

EXODUS: A Holy Hoax?

Dr. Mitra Makbuleh

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Some well meaning but naive souls have forwarded this video clip to me claiming the following:

“Evidence of the Splitting of the Yam Suf and the Remminance of the Egyptian Chariots under the sea. This is soo amazing and I think that everyone should watch this and pass it on. Enjoy the Miracle of Hashem!!!!”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLYQqUPCt7M>

I suggest that you first watch this clip, then read the documented material below, and find out for yourself how these supposed “proofs of evidence” of Exodus story are completely bogus! Dr. Israel Finkelstein the leading Israeli archeologist has declared that after many years of thorough archeological investigation, not one shred of evidence exists that the Exodus happened as described in the Bible. Smart Jews realize that they must put aside these infantile illusions and begin teaching themselves and others that the Exodus and many other stories of the Bible (as well as the stories in all other holy books of the world) are not historical events, but much more valuable than that: They are precious mystical accounts of the inner spiritual journey each human being must undertake (See: Kabbalah and Exodus by Z. Halevi). The future of humanity depends on whether or not enough Jews and non-Jews will wake up in time from this childish nightmare called Literalism and religious fundamentalism. Pass this on to all the Jews and the non-Jews you find worthy of waking up!

*Lovingly,
M
itra*

The Exodus Archeology Hoax



P R O C L A M A T I O N

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Six Leading Archaeological Myths by Bryant G. Wood, Ph.D.

The public is constantly bombarded, in both the secular and Christian media, with bogus archaeological finds that claim to either prove or disprove the Bible. I and my staff have dealt with many of them in our quarterly magazine, *Bible and Spade*, and in our electronic newsletter, available free of charge -- visit www.biblearchaeology.org.

Dr. Wood is Director of Associates for Biblical Research and editor of *Bible & Spade* journal. He has taught at numerous educational institutions, and presently continues to do archaeological field work. He and his wife live in Manheim PA. Dr. Wood has been affiliated with AIIA as a Resource Associate since 1997.

Here are a six examples:

MYTH #1 -- Noah's Ark Has Been Found

A number of individuals have stated they have found Noah's Ark at various locations in the vicinity of Mt. Ararat in eastern Turkey and, most recently, in Iran. To date, no scientific evidence has been produced to back up these assertions.

MYTH #2 -- Rameses the Great is the Pharaoh of the Exodus

Rameses II ("the Great") ruled Egypt ca 1279-1212 B.C. If there was an Exodus, liberal scholars say, the Pharaoh of the Exodus must have been Rameses. Hollywood and the media have picked up on this so that, in the minds of many, Rameses is the same Pharaoh that Moses confronted. There is a major problem with this identification, however, in that Biblical chronology places the Exodus 200 years earlier! While we cannot yet say for sure who the Pharaoh of the Exodus was, it certainly was not Rameses.

MYTH #3 -- Pharaoh's Chariot Wheels Have Been Found

There has been a lot of publicity in recent years arguing that Mt. Sinai has been found in Saudi Arabia and that the Red Sea (Hebrew = Reed Sea) crossing was at the Gulf of Aqaba between the Sinai Peninsula and Saudi Arabia. Divers have photographed round objects in the Gulf which, it is held, are from Egyptian chariots. Since the objects are encrusted with coral, they cannot be retrieved for further study, as coral is protected. The Gulf of Aqaba is much too far from Egypt to be the correct location. Moreover, the Gulf of Aqaba is a busy modern shipping lane and any number of round wheel-like objects could have been deposited there over the centuries.

MYTH #4 -- Mt. Sinai Has Been Located at Jebel al-Lawz in Saudi Arabia

Jebel al-Lawz is not in the right location to be Mt. Sinai. In Deuteronomy 1:2 we read that it took the Israelites 11 days to travel from Horeb (i.e. Mt. Sinai) to Kadesh in the northern Sinai. Pastoralists traveling with their flocks and herds can only cover 5-6 miles per day. This means the distance from Kadesh to Mt. Sinai is 60 miles or so. The straight line distance from Kadesh to Jebel al-Lawz is approximately 150 miles, with the actual walking distance being much greater.

MYTH #5 -- The Ark of the Covenant Has Been Found

The Ark of the Covenant is in Ethiopia, under the Temple Mount, or in a cave beneath Gordon's Calvary in Jerusalem, depending on who is trying to sell you his book or video. There is no evidence to back up any of these contentions. The late Ron Wyatt declared that he found not only the Ark with Christ's blood on it, but the Table of Showbread, Altar of Incense, original Book of the

Law written by Moses, and various Temple implements, in a cave beneath Gordon's Calvary in 1982. The cave was professionally excavated in 2005 and no trace of these objects was found.

MYTH #6 -- Archaeology Proves That There Was No Conquest of Canaan

Secular scholars maintain that archaeological findings demonstrate the Conquest described in Joshua never happened. Two places are singled out as providing proof positive: Jericho and Ai. At Jericho, they allege, there was no occupation at the time of the Conquest. Our research has shown that a massive destruction of the city (see Joshua 6:24), which the archaeologists dated to 1550 B.C., really occurred in 1400 B.C., the very date of the Conquest according to Biblical chronology. The site of Ai was misidentified. At the correct site, Khirbet el-Maqatir, where I directed excavations from 1995 to 2000, evidence was found which matches the Biblical account exactly, including evidence of burning (Joshua 8:28).

CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is! Do not believe sensational claims unless there is well-documented evidence to back them up.



From: Wikipedia Encyclopedia Online

Ronald Eldon Wyatt (1933 - [August 4, 1999](#)) was a controversial self-styled [archaeologist](#) (he had no training in the discipline and held no professional position) who claimed to have found many significant [Biblical](#) sites and [artifacts](#). His claims are dismissed by the scientific and historical communities.

By the time of his death in 1999 his claimed discoveries included:

- The true Noah's Ark (the [Durupinar](#) site, near but not on Mount Ararat)
- [Anchor stones](#) (actually [drogue](#) stones) used by Noah on the Ark
- The post-[flood](#) house and tombs of [Noah](#) and his wife
- The location of [Sodom and Gomorrah](#)
- Sulfur balls from the burning of Sodom and Gomorrah
- The site of the [Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea](#) (which Wyatt located in the [Gulf of Aqaba](#))
- Chariot wheels and other relics of the pursuing army of [Pharaoh](#) at the bottom of the sea
- The true site of the Biblical [Mt. Sinai](#) (located by Wyatt in [Saudi Arabia](#) at [Jabal al Lawz](#))
- A chamber at the end of a maze of tunnels under [Jerusalem](#) containing artifacts from [Solomon's temple](#)
- The [Ark of the Covenant](#)
- The original stones of the [Ten Commandments](#)
- The true site of the [Crucifixion](#)
- The blood of [Jesus](#), dripped onto the [Mercy seat](#) of the Ark of the Covenant, directly beneath the [Crucifixion](#)

Wyatt won a devoted following among some [fundamentalist](#) Christians seeking tangible evidence of the literal truth of the Bible. His credibility was disputed, often bitterly, by genuine archaeologists and Biblical scholars. One member of the [Israel Antiquities Authority](#) (IAA) stated that "Ron Wyatt is neither an archaeologist nor has he ever carried out a legally licensed excavation in Israel or Jerusalem. In order to excavate one must have at least a BA in archaeology which he does not possess despite his claims to the contrary. ... [His claims] fall into the category of trash which one finds in tabloids such as the [National Enquirer](#), [Sun](#) etc."^[1]

Robert Cornuke, commonly referred to as **Bob Cornuke**, is the president of the Bible Archaeology Search and Exploration Institute (BASE), of [Colorado Springs, Colorado](#). A former [Costa Mesa police officer](#), Cornuke is a self-styled [Biblical archaeologist](#) (he holds no professional position and has no training in the discipline) and the author of six books on biblical history based on his explorations over the last 20 years.

Cornuke holds a Masters of Arts Biblical Studies and a 2005 Ph.D. in Bible and theology from the [unaccredited Louisiana Baptist University](#)^[11]. His use of the [Bible as a literal guide](#) for his explorations is an approach which is rejected by the [scientific community](#) as [pseudoarchaeology](#), a form of [pseudoscience](#)^[21].

Another critic noted the "BASE institute site had some quotes from respected archaeologists which seemed to support the idea that Jebel al-Lawz was a good candidate for Mount Sinai," but "when I contacted some of these individuals, they assured me they never made such statements, neither did they feel Jebel al-Lawz was the real Mount Sinai."^[13] Thus, "it became quickly obvious that some of the information on the BASE Institute site was not legitimate."^[13]

Maltese Controversy

In 2002 Cornuke claimed to have found anchors from the Biblical shipwreck of St. Paul. This claim has been disputed, however, with Cornuke being labelled by some as a **"con artist"** who was claimed "to have found the wreck of Paul's ship from Acts - and then got sued for breaking 'all aspects' of an oral contract with a former US ambassador to Malta."^[14] The case was unsuccessful with the judging ruling that the book was already unreleased and could not be prevented from being sold.^[15] His critics believe he is "more interested in the money to be gained from their claims than in providing genuine evidence for anything."^[14] Others say that these anchors were actually discovered by fishermen, and were subsequently purchased and passed off as his own discovery.^[15]

Noah's Ark Controversy

Cornuke's surrogates claimed in June 2006 that Cornuke has discovered Noah's Ark in a pile of dark-colored rocks on the Iranian Takht-e Suleiman ("Throne of Solomon") or Mount Suleiman in the Alborz (Elborz) Mountains^[20]. Cornuke makes numerous mistakes in his research and relies heavily on one alleged eyewitness of Noah's Ark, Ed Davis, in which there are problems with him being in Iran let alone at this site when he claimed to see Noah's Ark in 1943^[21]. Even creationist geologists doubt whether the rocks viewed by Cornuke are petrified and are urging caution^[22]. The research team included Arch Bonnema, film producer of [The Genius Club](#) and other well-known Christian businessmen. The oldest creationist organization does not believe the rocks viewed by Cornuke are petrified or Noah's Ark^[23]. Associates for Biblical Research also produced a 7,800-word paper about problems with the Cornuke site^[24]. National Geographic critiqued the rocks at the site^[25].

