- n) eradication
- o) hobby
- p) lineage
- q) overpowered
- r) pertaining to Passover
- s) precursor
- t) proclamation
- u) religious
- v) religious rule
- w) tarriance
- x) termination
- y) unalterable

Word Search Puzzle

H G F P P M Z N F E O P I M S I A L C D R S P
 A E S F E Z O H A B X S R T I M T A J E M U A
 R N E S J N X A E A R O N O M V L O V W Y C L
 O E U C E V T N B A N E D O M E N O R A H I E
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 N E K L M P S U K K O T E G Y P T S E S O M B
 T T T Q Y N I L E R I V E R A M O R I T E S Y

Aaron

Ammonites

Amorites

bondage

Caleb

Canaan

Deuteronomy

Egypt

Exodus

Genesis

Goshen

Hebrews

Israelites

Jethro

Jochebed

Joshua

Leviticus

menorah

Miriam

Moabites

Moses

Mount Nebo

Nile River

Numbers

Palestine

Passover

Pentecost

Pharaoh

plagues

promised land

Shabbat

Sinai Peninsula

Sukkot

Tabernacle

Ten Commandments

Torah

wilderness

Zipporah

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O E U + E + T N B A N E D O M E N O R A H I E
P S G A D N T E E I M A N U B I S + + A + T S
P I A A E N R L C D T I C + S S S + + + H I T
I S L R U + I E N O T E L C A N R E B A T V I
Z B P O T T + A D E S H S P + + + + D + + E N
G O M N E + M + S L O T S R E B M U N L + L E
O N + S R M S I N A I P E N I N S U L A A + +
S D + + O M A I R I M W D E B E H C O J + N +
H A + C N + + A H E B R E W S T A B B A H S D
E G N + O + H J E T H R O A U H S O J + + + +
N E + + M P S U K K O T E G Y P T S E S O M +
T + + + Y N I L E R I V E R A M O R I T E S +