Trivia

- Cornuke is reported as styling himself in an "[Indiana Jones](#)" fashion.^[15]
- Cornuke has appeared on [CBS's Ancient Secrets of the Bible](#) on May 15, 1992, November 13, 2000 he was on [MSNBC's Dateline](#), July 7, 1998 The [700 Club](#), and on Fox Television's [Ripley's Believe It or Not](#) February 9, 2000 (episode 105).^[7]
- Bob Cornuke's Ph.D. in [Biblical Studies](#) was received in 2005 from [Louisiana Baptist University](#),^[26] an [unaccredited](#) Baptist school, where he also serves as an adjunct speaker.^[27] There is no record or claim made by Cornuke for having any undergraduate degree.
- Cornuke is travel guide/business partners with [Chuck Missler](#).^[10] Cornuke received credits at Missler's unaccredited Koinonia Institute, which were transferable to the unaccredited [Louisiana Baptist University](#).^[26] Missler is a 1999 graduate of Louisiana Baptist University, and currently Cornuke in Colorado, a 2005 graduate, and Missler in Idaho are professors at the "school."^[27]

Both Wyatt and Cornuke have pictures of all this on their sites. Notice the columns that Wyatt found on each side the the Gulf at the Nurweiba location. One of these columns had inscriptions mentioning Moses, Midian, Egypt, Pharoah and Yahweh (God).

Wyatt also claims to have discovered Noah's Ark in Turkey. Cornuke has just announced he has also found Noah's Ark, on the mountains of Ararat, but not in Turkey. He will reveal details at a conference in August. Stay tuned for an update later in the year. Whilst you are visiting this site, take a look at some other parts of it - see links below.

Red Sea in biblical context

A great deal of the problem about identifying the sea crossing of the Exodus party is that supporters of the Gulf of Aqabah scenario are not reading the Bible in context. The term *yam sup* can be found over 20 times in the Hebrew Bible. Now, if the passages where the Red Sea is mentioned are taken in context, it is obvious that *yam sup* can be linked to three different locations: The Gulf of Aqabah, the Gulf of Suez, and the location of the Exodus crossing (Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible: p.636). Now we have three different locations, just as Herodotus had three different areas that he referred to as the Red Sea, and we need to examine the verses that mention *yam sup* to find out which of the three areas each Bible verse is concerned with.

I think that the most important thing for Bible believers to do before giving their hard earned money to charlatans who peddle the Gulf of Aqabah nonsense, is to get their Bible's out and actually look at what the verses that mention Red Sea are saying, read them in context, doing this will convince you that the Gulf of Aqabah cannot be the sea of the Exodus, there is one verse in particular that sinks this myth, but it can wait.

However, *yam sup* is translated as Reed Sea or Sea of Reeds, the Red Sea has no reeds, it was a mistranslation. The Septuagint is well-known for the translational errors in it, the Jews binned it because it was such a mess.

1. The problem of the biblical text claiming that the Israelites crossed the sea before they came to the Red Sea.
2. Roughly, how long would it take for 2- 3 million people to walk 120 miles?
3. How do you harmonise the Gulf of Aqabah crossing with the Exodus itinerary in Numbers 33?

Finally, when Moses raised his hands and the sea separated and the Egyptians travelled through it, he raised his hands again and killed the Egyptians? Why wouldn't the Egyptians great writers of their history document this? Even if it did happen, why wouldn't the Egyptians wait for Moses to be their leader? Too obvious.

Now, about the low tide theory, possible but unlikely, the myth already contains errors -- why try and make that myth go under any more scrutiny? It's unlikely to begin with, but everyone knows that, except those followers of the Exodus Revealed Video.

PROBLEMS WITH MT. SINAI IN SAUDI ARABIA

Compiled by Brad C. Sparks

W. A. Bartlett 1848, St. Catherine's Monastery and Mt. Sinai

PROBLEM NO. 1:

The Bible Puts Mt. Sinai in the Sinai

Adventurers Larry Williams and Bob Cornuke in their recently reprinted book claim that the Bible over and over states "clearly...that Mount Sinai is in Arabia"¹ -- an admittedly crucial point "upon which the thrust of our argument will fall" if disproved Biblically.² Howard Blum has retold their story in a new book, *The Gold of Exodus*, published by Simon & Schuster (1998), and Cornuke has now come out with his own separate book (2000). There is a certain amount of irony if not implausibility in their argument which in essence tries to *take Mt. Sinai out of the Sinai*.

What they mean by "Arabia" is *modern Saudi Arabia* and there is no statement in the Bible or any other ancient source that places Mt. Sinai in Saudi Arabia by whatever ancient name (in this case Midian). In fact, it is quite the reverse, Mt. Sinai is clearly placed *outside* of Saudi Arabia and right on the Sinai Peninsula as we would expect.

Exodus 18:27 states that, while the Israelites were camped near Mt. Sinai,³ Moses sent his Midianite (Saudi Arabian) father-in-law Jethro back to "*his own country*" of Midian (NIV, emphasis added). Clearly, Mt. Sinai and northwestern Saudi Arabia (Midian) were in *two different locations*. The making of the statement signals the importance of the action, it was not a trivial event or insignificant journey for Jethro to go back to Midian from Mt. Sinai.

This incident was repeated about a year hence on a later visit to Mt. Sinai by Moses' Midianite father-in-law or nephew Hobab (Numbers 10:29-31). Moses asked him to stay and guide the Israelites to the

Promised Land, but he declined, saying he would return to "*my own land*" (Midian) and "*my own people*" (Midianites) from Mt. Sinai. (NIV, emphasis added) He did not want to go on a long journey to Moses' land with Moses' people. Hobab's land (in what is modern Saudi Arabia) was clearly not the same land where they were at (Mt. Sinai) and not the same land where they were going (Canaan), which were national or geopolitical entities spread across a great distance and requiring an expert guide to navigate.

The only response to these difficult arguments from the Bible has been to suggest that everything was really happening at Mt. Sinai in Midianite Saudi Arabia and that Hobab merely meant that he was going back to his own tent nearby, which trivializes the watershed decision and is frankly absurd. If this conversation at Mt. Sinai was really taking place already in Hobab's homeland of Midian *among his people the Midianites* then Hobab would have said to Moses "You go on your journey but I am *staying here* in my land with my people." Hobab obviously did not say that. It was a parting of ways with the two going their separate routes.

Another variation of this back-to-his-tent counterargument tries to split the difference and elevates Hobab's tent to a city. But that makes no sense either, the verses are *not* talking about Moses going to his own *city* (the Promised "City" instead of Promised Land?) and Hobab going back to *his* own *city*.

This devastating Biblical disproof of Sinai-in-Arabia was first made in a book that Williams and Cornuke quote and use as an important reference, yet they never mention the disproof to their readers. It was in Prof. Menashe Har-El's 1983 book *The Sinai Journeys: The Route of the Exodus*. It was again repeated to Cornuke and Williams in Dec. 1996 when the draft of this article was presented to them *in advance of publication* on this website in Jan. 1997 and again there was no response, though one was promised in writing. Four years later an unofficial rebuttal has been presented privately but hasn't been made public as of this date.

Biblical geographer Har-El of Tel Aviv University was evidently the first to develop this disproof of Sinai-in-Arabia notion in his critique of Charles Beke's theory, which goes back to the 19th century. Williams and Cornuke got their theory from still another adventurer Ron Wyatt,⁴ but they make no mention of the theory's origin in modern scholarly theories (which in turn may originate in medieval Muslim polemics against Christians). In 1834, Beke proposed that the land called Mizraim where Israel was held in bondage was not Egypt but Arabia, that the Israelites crossed the Red Sea over the Gulf of Aqaba instead of Suez and so Mt. Sinai was to be sought in Arabia. By 1871 Beke suggested that Mt. Sinai was a volcano in what is now Saudi Arabia. (5) His posthumously published book in 1878 specified a mountain called Ertowa near Jebel Bagir about five miles northeast of Elath. (6)

Har-El comments that the passage in Numbers shows that "while the Israelites were still at Mount Sinai," Moses' father-in-law "was outside his own country, Midian, to which he wished to return, and it also *proves that Mount Sinai was not in Midian [Saudi Arabia]....*" (7)

The latest desperate effort to save Sinai-in-Arabia, the back-to-the-city theory, was in *Bible Review* magazine for April 2000. The suggestion is that "Midian" was a *city* and that Mt. Sinai was close by, thus supposedly solving the problem of the Bible verses in Exodus 18 and Numbers 10, which we just reviewed (above), and again putting Mt. Sinai in Saudi Arabia. However, this flies in the face of the passages in Exodus and Numbers that clearly indicate that Midian was a *land* not a city and that it was a substantial distance from Mt. Sinai requiring a special effort by Jethro to send word back and forth and to come out and meet Moses (Exod. 18:1, 5-7). There may have been a capital city of Midian with the same name as the land (as indicated in a few places in the Septuagint Greek translation of the Bible) and this was often the case with ancient nations and their capitals. But it is irrelevant to the circumstances in the

Bible describing the land of Midian not a city. As previously noted, if Midian was a city near Mt. Sinai then Hobab should have told Moses he was *staying* where he was when the Israelites set out for the Promised Land, instead of saying he was *returning* to his own land (Num. 10:30).

The Bible treats locations close to Mt. Sinai as interchangeable or virtually identical sites, e.g., Horeb was near Mt. Sinai and the two place names are used interchangeably. (7a)

If Midian was a city near Mt. Sinai then it was effectively the same location in Biblical terms and so Hobab would have stayed and waved to Moses and the Israelites as they left him behind.

Bible archaeologist Gordon Franz has published an outstanding critique of the Sinai-in-Arabia theory in the most recent issue of *Bible and Spade* journal for Fall 2000, published in February 2001, by the Associates for Biblical Research (see website at <http://christiananswers.net/abr/abrhome.html>). Franz thoroughly reviews the archaeological evidence of the Jebel al-Lawz site and its surroundings, and the lack of evidence for the Israelites. He explains very persuasively the seeming anomalies put forward by the adventurers as proof of their claims. He also has learned that the official Saudi archaeologist is soon to release an exhaustive site analysis in a formal archaeological survey report.

PROBLEM NO. 2: Josephus Puts Mt. Sinai *Between* Egypt and Arabia

Jewish historian Josephus, ca. 100 A.D., lauded in the Williams-Cornuke book as "perhaps the greatest Biblical scholar of all time," (8) vindicates the traditional location of Mt. Sinai on the Sinai peninsula (9):

JOSEPHUS: "Moses went up to a mountain that lay *between Egypt and Arabia*, which was called *Sinai*...."

It has been suggested in rebuttal that Josephus was here quoting Apion whom he was attacking, so therefore everything Apion said was a lie. This is a desperate and absurd argument. Josephus merely objected to a discrepancy in Apion's account of the Israelites' Exodus about the number of days of travel versus remaining camped, and evidently agreed with this statement of Mt. Sinai's location "between Egypt and Arabia" otherwise he would either have attacked it as well (especially since it had bearing on the travel time issue) or he would not have quoted it in the first place.

Moreover, how on earth did Apion in ca. 40 B.C. even get the idea that Mt. Sinai was, well, in the Sinai, if as Williams and Cornuke allege, this was actually a fabrication of the 18th century designed as a "tourist scam" to attract visitors to the traditional site at St. Catherine's monastery?

Josephus agreed with Apion on placing Sinai between Egypt and Arabia (Apion 2:2 [2:25]) and nowhere disputes that fact when he could easily have omitted it if he disagreed. Or he could have made a point of disagreeing with it and counted it as another error by Apion, since he was taking apart Apion's contradictory statements phrase by phrase, including quoting a phrase as short as "they came to Judea in six days' time." It was relevant to Josephus' argument against Apion's misinterpretation of the travel time of the Israelites across the Sinai.

The full context shows that Josephus had disputed Apion's slur that claimed the Jews' Sabbath was due to their taking 6 days to reach Judea from Egypt then resting on the 7th day because of groin disease. Josephus disputed this slur by pointing out, among other things, a self-contradiction where Apion

elsewhere had said the Jews had taken at least 40 days to cross the Sinai by stopping at Mt Sinai for 40 days "between Egypt and Arabia," which statement Josephus agreed with.

If Josephus did not agree that Sinai was "between Egypt and Arabia" but thought that Sinai was *in* Arabia he should have said so and racked it up as another gross error by Apion, or just omitted that altogether if the only issue was the 6 days vs. the 40 days travel. But he didn't.

PROBLEM NO. 3: Mt. Sinai-in-Arabia Started as a Muslim Polemic

Placing Mt. Sinai somewhere in Arabia is not new, contrary to what has been implied by Williams and Cornuke, but the specification of a particular mountain is relatively recent. The general idea goes back to about 1225 AD, when Muslim geographers began to arbitrarily shift Biblical place names — largely because they had been identified by Christians — from the Sinai to Arabia, as a kind of polemic against the Crusades. But this Mt. Sinai-in-Arabia concept was purely a product of scholarly theories and propaganda, not of long-standing local traditions which often can preserve genuine information about ancient geography and Biblical sites. (10) Nor does not compare in antiquity with the traditions attached to the southern Sinai Peninsula, which can be traced back to about 100 A.D.

Among modern scholars Charles Beke was the pioneer arguing for Sinai-in-Arabia, starting in 1834 (without pinpointing a specific peak) and culminating in his book, *Mount Sinai a Volcano*, published in 1873. (11) But upon his firsthand exploration of the Arabian mountains shortly before his death, Beke retracted his novel thesis of a volcanic origin for the smoke, fire and rumblings on Mt. Sinai, thus weakening his case for Sinai-in-Arabia. (12)

At the turn of the century "Pan-Arabianism" was popular among critical Bible scholars of the Wellhausen school. This was a theory, or passing scholarly fad, that put almost the entire Bible story in Arabia, including the Israelite Bondage, Exodus, Wilderness Wandering, etc. The Pharaoh was just an obscure Arab sheikh in this scheme. Its heyday was the 1880s through about the 1910s. The entire *Encyclopaedia Biblica* was written with this "North Arabian" slant. (13)

The specific Jebel al-Lawz site for Mt. Sinai has been occasionally indicated in some scholarly references as a possibility, going back at least two decades prior to the Williams-Cornuke and Blum books. Such references include a map published in an encyclopedia in 1972, a map in the Har-El book published in 1983 (used by Williams-Cornuke without credit for the site location), maps in two popular books in 1975 and 1985, and in a well-known archaeology magazine in 1977. (14) None of these sources give any documentation that the Jebel al-Lawz site had a *genuine local geographic tradition* as Mt. Sinai. No early map or reference has been cited specifically giving Jebel al-Lawz the name "Jebel Musa" ("Mountain of Moses" in Arabic). The only evidence is stories allegedly told Williams and Cornuke by local residents and *not even claimed by the locals to have come from ancient tradition* and is not documented from ancient sources. (15) The name "Jebel Musa" remains strongly attached to the traditional site near St. Catherine's monastery, as it has for nearly 2,000 years (see next section).

PROBLEM NO. 4: Traditional Southern Sinai Site is Ancient

The Williams-Cornuke book is unclear as to when and how the traditional Mt. Sinai was supposedly picked, and this of course has a bearing on how substantial and legitimate a geographic tradition it is. An unnamed "psychic or seer" is said to be responsible for choosing the traditional Sinai site for Emperor

Constantine (plate 7 caption of the book). But elsewhere their book says this "myth" has arisen only within the last "almost 250 years" as a long-running "tourist scam," and "prior to that time [about 1740], numerous other mountains were claimed" to be Mt. Sinai though no example is given (pp. 17, 50) and the claim is patently false.

Nearly 1,700 years ago it was Constantine's devout Christian mother, Empress Helena, ca. 330 A.D., who chose the site for a church. She did not do it to set up a "tourist scam" but for humanitarian reasons -- to build the church to protect monks from murderous raids by nomads. (16) According to the tradition, the church was built at the place where the local monks pointed out what they believed was the Burning Bush. (17) Hence the site was already well known as Mt. Sinai by that time. About 550 A.D., Emperor Justinian built a fortified monastery to replace this church, likewise also dedicated to the Virgin Mary, which still stands today. (18) Much later, the monastery took on the name of St. Catherine, the earliest mentions perhaps about 1244. (19) Contrary to the claim that prior to about 1740 "numerous other mountains were claimed" to be Mt. Sinai, it was not until Lepsius' proposal in 1845 that any other specific mountain but the traditional Jebel Musa was ever suggested for Mt. Sinai. (20) (Earlier, when Muslim scholars arbitrarily placed Mt. Sinai in Arabia, they did not single out a particular mountain.)

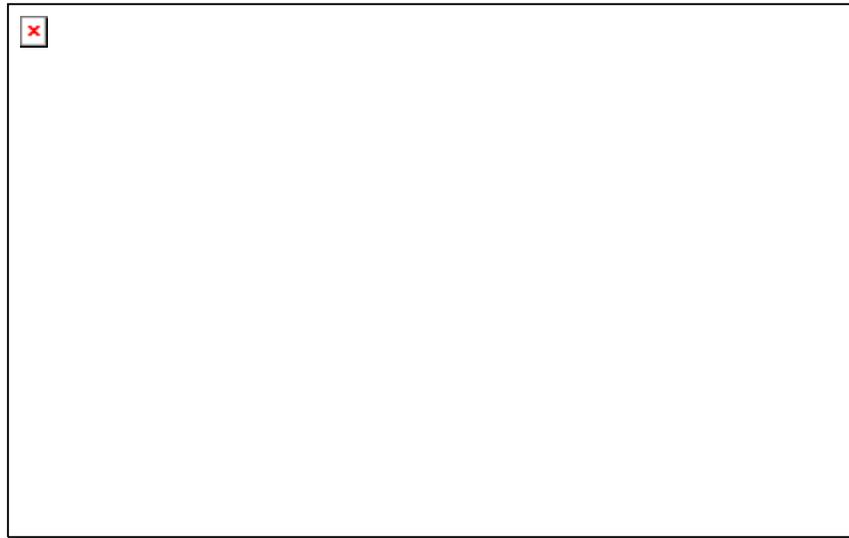
There is evidence of early Jewish pilgrimages that led to identifications of sacred sites later adopted by Christian travelers, though it is in some dispute. One careful scholar of the geography of the Exodus route, Graham Davies of Cambridge, has argued that in the late Tannaitic period (about 100-200 A.D.), for example, rabbinical literature described the distance between Pharan and **Mt. Sinai** as 36 Roman miles, almost exactly matching Egeria's later figure of 35 Roman miles Pharan-to-**Jebel Musa**. In other words, **Mt. Sinai = Jebel Musa**. To Davies this shows that Jebel Musa (the later St. Catherine's) had already been identified as Mt. Sinai by Jewish pilgrims around 100 A.D. (21)

The current book (pp. 57, 69-70) completely misses the following statement in quoting from the "Sinai" entry in Harper's Bible Dictionary: In that reference, it states that among many possible sites "one can safely say that **Jebel Musa**, or another mountain in its immediate [southern Sinai] vicinity, **remains the most likely candidate** [for Mt. Sinai]." (22)

Many early travelers confirm the monks' tradition locating Mt. Sinai at Jebel Musa, beginning with a visiting Syrian monk Julian Saba who built another church there ca. 360 A.D., then Egyptian monk Ammonius ca. 372-3, and the intrepid Lady Egeria from France/Spain ca. 383. (23) Egeria wrote with such "sharp observation of the landscape" (23) on her extensive travels through the Holy Land, giving estimated mileages and travel times, that Egyptologists and Bible archaeologists minutely pour over her story for clues to the whereabouts of the Pharaoh's store-cities of Pithom and Raamses, the sites along the route of the Exodus, the conquered cities of Bethel and Ai in the Promised Land, and other Biblical places. (25)

The current book likewise attributes the traditional Red Sea crossing site at the Gulf of Suez to an unnamed 16th century "mystic who claimed she had a revelation" (pp. 140-141).

But the identification of the Suez site dates back at least to Egeria ca. 383, then Orosius ca. 415, Cosmas Indicopleustes (Cosmas the India-Sailor) ca. 550, and Antoninus ca. 570. Even earlier, the name Clysma, given in ancient Greco-Roman days to a place near the modern town of Suez, reflects local tradition of a watery *cataclysm* (Greek for flood or surging inundation) that overwhelmed the Pharaoh and his army. (26)



PROBLEM NO. 5: In Paul's Time "Arabia" Included Sinai Peninsula

In Apostle Paul's time, "**Arabia**" covered a wide area that "**included the Sinai Peninsula**" as well as what we now call Saudi Arabia, according to Cambridge scholar Graham Davies. (27) A glance at most Bible atlases will show this. Thus, Paul's remark in Galatians 4:25 is quite consistent with Mt. Sinai's traditional placement on the Sinai Peninsula.

PROBLEM NO. 6: Too Much Reliance on Strange Methods or Devices

One investigator of the Jebel al-Lawz site states he discovered the gold from the Golden Calf there using a "molecular frequency generator" (p. 107), which one knowledgeable source (Dr. John Morris) says is actually a **dowsing** or **divination** rod. (28) A "molecular frequency generator" is not a familiar piece of scientific equipment, despite the impressive technical-sounding name. The current book refers to site surveying by "pendulums" (p. 75), another form of dowsing. The Bible cautions against such practices (Deut. 18:10-11; Levit. 19:26, 20:27) or consulting those who use them. (Levit. 19:31; Deut. 18:14). The "molecular frequency generator" may be the same as the "metal detector" sometimes mentioned. (29) However, the metal detector's reported detection of gold from a distance of **two miles** seems to be an impossible range for the usual electromagnetic induction metal detectors, which are limited to a maximum range of just a few feet.

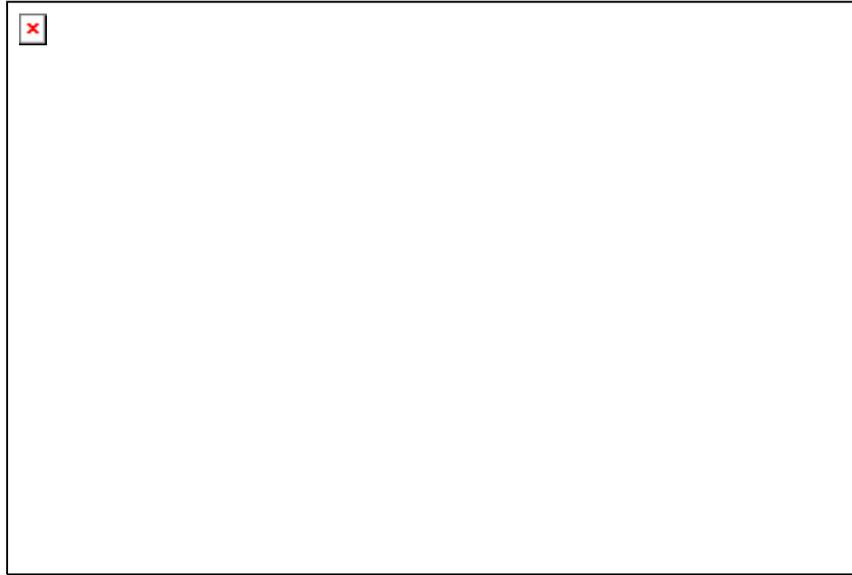
PROBLEM NO. 7: The Sinai was Not Part of Egypt in Ancient Times

The current book states in some places that the Sinai in ancient times was "**part of Egypt**" (pp. 26, 58). We can call this the "Sinai/Egypt" territory for simplicity. If so, this would prove that Mt. Sinai was not on the Sinai peninsula because the Israelites would have to leave this "Sinai/Egypt" territory in order to be totally free of Egypt and then to travel to the holy mountain. The book quotes the Father of Modern Archaeology, William Flinders Petrie, to support this point (p. 56). But the Petrie quote in the book actually states the **exact opposite**, that the southern Sinai was, quote "**outside the territorial border of Egypt**"!

Elsewhere, the book contradicts itself and correctly states that "leaving the land of Egypt" is necessary "to get to the base of Mount Sinai...the traditional site" (p. 125). (30)

Petrie was supposed to prove that during Moses...time the traditional Mt. Sinai and environs formed a province of Egypt, and that Egyptian troops patrolled the copper and turquoise mines in that southern Sinai region (pp. 54-57). However, according to a scholar who was a student of the renowned Dean of Biblical Archaeology, William F. Albright, an Israelite march toward these mines would NOT have brought them into:

John Bright: "...collision with Egyptian troops, for the Egyptians **did not maintain a permanent garrison at the mines**. Except at intermittent periods when mining parties were at work, the Hebrews could have passed unmolested." (31)



Traditional Route of the Exodus and Traditional Location of Mount Sinai

PROBLEM NO. 8: Climate was Wetter in the Past – Sinai Covered in Forests

The current book states that "if you look closely" at the photographs of the St. Catherine's area "you will see there is no vegetation" (pp. 60-61). But there is an **oasis** behind St. Catherine's and looking closely one can see the tops of **trees** towering over the back wall of the monastery even in Plate 7 of the book.

The book states (p. 62): "I don't think there is anyone who will contest that it is **impossible** to graze a flock of sheep at the base of the supposed Mount Sinai [Jebel Musa]."

But the Grollenberg Atlas of the Bible has a large photo of just such a flock of sheep grazing at the base of Jebel Musa, the traditional Mt. Sinai, in the plain of Er-Rahah. (32) The shrubbery looks exactly like the vegetation in the photos of the Jebel al-Lawz site (plate 21), which is praised in the book as excellent pasturage and "**totally different**" from the supposedly barren traditional site in the Sinai (pp. 66, 158-159). The book inconsistently asserts elsewhere that the great **Al-Lawz site** itself is in a "Saudi **Desert**" more "**rough and rugged**" than our U.S. Southwest and is "**dry and uninhabitable**" (p. 152). Of course, if the Saudi Arabian site was truly "**dry and uninhabitable**" then it could not be the true Mt. Sinai, could it?

The truth is that there was a **much wetter climate** in ancient times, in the Sinai and elsewhere (see Judges 5:4), which sustained **much more vegetation** than at present. (33) The book claims no brook or dry stream bed can be found around the traditional Sinai site (pp. 65, 68-69), which is odd considering

that the surrounding "wadis" themselves by definition **are stream beds**. Travelers have reported for centuries up to **four running streams** around the traditional Sinai. Egeria saw a stream there about 383 A.D. There were "bubbling springs" seen there about the year 550. (34)

Petrie's student and scholar, Lina Eckenstein, in her History of Sinai, has also described the "reckless deforestation...which has gone on unchecked for thousands of years," turning a Sinai of "great fruitfulness" into a vast wasteland. **Forests** once covered the Sinai valleys. Proof of the heavy **forests** can be found in the massive, possibly 100,000 tons, of slag-heaps left from the copper smelted by burning **huge loads of wood** in the Sinai's Wadi Nasb, and in the "great bed of ashes" from sacrifices burned with tons of wood at the mines of Serabit el-Khadem. (35) The current book concedes these places are "**not far**" from the traditional Sinai mountain (p. 54).

Gone are the Sinai's "**extensive tamarish groves**," the "**enormous plantations**" of palms and dates, such as the **grove of 10,000 date-palms** reported in 1335, the "**numerous fruit and vegetable gardens**," and the numerous "herds of gazelles," all of which were still in existence as late as the Middle Ages, according to Eckenstein. "**pasture lands** which formerly fed sheep and goats" were turned into spreading desert by the introduction of the camel, "a most destructive animal," she states, "like a huge goat." (36)

PROBLEM NO. 9: Moses Could Have Wandered Well Outside of Midian to Reach the Burning Bush at Mt. Sinai

The book argues that Moses could not have wandered outside of Saudi Arabia when he found the Burning Bush at Mt. Sinai because Moses was like the Midianites who "were **not nomads** but, in fact, were a **sedentary** culture; they didn't move around, they stayed in one place. They stayed in Midian, which is now associated with Saudi Arabia." (p. 16) But then the book actually quotes two of its leading reference works (pp. 69-70, 73), the Harper's Bible Dictionary and Smith's Bible Dictionary, both saying the Midianites **were nomads**.

The Bible reports Midianites traveling long distances into Egypt for trade (Gen. 37:28, 36) and into Western and Northern Israel for war (Judges 6-8). Like his Midianite hosts, Moses could have wandered far outside of Midian in reaching Mt. Sinai. In fact, the Bible seems to say just that: In Exodus 3:1, where Moses is said to have "led" Jethro's flock to Horeb (Mt. Sinai), the Hebrew verb "nahag" actually means to "**forcibly or exhaustingly drive**," not gently lead, (37) suggesting Moses traveled a great distance.

The Amalekites are another case like the Midianites. The Israelites fought the Amalekites near Mt. Sinai, while Moses had his arms held up (Exodus 17). The book argues that the Amalekites stayed in Arabia, never venturing as far as the Sinai or Egypt, so the battle must have occurred in Saudi Arabia and that must be where Mt. Sinai is to be found (pp. 111-115). But Josephus also located the Amalekites **in the Sinai**, "the whole district extending from Pelusium **in Egypt** to the Red Sea," based on 1 Samuel 15:7. (38)



PROBLEM NO. 10:
Confusion About Biblical Geographic Clues to Mt. Sinai

At first, the book correctly reads Exodus 3:1 to mean Mt. Sinai must be WEST of the wilderness. The book states that the Jebel al-Lawz site for Mt. Sinai in Saudi Arabia meets this condition (p. 62). But elsewhere the book claims the al-Lawz mountain lies to the EAST of the wilderness (p. 99).

PROBLEM NO. 11:
Melted or Burned Rocks From Jebel al-Lawz are Volcanic

The book contends that God's presence on top of Mt. Sinai supernaturally burned it (Exodus 24:17; Deut. 5:23) -- though the Burning Bush was not burned up (Exodus 3:2-3). The book is inconsistent in doubting at one place whether any evidence of such burning would be left after three millennia (pp. 77-78), but then claiming there is a present-day blackening of the top of Jebel al-Lawz that is unexplained (p. 99) and that "analysis" of rocks from the base show they "may have been burned" (p. 98). Plants may have been supernaturally melted right into solid rock, it is said. (39)

Geologist Dr. John Morris told me the Jebel al-Lawz rock he examined is normal metamorphic rock typical for the volcanic area it came from, there was nothing strange about it nor any sign of plants melted into the rock. (40) The book does not mention that Jebel al-Lawz is in a volcanic region.

One of the al-Lawz investigators still maintains that rock from the site has plants melted into it and promises to make available slides and other documentation. (40a)

PROBLEM NO. 12:
Cut & Polished Stones Cannot be from Exodus Israelites

The current book seems to refer to various cut and polished stones as related to the Exodus, yet occasionally admitting they are of much later date (pp. 97, 217). The Israelites were not allowed to cut the stones (Exodus 20:25; Deut. 27:5).

PROBLEM NO. 13:
Altar at Mt. Sinai was EARTHEN NOT STONE

The book insists that when Moses built an altar for **burnt offerings** and **fellowship offerings**, at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 24:4) it was made of STONE.

The Bible states that God instructed Moses **on Mt. Sinai** to make **an altar of earth, not stone** (Exodus 20:24, 24:4), for burnt offerings and fellowship offerings:

Exodus 20:24: "**Make an altar of earth** for me and sacrifice on it your **burnt offerings** and **fellowship offerings**, your sheep and goats and your cattle." (Emphasis added.)

The Bible then qualifies the instructions for **future** circumstances **at other locations** that, "**Wherever I** cause my name to be honored, **I will** come to you and bless you. **if** you make an **altar of stones** for me, do not build it with dressed stones, for you will defile it if you use a tool on it." (Exodus 20:24-25, emphasis added.) Later, the Israelites did indeed build such an uncut **stone altar**, but in the Promised Land of Canaan, **not Sinai** (Deut. 27:5; Joshua 8:31).

The book author states, "I seriously doubt that an altar of **earth** would have survived all these years" (p. 75, emphasis added). But at another place he almost seems to admit the altar on Sinai **was** made of **earth** and long since destroyed (see p. 96). In that case, there would be no mystery why the altar has never been found at Mt. Sinai. One flash flood might have washed it away in an instant. (41) Over the centuries surely nothing would be left. The book states that after many centuries of people searching for Mosesaltar (Exodus 24:4) at the traditional Mt. Sinai, "no one has found anything remotely resembling" it. Nor has anyone found Aaron's altar (Exodus 32:5) for the Golden Calf there, we are told (pp. 75-76).

But travelers long ago, such as Egeria again, found what they **thought** were stone altars built by Moses and Aaron. (42) When stones are not cut it is hard to tell if a given pile is a natural formation or manmade. So, whether travelers were right or wrong in their observations of landscape or in their interpretations of Scripture, it is not quite correct to say that **absolutely nothing** has ever been **thought** found at the traditional Sinai. Because it is certainly **not correct** that no one has ever "**claimed , or even discussed**" the possible finding of altars there as the book insists (p. 109).

As for the survival of the 12 pillars of Moses at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 24:4), the book author finds it "difficult to comprehend that a mountain as important as this one would be **defaced**" or that its stones would be "whisked away by someone" (p. 75).

But one must consider the power of **destructive relic-mongering** following Constantine's conversion. After Helena's pilgrimage **Mt. Sinai** "was becoming **one of the most favored Christian [pilgrimage] sites**." (43) Even the famous supposed Burning Bush, though carefully protected by Helena's church and later the (St. Catherine's) fortress monastery, did not survive. By 1216, it was gone, having been taken by relic-seekers. (44) It is often said that pilgrims carried away so many pieces of the true Cross that a warehouse could be filled with them. It is most likely the 12 pillars set up by Moses have been disturbed or removed through the ages so that they are not recognizable as 12 stones set aside in one defined place.

PROBLEM NO. 14: **"PILLARS" at al-Lawz are Actually "RINGS" of Small Stones**

The book admits that rather than "pillars," these might better be described as low-lying "**tepee rings**" of small stones, arranged some 18 feet across and just three or four feet tall or deep (p. 90), possibly only one to two feet deep (p. 210). These sound suspiciously like Early Bronze II-Middle Bronze I rings,

which are usually made of small uncut field stones arranged in circles from 6 to 20 feet in diameter and about 2-1/2 feet high. (45)

Since only one or two of the "rings" were barely visible from under the dirt and rock, and none of this debris was cleared, it is difficult to see how one can know if any other such "pillars" existed or that there are exactly 12 of them.

PROBLEM NO. 15:
Smooth Marble Pillars at al-Lawz are Probably Nabatean

The smooth marble pillars at Jebel al-Lawz are most likely Nabatean. Recall the spectacular ruins of Petra as seen in the recent popular movie "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade." The huge marble-columned Nabatean temple at Petra, ca. 40 A.D., (46) appears "out in the middle of nowhere," to paraphrase the current book. The unexpected appearance of such products of high civilization in a remote place is not proof of a link with the Exodus. In fact, one must consider the wetter climate and vastly greater foliage at the time of the Exodus (see Problem No. 8, above). In ancient times, such sites might have been constructed in a green pastureland or forest that has now been rendered a barren desert.

PROBLEM NO. 16:
Caves of Moses/Jethro near Al Bad, Saudi Arabia, are Well Known

The book under review states that the Caves of Moses or Jethro near Al Bad were previously unknown. Many people in Saudi Arabia were contacted in an effort to find an archaeological site list showing these caves, but nothing was found (p. 183). "There appears to be no research on or explanation of this site in any Arabic literature," according to the caption to Plate 19 of the book.

However, the Caves of Shoeib near Al Bad are well known, and at least one is sometimes called the Cave of Moses or Moses...Servants. (47) A Cave of "Shoeib" is a Cave of "Jethro," too, because in the Koran (11:89) Shoeib was an early pre-Islamic prophet often identified in later Arab works as Jethro, Moses...Midianite father-in-law. (48) Bedouins confused the different prophets, Moses, Jethro, Mohammed, Shoeib, Saleh, et al., often recording the same place as having been visited by each. (49)

PROBLEM NO. 17:
Satellite Photos of Israelites...Trail Not Shown

None of the alleged satellite photos that are supposed to show the ancient Israelite marching trails and campsites along the Exodus route (pp. 220-221) have been published as far as I know. This makes it difficult to study the assertions that have been based on the photos, or even to verify whether the photos exist.

PROBLEM NO. 18:
Israelites Marched in One Direction from Mt. Sinai--Direct to Kadesh Barnea

The book asserts that the Israelites...trail can be followed in the (unpublished) satellite photos from the Sinai peninsula, then into Saudi Arabia, and it "**just disperses**" at the Jebel al-Lawz site, the claimed Mt. Sinai. "It does **not continue on** in any one direction" from Jebel al-Lawz (pp. 220-221). The explanation is that from Mt. Sinai the Israelites supposedly started their aimless wandering in the wilderness for 40 years (see p. 57).

However, there is a misconception and misreading of the Bible here as the Israelites **did** march on in "one direction" from Mt. Sinai. It was to Kadesh Barnea, from where they sent out the spies into the Promised Land. Only **at Kadesh-Barnea** were they condemned to wander in the wilderness for the next 38 years (Deut. 2:14) for their rebellion, **not at Mt. Sinai**. (Deut. 1:19-2:1; 9:23; Numbers 10:12, 33; 13:26; 14:25.) If the real Mt. Sinai is at Jebel al-Lawz then there **must** be a continuation of the trail at least to Kadesh Barnea. But admittedly there isn't.

No satellite pictures are shown of the allegedly inferior trails around the traditional Mt. Sinai. No scientific explanation is given, or technical reference cited, for the "high-tech space photography" method of precisely **dating** these traditional-site trails at only "300 or 400 years old, at most" (p. 221).

PROBLEM NO. 19: Seven Days...Travel to Red Sea Most Likely

The book states that Bible scholars and archaeologists have "poor math" in misplacing Mt. Sinai in the Sinai (p. 71). A "glaring" math error has been committed for "thousands of years" in figuring that the Israelites reached the Red Sea from Goshen in only three days...march (p. 118). This mistake is said to be due to the widespread "assumption" that Moses...request of Pharaoh for three days...journey into the wilderness to worship God (Exodus 5:3; 8:27) also represents the travel time to the Red Sea upon the Israelites...escape.

However, the real reason scholars have thought (mistakenly) that it took three days to get to the Red Sea is that the Bible lists **three stops** (Succoth, Etham, and Pi-ha-Khiroth) and it is assumed each stop represented one overnight rest. (5) But it cannot be simplistically assumed that the Israelites always camped at night since the pillar of cloud that led them by day was a pillar of **fire by night** "so that they could **travel** by day or **night**" according to Exodus 13:21 (emphasis added).

Ancient Jewish tradition identifies the eating of unleavened bread in haste for seven days in the Passover (Exodus 12:11-19, 37-39; 13:6-7) as the time occupied in hasty travel to the Red Sea. "**For seven days** eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, **because you left Egypt in haste,**" states Deuteronomy 16:3. If so, the Israelites took seven days to get to the Red Sea. (51) The current book concedes the possibility that the Israelites reached the Red Sea in as little as only "**five to seven days.**" (p. 125).



PROBLEM NO. 20:
Midian Partly Overlapped into the Sinai Peninsula

The book states (p. 70, emphasis added): "There is NO mention in any work we have been able to uncover that the land of Midian was ever reputed to be in the Sinai Peninsula. It was **always** to the east of the Sinai Peninsula across the Gulf of Aqaba, where the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is now found." The argument is that if Mt. Sinai is in Midian, and Midian is only in Saudi Arabia, then Mt. Sinai had to be in Saudi Arabia, too. But as we have seen, Mt. Sinai and Midian were in two different places according to the Bible (Exodus 18; Numbers 10).

The book's highly praised ancient author Josephus wrote that the land of Midian was located **in the Sinai**, in "the whole district extending from Pelusium in Egypt to the Red Sea," where kinsmen of Moses...Midianite father-in-law had settled. (52) (Notice that Josephus does not make Sinai part of Egypt.) Midian was placed at least partly in the Sinai by later authors (Antoninus of Placentia, Italy, ca. 570 A.D., Arab historian Makrizi, d. 1441). (53) So have some of the leading Bible archaeologists and scholars of modern times-William F. Albright, H. H. Rowley, G. Ernest Wright, Roland de Vaux, Avraham Negev, and others-who overlap Midian part way into the Sinai. (54) Yet the current book says

one would be "**extremely hard put to find an archaeologist or Biblical scholar**" who would **locate Midian in the Sinai** (pp. 16, 70, emphasis added). The book author challenges the reader to check one's own Bible atlases and see if he is right (p. 69). But he is not. See for example the Grollenberg Atlas of the Bible, Westminster Historical Atlas of the Bible, the map section of the revised Hastings...Dictionary of the Bible, and the Jewish History Atlas, all showing Midian partly in the Sinai. (55)

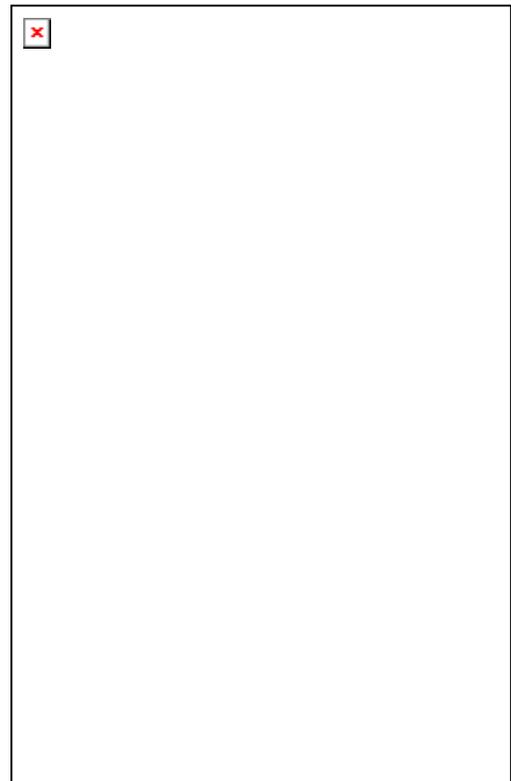
The Harper's Bible Dictionary is not correctly quoted in the book to support the idea that Midian was limited to Saudi Arabia (pp. 69-70). The correct quote only refers to the **center of Midian** as located in Saudi Arabia, as it includes the following capitalized portion omitted from the book under review here: "The Land of Midian (Exodus 2:15) **probably refers to the center of the Midianite territory**, that part of northwestern Arabia bordering the Gulf of Aqabas eastern shore...." (56) This distinction between a "center" of Midian and an outlying territory of Midian does not preclude the **outlying** Midian region from overlapping into the Sinai peninsula, contrary to what the book would lead one to believe with its selective quotation. The map in another key source for the current book, the Harper's Bible Commentary, puts "Mt. Sinai (Gebel Musa)" at the traditional spot **without the question mark** that the book claims is used in almost every Bible atlas (p. 49) -- and without showing any alternative site in Saudi Arabia. The book mentions neither of these facts.

CONCLUSION

Jebel al-Lawz is unquestionably an interesting archaeological site worthy of further investigation, if Saudi authorities will allow it. The identification of this site as the true Mt. Sinai needs to overcome a host of problem areas outlined above. I remain interested in reviewing the evidence for this site and am in the process of gathering further data.

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On the third new moon after the people of Israel had gone forth out of the land of Egypt, on that day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. And when they set out from Rephidim and came into the wilderness of Sinai, they encamped in the wilderness; and there Israel encamped before the mountain. And Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel." ... And the LORD said to Moses, "Lo, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe you for ever." ... "Go to the



people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments, and be ready by the third day; for on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people. And you shall set bounds for the people round about, saying, 'Take heed that you do not go up into the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall be put to death; no hand shall touch him, but he shall be stoned or shot; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the trumpet sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain." So Moses went down from the mountain to the people, and consecrated the people; and they washed their garments. And he said to the people, "Be ready by the third day; do not go near a woman." On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God; and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. And Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire; and the smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. And the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up...And the people stood afar off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was. (Exodus 19-20)

NOTES:

- (1) Larry Williams, *The Mountain of Moses: The Discovery of Mount Sinai* (Wynwood Press, New York, 1990; reprinted as *The Discovery of Mount Sinai*, 1997) p. 182.
- (2) Williams, *Mountain of Moses* (1990) p. 70. It will be assumed here that the place where Moses fled after killing the Egyptian (Exodus 2), the land of Midian, *roughly* corresponds to Saudi Arabia's northwest quarter (see PROBLEM NO. 20 regarding some overlap into the Sinai).
- (3) "Near the mountain of God" (Exodus 18:5). The Israelite camp at Rephidim was literally within a short walking distance of Horeb (Mt. Sinai), where Moses struck the rock to get water (cp. Exodus 17:1,

5-6). Mt. Horeb = Sinai approximately (cp. Exodus 33:6, 34:29-30). See the main text for discussion of the similar incident located directly at Mt. Sinai (Numbers 10).

(4) Har-El's book is quoted in Williams, *Mountain of Moses* (1990) pp. 61, 223.

(5) Charles T. Beke, *Origines Biblicae* (London, 1834) vol. 1, cited in Thomas K. Cheyne, "Exodus" sec. 5, in Cheyne and J. Sutherland Black (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (Macmillan, New York, 1901) vol. 2, col. 1434. See also Beke, "Egypt not the Mizraim, nor the Gulf of Suez the Red Sea, of Scripture," *Asiatic Journal*, new series, vol. 13 (1834) p. 258; "On the localities of Horeb, Mount Sinai, and Midian, connexion with the hypothesis of the distinction between Mizraim and Egypt," letter in *The British Magazine* (1835), cited in Ibrahim-Hilmy, *The Literature of Egypt and the Soudan* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1886 [Kraus Reprint, Nendeln, Liechtenstein, 1966]) vol. 1, p. 58. Beke, *The Idol in Horeb: evidence that the Golden Image at Mount Sinai was a cone, and not a calf* (London, 1871); *Mount Sinai a Volcano* (Tinsley, London, 1873).

(6) Charles T. Beke (ed. Emily Beke), *The Late Dr. C. B.'s Discoveries of Sinai in Arabia, and of Midian* (London, 1878) p. 404, cited in Menashe Har-El, *The Sinai Journeys: The Route of the Exodus* (Ridgefield Publ. Co., San Diego, Calif., 1983 rev. Eng. transl.) = [*Mase Sinai* (Am-Oved Publ. Ltd., Tel Aviv, 1968)] pp. 252, 294 n. 441. Upon his firsthand exploration of the Arabian mountains in 1873-4, Beke seemed to retract his novel thesis of a volcanic origin for the smoke, fire and rumblings on Mt. Sinai, but without repudiating the general Arabian locale. Beke, *Sinai in Arabia* (1878) p. 436, as partly cited in Ian Wilson, *Exodus: The True Story* (Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1985) [= *The Exodus Enigma* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1985)] pp. 128, 195.

(7) Har-El, *Sinai Journeys* (1983) p. 250.

(7a) See note 3 (above).

(8) Williams, *Mountain of Moses* (1990) pp. 62, 84.

(9) Josephus, *Against Apion* 2:2 [2:25]: William Whiston (transl.), *Josephus: Complete Works* (London, 1734 [Kregel Publs., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1960 reprint]) p. 623b; Henry St. J. Thackeray (transl.), *Josephus* (Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1926) vol. 1, pp. 301-303.

(10) Graham I. Davies, *The Way of the Wilderness* (Cambridge Univ. Press, London, 1979) pp. 51-55.

(11) "Exodus" entry, Cheyne-Black, *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (1901) vol. 2, col. 1434.

(12) Beke, *The Late Dr. C. B.'s Discoveries* (1878) p. 436 as cited in Wilson, *Exodus* (1985) pp. 128, 195, and in Ibrahim-Hilmy, *Literature of Egypt/Soudan* (1886) vol. 1, pp. 58-59.

(13) Cheyne-Black, *Encyclopaedia Biblica* (1899-1903).

(14) Oded Bustanay, "Exodus," *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (Keter Publ. House, Jerusalem, 1972) vol. 6, p. 1043; Har-El, *Sinai Journeys* (1983) pp. 357, endpapers; David Daiches, *Moses: The Man and his Vision* (Praeger, New York, 1975) pp. 84, cf. 90, 98; Wilson, *Exodus* (1985) pp. 154, 196; Siegfried H. Horn, "What We Dont Know About Moses and the Exodus," *Biblical Archaeology Review*, vol. 3, no. 2 (June 1977) pp. 22a-31b at 30, cf. 29a. Har-El's book is quoted in Williams, *Mountain of Moses* (1990) pp. 61, 223.

(15) Williams, *Mountain of Moses* (1990) pp. 13, 56.

(16) Nectarius, Bishop of Sinai at St. Catherine's Monastery ca. 1658, drew on the monastery's vast manuscript collection (which included the now famous Codex Sinaiticus) to write the monastery's official history and he is the authority for Helena's role in building the original church ca. 330. Lina Eckenstein, *A History of Sinai* (London & New York, 1921 [AMS Press, New York, 1980 reprint]) pp. 99 fn. 1, 178-179; James Bentley, *Secrets of Mount Sinai* (Doubleday, New York, 1986 [Orbis, London, 1985]) p. 58; Edith Deen, *Great Women of the Christian Faith* (Harper & Row, New York, 1959 [Barbour & Co., Westwood, N.J., reprint]) pp. 7-10.

(17) Bentley, *Secrets/Sinai* (1986) p. 58; Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai* (1921) p. 99.

(18) Contrary to the arbitrary dating of Justinian's accession in 527 that is sometimes cited, the monastery must have been built after Empress Theodora died in 548 as a roof inscription still extant is dedicated to her posthumously (Bentley, *Secrets/Sinai*, pp. 64-67). Justinian's building activity began ca. 535 and a decree of Justinian dated to 551 guarantees political independence of the monastery (Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai*, pp. 121-122, 177). Though the decree is probably an ancient forgery, it nevertheless may reflect early information on the construction date of the monastery.

(19) Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai* (1921) p. 147. A SHRINE for St. Catherine on an elevated portion of Mt. Sinai (Jebel Musa) had been mentioned as early as ca. 1096 (*ibid.*, p. 140) but the name evidently was not yet applied to the MONASTERY itself, located in the wadi next to Mt. Sinai.

(20) Davies, *Wilderness* (1979) pp. 63, 109.

Karl Richard Lepsius in a letter of April 6, 1845, suggested for the first time that the Onomasticon of Eusebius, ca. 330 A.D., revised by Jerome ca. 390 A.D., had identified a mountain AT a place called Paran (not a "Mt. Paran"), three days...journey from Eilat (Elath), as Mt. Sinai. But his theory was based on a misreading of the text, which clearly distinguished Paran and Mt. Sinai as separate locales. Lepsius also believed this Mt. Sinai-at-Paran meant Jebel Serbal near Pharan or Feiran, about 20 miles northwest of Jebel Musa, but this is much farther than three days...travel from Elath. Lepsius (transl. Charles H. Cottrell), *A Tour from Thebes to the Peninsula of Sinai* (London, 1846 Eng. transl.) pp. 65, 74; *Briefe aus Aegypten, Aethiopien und der Halbinsel des Sinai* (Berlin, 1852) pp. 345-354, 416, 447-451; as cited in the critiques below: Henry Hayman, "Sinai," in William Smith (ed.), *A Dictionary of the Bible* (Murray, London, 1863) vol. 3, pp. 1325a-1328a at 1326b-1327a; James G. Murphy, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Exodus* (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1866 [Klock & Klock, Minneapolis, Minn., 1979 reprint]) pp. 204-205; C. F. Keil and Friedrich Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament* (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1878) vol. 2, p. 90 fn. 1 [on Exodus 19:1, 2]; J. Rendel Harris, "Sinai, Mount," in James Hastings (ed.), *A Dictionary of the Bible* (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh; Scribner's, New York, 1898 [Hendrickson Publ., Peabody, Mass., 1988 reprint]) vol. 4, pp. 536b-538a at 537b; Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai*, p. 4; Davies, *Wilderness*, pp. 43-44, 63, 109 nn. 5, 6. Davies refutes the mistaken notion of Hare-El, and a J. Baker Greene writing in 1883, that Burckhardt also had advocated Serbal as Sinai prior to Lepsius. Davies, p. 109 n. 6. (The same mistake was made still earlier in the *Smith Bible Dict.*, 1863; see Hayman, *ibid.*)

(21) Davies, *Wilderness* (1979) pp. 14-28, esp. 23-24.

(22) Paul J. Achtemeier (ed.), *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (Harper & Row, New York, 1985) p. 957, emphasis added.

(23) Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai* (1921) pp. 98-101, 104, 119; Davies, *Wilderness* (1979) pp. 100-101 n. 23; John Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels to the Holy Land* (Aris & Phillips, Warminster, Eng. & Ariel Publ. House, Jerusalem, 1981 rev.) pp. 29, 237-239; see A. Thomas Kraabel review in *BAR*, vol. 9, no. 2 (March/April 1983) pp. 20-23. Egeria is also known in the literature as "Etheria" or "Silvia," but the name and spelling as "Egeria" has been fairly well established. George E. Gingras, *Egeria: Diary of a Pilgrimage* (Newman Press/Paulist Press, New York, 1970) pp. 6-7; Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels*, pp. 235-236.

(24) Davies, *Wilderness* (1979) p. 42.

(25) Alan H. Gardiner, William F. Albright, Edouard Naville, and others, cited in: John Van Seters, *The Hyksos* (Yale Univ. Press, New Haven, Conn., 1966) pp. 148-149; Gingras, *Egeria*, pp. 21-23, 149-150 nn. 96-102, 183 n. 103; Wilson, *Exodus*, p. 47; John Bimson, "Exodus and Conquest-Myth or Reality?" *Journal of the Ancient Chronology Forum*, vol. 2 (London, 1988) pp. 37, 39; Itzhaq Beit-Arieh, "Fifteen Years in Sinai," *BAR*, vol. 10, no. 4 (July/August 1984) p. 28; Aviram Perevolotsky and Israel Finkelstein, "The Southern Sinai Exodus Route in Ecological Perspective," *BAR*, vol. 11, no. 4 (July/August 1985) pp. 28-32.

(26) Davies, *ibid.*, pp. 40, 43, 46; Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai* (1921) pp. 93-94, 115; Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels* (1981) pp 28-29, 100-101, 205-207.

Etymology of "Clysmā": J. Rendel Harris and Arthur T. Chapman, "Exodus and Journey to Canaan," in *Hastings, Dict. of the Bible* (1898) vol. 1, p. 803b; Joseph Henry Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Associated Pubs., Grand Rapids, Mich., reprint 1889 rev.) pp. 332a, 350b.

(27) Davies, *Wilderness* (1979) pp. 30, 99 n. 1, emphasis added. In Herodotus ca. 450 B.C., not only was the Sinai Peninsula considered PART OF ARABIA but, surprisingly, so was all of the eastern desert half of what WE now call EGYPT on the continent of AFRICA. In Greek and Roman Empire days, the bulk of the Sinai Peninsula was left to the Nabateans as "Arabia Petrea," until their conquest by the Romans in 106 A.D. The southern and central Sinai were then merged into the new Province of Arabia. Even in modern times, Wilhelm Gesenius listed both MT. SINAI and the Sinai Peninsula as PART OF "ARABIA," in his famous 1834 Hebrew Lexicon. (Herodotus II:8, 11, 158; Michael Avi-Yonah, "Sinai," *Encycl. Judaica*, vol. 14, p. 1595; Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai*, p. 91; Davies, *Wilderness*, p. 30; Avraham Negev (ed.), *The Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land* [AEHL] (Thomas Nelson, Nashville, Tenn., 1986 rev.) pp. 65, 221-223, 276, 292, 351; Samuel P. Tregelles (transl.), *Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon* (Baker, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1979 reprint [London, 1847, 1857]) p. 584 (Strong's no. 5514).)

(28) Telephone interview with John D. Morris, ICR, Oct. 26, 1990; Morris, "The Search for Noah's Ark: Status 1992," *Impact*, no. 231 [*Acts & Facts*, vol. 21, no. 9] (Sept. 1992) p. iii.

(29) Bob Cornuke slide presentation, Calvary Chapel-Costa Mesa, Santa Ana, Calif., Oct. 25, 1990 (tape transcript). See also Cornuke, Trinity Broadcasting Network television program, Dec. 18, 1991 (audio tape available from TBN, Tustin, Calif.).

(30) Also Williams, *Mountain of Moses* (1990) p. 123 (to go "out of Goshen" is to go "OUTSIDE OF EGYPT"), emphasis added.

(31) John Bright, *A History of Israel* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1959) pp. 114-115.

(32) Louis Grollenberg, *Atlas* (Thomas Nelson, London, 1956, 1965) p. 51.

(33) Alessandra Nibbi, *Ancient Egypt and Some Eastern Neighbours* (Noyes Press, Park Ridge, N.J., 1981) pp. 1-5, 9, 11; William H. Stiebing, *Out of the Desert?* (Prometheus Books, Buffalo, N.Y., 1989) pp. 184-186.

(34) Frederick W. Holland in Charles W. Wilson, et al., *The Recovery of Jerusalem* (R. Bentley, London, 1871) p. 524, quoted in Claude R. Conder, "Sinai," in James Orr (gen. ed.), *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* (Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1929 rev. [1986 reprint]), vol. 4, p. 2804;

Samuel C. Bartlett, *From Egypt to Palestine* (Harper & Row, New York, 1879) pp. 270-272, as cited in Wilbur Fields, *Exploring Exodus* (College Press, Joplin, Missouri, 1976) p. 394; Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai* (1921) pp. 118, 122-123.

(35) Eckenstein, *ibid.*, pp. 6-7, 39-40.

(36) *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7, 90-91, 160.

- (37) R. Laird Harris (ed.), *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Moody Press, Chicago, 1980) vol. 2, pp. 558-559 (no. 1309); Gesenius Lexicon, p. 536 (Strong's no. 5090).
- (38) Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 6:7:3 [140]; edition of Henry St. J. Thackeray and Ralph Marcus (transl.), *Josephus* (Harvard Univ. Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1934) p. 237. See also Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai*, p. 45.
- (39) Cornuke presentation, Oct. 25, 1990 (tape transcript). Cf. Williams, *Mountain of Moses* (1990) pp. 77-79. See also Cornuke, TBN television, Dec. 18, 1991 (audio tape).
- (40) Telephone interview with John D. Morris, ICR, Oct. 26, 1990; Morris, "Search for Noah's Ark," *Impact [Acts & Facts]* (Sept. 1992) p. iii.
- (40a) Bob Cornuke telephone interview, Dec. 30, 1996.
- (41) Flash floods at St. Catherine's or southern Sinai generally: Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai* (1921) pp. 5-6; George H. Forsyth and Kurt Weitzmann, "Saving the Mt. Sinai Mosaics," *BAR*, vol. 4, no. 4 (Nov/Dec 1978) p. 20.
- (42) Egeria 2:2, 4:4; Eckenstein, *ibid.*, pp. 117-118; Gingras, *Egeria* (1970) pp. 50, 54-55; Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels* (1981) pp. 91, 95-96.
- (43) Bentley, *Secrets/Sinai* (1986) p. 58, emphasis added.
- (44) Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai* (1921) p. 151; Bentley, *ibid.*, p. 67.
- (45) Negev, *AEHL* (1986) p. 351. Eckenstein, *ibid.*, p. 118. Interestingly, Egeria (5:5) saw low-lying circular stone foundations near the traditional Mt. Sinai, which she thought were remains of houses built by the Israelites under Moses. Egeria also saw the so-called Nawami stone huts (Eckenstein, p. 90; Wilkinson, pp. 209-210, 213, 216, 328) on her way to Mt. Sinai. These have been found in various spots across the Sinai and Negev, some with the stone roofs amazingly still intact. Based on pottery chronology, they are dated to the Chalcolithic age. (Beit-Arieh, *BAR*, July/Aug 1984, pp. 34-36.)
- (46) Avraham Negev, "Understanding the Nabateans," *BAR*, vol. 14, no. 6 (Nov/Dec 1988) pp. 32, 34.
- (47) Davies, *Wilderness* (1979) pp. 49, 106 n. 2, 110 n. 17.
- (48) Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai* (1921) pp. 81-82. Arab historian Masoudi ca. 951 A.D. disputed this identification of Shoeib with Jethro.
- (49) *Ibid.*, pp. 125-126.
- (50) Exodus 12:37; 13:20; 14:2; Numbers 33:3-8. See Keil-Delitzsch, *Comm. Exodus* (1878) pp. 26-27 (on Exod. 12:37-42).
- (51) "Ancient Hebrew tradition" of 7-day travel on Abib/Nisan 15-21 from Egypt to the Red Sea: Johann David Michaelis, *Essai physique sur l'heure des marées dans la Mer Rouge, comparée avec l'heure du passage des Hébreux* (Paris, 1755; rev. Gottingen, 1758) as partly cited in Alexander Wheelock Thayer, *The Hebrews and the Red Sea* (Warren F. Draper, Andover, Mass., 1883) p. 11 fn. 1; see also Howard B. Rand, *Primogenesis* (Destiny Publishers, Haverhill, Mass., 1953) pp. 166-167, as quoted in John J. Davis, *Moses and the Gods of Egypt* (Baker, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1986 rev.) p. 174; Fields, *Exploring Exodus* (1976) pp. 260, 289 (3 days to Succoth then 4 days to Red Sea).
- (52) Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews* 6:7:3 [140]; Thackeray-Marcus, *Josephus* (1934) p. 237.
- (53) Eckenstein, *Hist. Sinai* (1921) p. 81; Davies, *Wilderness* (1979) p. 46.
- (54) Grollenberg, *Atlas* (1965) pp. 44, 157; G. Ernest Wright and F. V. Filson, *Westminster Historical Atlas* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1956 rev.) p. 33; James Hastings (ed.), Frederick C. Grant and H. H. Rowley (rev. eds.), *Dictionary of the Bible* (Scribner's, New York, 1963 rev.) map 5; Negev, *AEHL* (1986) p. 262.

(55) Ibid.; Martin Gilbert (ed.), *Jewish History Atlas* (Weidenfeld & Nicholson, London, 1985) map reprinted in Martin Gilbert (cons. ed.), *Illustrated Atlas of Jewish Civilization* (Macmillan, New York, 1990) p. 15.

(56) Achtemeier, *Harper's Bible Dict.* (1985) p. 634. Harper's next sentence confusingly talks about the Midianites roaming "far beyond this ancestral homeland" as far as the "*Sinai*," which might suggest to a cursory reader that the Sinai was outside of Midian but apparently means the Sinai was outside of the ancestral "*center*" of Midianite territory." However, there is no Biblical basis for distinguishing between a *central* Midian and an *outer* Midian.

(57) Ibid., p. 957; James L. Mays (gen. ed.), *Harper's Bible Commentary* (Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1988) map 2.

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Addendum: Prof. K.A. Kitchen addresses the possible routes of the Exodus and the overwhelming evidence that the traditional location at the South end of the Sinai Peninsula is correct. See his new book, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament*, Wm. B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 2003. See especially pages 241-274. [Route Maps, from K.A. Kitchen.](#) Another [Traditional route map](#) with major place names. (added 3/18/04).

Sinai-Related Links

[The Exodus and Related Satellite Imagery, \(Tom Pickett\)](#)

[The Riddle of Mount Sinai: Archaeological Discoveries at Har Karkom, \(Prof. Emmanuel Anati\)](#)

[Is Mt. Sinai in Arabia? Gary Byers, Bryant G. Wood, Associates for Biblical Research \(ABR\)](#)

[International Standard Bible Encyclopedia \(ISBE\) Entries for Mt. Sinai](#)

[W. M. Flinders Petrie, Researches in Sinai \(Excerpts\)](#)

[The Mountain of Moses \(and St. Catherine's Monastery Tour\)](#)

[Jebel Musa](#)

[Egypt Travel: Sinai and St. Catherine's Monastery](#)

[Peakware World Mountain Encyclopedia](#)

[Catholic Encyclopedia: Mt. Sinai](#)

[Hormuz - Satellite Images - Sinai and the Red Sea](#)

[Places of Peace and Power](#)

Online version created January 30, 1997. Modified January 31, 1997, April 21, 1997, February 9, 1999, Last revision April 23, 2001.
Formatting changes: Thursday, February 6, 2003. January 1, 2004. April 17, 2004. October 7, 2004. March 24, 2005. April 2, 2005. August 7, 2006.

These are serious flaws in the research by the BASE Institute that need to be addressed by scholars and should be brought to the attention of the general public. An informed person will find that there is overwhelming evidence that the object of interest discovered by the BASE team is not Noah's Ark.

A disclaimer is in order as well. A business associate and close friend of the BASE Institute predicted that Mr. Cornuke would be "venomously attacked by both Christians and non-Christians." He claims that the reason some Christians would attack him would be because they are jealous, having "spent years and millions of dollars searching on Mt. Ararat in Turkey" and it turned out to be the wrong mountain.

Personally, I have never searched for anything on Mt. Ararat (Agri Dagh) in Turkey and, in fact, have never been to that mountain, nor do I have any interest in climbing that mountain. I have done all my archaeological work in Israel (Jerusalem, Lachish, Jezreel, Hazor, Ramat Rachel, etc.) and have never excavated in Turkey.

This article is a critique of the ideas presented on the BASE website and in the books and nothing more. I will not judge motives. I will simply examine the evidence as a professional. I hope this will invite a similar response from Mr. Cornuke, his organization and his supporters to this or any other factually based critique of his claims.

One of the flyers distributed by an organization promoting a presentation by Cornuke asked the question, "Is it Noah's Ark?" The blurb goes on to say, "Dr. Bob Cornuke, president of BASE Institute is not making any claims. Instead, he is sharing photographic and laboratory data, and letting audiences draw their own tentative, informed conclusions ..."

Herein is the problem. They raise the question, "Is this Noah's Ark?" But they never answer the question whether it is Noah's Ark or not. What we, in the evangelical community lack is any critical evaluation by the BASE team of the material presented, especially when it goes contrary to the statements of the Bible. Such an evaluation would allow someone to make a conclusive, informed decision.

The Exodus Hoax

P R O C L A M A T I O N

Volume 17 | No. 1 | October 2006

Six Leading Archaeological Myths by Bryant G. Wood, Ph.D.

The public is constantly bombarded, in both the secular and Christian media, with bogus archaeological finds that claim to either prove or disprove the Bible. I and my staff have dealt with many of them in our quarterly magazine, *Bible and Spade*, and in our electronic newsletter, available free of charge -- visit www.biblearchaeology.org.

Dr. Wood is Director of Associates for Biblical Research and editor of Bible & Spade journal. He has taught at numerous educational institutions, and presently continues to do archaeological field work. He and his wife live in Manheim PA. Dr. Wood has been affiliated with AIIA as a Resource Associate since 1997.

Here are a six examples:

MYTH #1 -- Noah's Ark Has Been Found

A number of individuals have stated they have found Noah's Ark at various locations in the vicinity of Mt. Ararat in eastern Turkey and, most recently, in Iran. To date, no scientific evidence has been produced to back up these assertions.

MYTH #2 -- Rameses the Great is the Pharaoh of the Exodus

Rameses II ("the Great") ruled Egypt ca 1279-1212 B.C. If there was an Exodus, liberal scholars say, the Pharaoh of the Exodus must have been Rameses. Hollywood and the media have picked up on this so that, in the minds of many, Rameses is the same Pharaoh that Moses confronted. There is a major problem with this identification, however, in that Biblical chronology places the Exodus 200 years earlier! While we cannot yet say for sure who the Pharaoh of the Exodus was, it certainly was not Rameses.

MYTH #3 -- Pharaoh's Chariot Wheels Have Been Found

There has been a lot of publicity in recent years arguing that Mt. Sinai has been found in Saudi Arabia and that the Red Sea (Hebrew = Reed Sea) crossing was at the Gulf of Aqaba between the Sinai Peninsula and Saudi Arabia. Divers have photographed round objects in the Gulf which, it is held, are from Egyptian chariots. Since the objects are encrusted with coral, they cannot be retrieved for further study, as coral is protected. The Gulf of Aqaba is much too far from Egypt to be the correct location. Moreover, the Gulf of Aqaba is a busy modern shipping lane and any number of round wheel-like objects could have been deposited there over the centuries.

MYTH #4 -- Mt. Sinai Has Been Located at Jebel al-Lawz in Saudi Arabia

Jebel al-Lawz is not in the right location to be Mt. Sinai. In Deuteronomy 1:2 we read that it took the Israelites 11 days to travel from Horeb (i.e. Mt. Sinai) to Kadesh in the northern Sinai. Pastoralists traveling with their flocks and herds can only cover 5-6 miles per day. This means the distance from Kadesh to Mt. Sinai is 60 miles or so. The straight line distance from Kadesh to Jebel al-Lawz is approximately 150 miles, with the actual walking distance being much greater.

MYTH #5 -- The Ark of the Covenant Has Been Found

The Ark of the Covenant is in Ethiopia, under the Temple Mount, or in a cave beneath Gordon's Calvary in Jerusalem, depending on who is trying to sell you his book or video. There is no evidence to back up any of these contentions. The late Ron Wyatt declared that he found not only the Ark with Christ's blood on it, but the Table of Showbread, Altar of Incense, original Book of the Law written by Moses, and various Temple implements, in a cave beneath Gordon's Calvary in 1982. The cave was professionally excavated in 2005 and no trace of these objects was found.

MYTH #6 -- Archaeology Proves That There Was No Conquest of Canaan

Secular scholars maintain that archaeological findings demonstrate the Conquest described in Joshua never happened. Two places are singled out as providing proof positive: Jericho and Ai. At Jericho, they allege, there was no occupation at the time of the Conquest. Our research has shown that a massive destruction of the city (see Joshua 6:24), which the archaeologists dated to 1550 B.C., really occurred in 1400 B.C., the very date of the Conquest according to Biblical chronology. The site of Ai was misidentified. At the correct site, Khirbet el-Maqatir, where I directed excavations from 1995 to 2000, evidence was found which matches the Biblical account exactly, including evidence of burning (Joshua 8:28).

CONCLUDING OBSERVATION

If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is! Do not believe sensational claims unless there is well-documented evidence to back them up.

From: Tabibzadeh, Ramin [mailto:rtabibzadeh@archstoneconsulting.com]

Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 9:54 AM

To: itabib@cox.net; nousheentabib@yahoo.com; rbbabaknia@yahoo.com; shrabanzadeh@yahoo.com

Subject: FW: Evidence of the Splitting of the Yam Suf and the Remminance of the Chari...

From: Cyrus Kermanian [mailto:qqbeautycenter.qq@verizon.net]

Sent: Saturday, April 28, 2007 1:35 PM

To: Albert Bagdadi; Cynthia Soukiasian; klawdave@aol.com; Elliott Benjamin; Gina K; Koorosh Banayan; Michael Benjamin; Mimi Tome; morris@orientimpex.com; Sam Kermanian; Tabibzadeh, Ramin; Dyrek, William

Subject: FW: Evidence of the Splitting of the Yam Suf and the Remminance of the Chari...

There are other parts of this documentary on U Tube
Enjoy

-----Original Message-----

From: qqbeauty@aol.com [mailto:qqbeauty@aol.com]

Sent: Saturday, April 28, 2007 12:46 PM

To: QOBEAUTYCENTER.QQ@VERIZON.NET

Subject: Fwd: Evidence of the Splitting of the Yam Suf and the Remminance of the Chari...

-----Original Message-----

From: dinojune@yahoo.com

To: agentkaro@aol.com; khalilial@yahoo.com; angelaefros@aol.com; jozefashouri@yahoo.com; kobydar@yahoo.com; edn675@netscape.net; electrotex@aol.com; nichole_maree@hotmail.com; kennanchiang@yahoo.com; rjkerendian@yahoo.com; qqbeauty@aol.com; royasab@yahoo.com; sergia076@sbcglobal.net; saralene@sbcglobal.net; tdreamsimagined@aol.com; saberi321@aol.com; smalak@mbreg.com; linextex@sbcglobal.net; er543@aol.com; fredchief@netzero.com

Sent: Sat, 28 Apr 2007 9:35 AM

Subject: Fwd: FW: Evidence of the Splitting of the Yam Suf and the Remminance of the Chari...

Note: forwarded message attached.

Attached Message

From:	Hertzel@topnetinc.com
To:	Hertzel@topnetinc.com
Subject:	FW: Evidence of the Splitting of the Yam Suf and the Remminance of the Chari...
Date:	Fri, 27 Apr 2007 10:42 AM

The beginning is boring, but watch to the end. It is totally amazing. Also watch part 8 to the end and if you can 9 and 10 as well.

Evidence of the Splitting of the Yam Suf and the Remminance of the Egyptian Chariots under the sea.

This is soo amazing and I think that everyone should watch this and pass it on.

Enjoy the Miracle of Hashem!!!!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VLYQqUPCt7M>

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