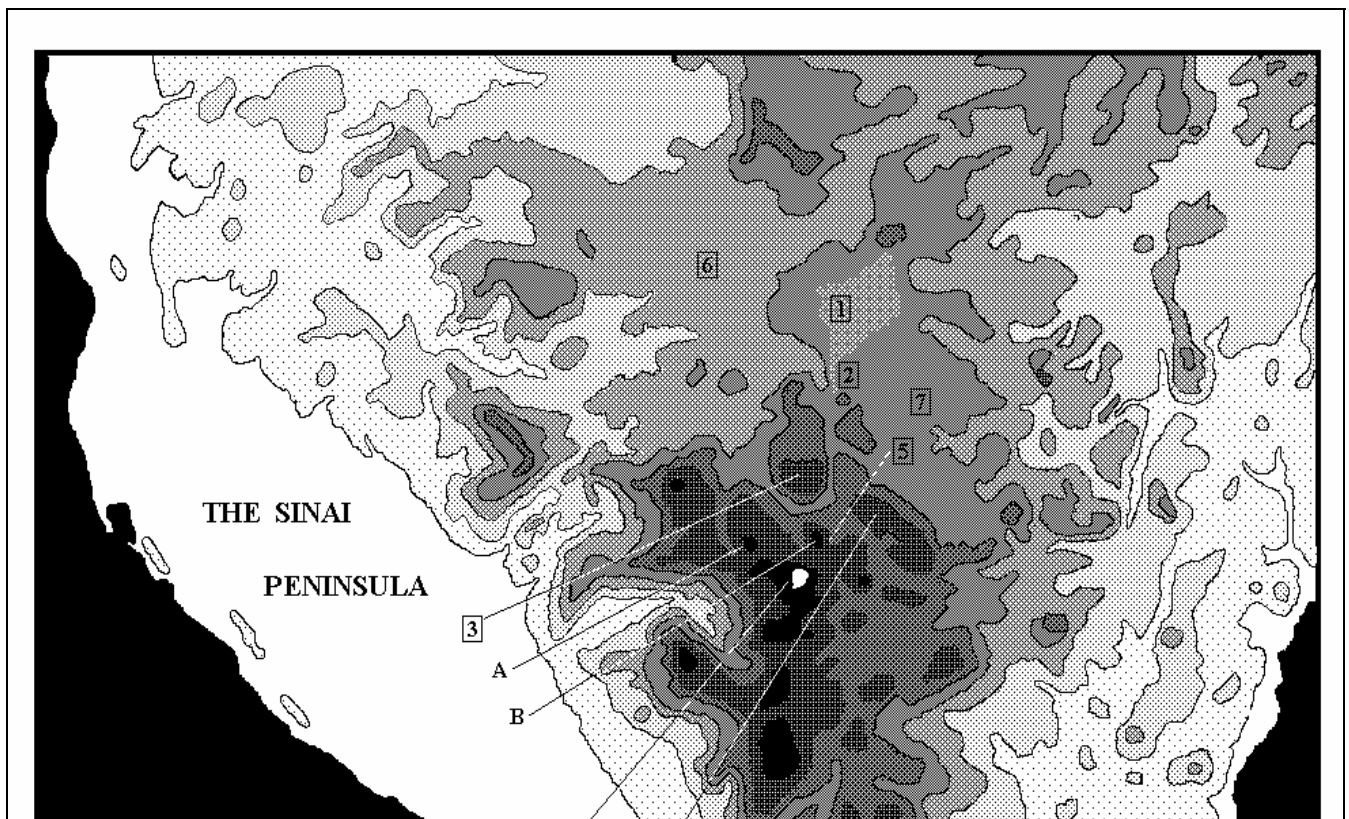


GOD'S ROCK

MOSES and the EXODUS Epoch



C. Ronald Johnson

GOD'S ROCK

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GOD'S HOOK

All scriptures are quoted from the King James Version - with the exception of several passages translated by the author, which are noted.

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DEDICATION

May this work be pleasing to my Lord
and Master, to whom I dedicate it
and to my precious wife, Barbara
and to my steadfast son, Benjamin -
all of whom I owe much for their faith in
me with resoluteness;

and to all the unknown saints past, present,
and future who have, do, and shall wait upon
our God...

who also wait for the forthshining of
Christ our Rock.

SUPPORT

While this book is in its initial stage of printing (i.e. not the final copy but a proof copy), it is offered to the reader at no profit to me. Go to our website (listed at the beginning of this book) for ebook and printed copies of this and other books.

As this is a proof copy, my hope is that the reader will take notes regarding any typo errors (or any other errors) and notify me by mail or email. This provides me an invaluable service, as I wish to present the final work as respectable can be. For now, use the email address: ron-barbara@christianwildernesspress.net. My hope is that the reader will find this book to be a real help in his or her study of the life of Moses and the Exodus Epoch. Also I hope that he or she will be encouraged into extended stays in scripture...which, if you will, is “a garden inspired by God” where He would often visit you. Hopefully you will be their often (note the ‘their’ in this sentence as it is the kind of typo I need readers to find for me since spelling and grammar checkers seldom catch it). I am often in my Bible-garden, but the Lord does not visit me there as often as I like; however, if there are times when He does visit the garden and I am not there for my own personal reasons, then I miss out on...well, I do not know what.

This work is offered within the context of Ecclesiastes 11:1 - ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.’ (KJV)

Christian Wilderness Press will be operated accordingly, usually not knowing where the bread will go...or how or when it may be found again by us. It is our hope that much of it will be found multiplied and awaiting us in heaven.

If this work seems worthy then please consider adding Barbara and me and the work of Christian Wilderness Press to your prayer sessions. Our hope is that readers of this book will see it as but part of the work at Christian Wilderness Press, for we hope to have an internet presence where more will be offered.

Any support graciously offered will be graciously received, including help in proofing the writings of Christian Wilderness Press.

The Lord bless you in your growing study of your Bible.

Sincerely, Ron and Barbara Johnson

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GOD'S ROCK

It is the glory of God to conceal a thing:
but the honor of kings to search out
a matter. Proverbs 25:2



This book is a lengthy teaching on 'that spiritual Rock' -

1Corinthians 10:1-6

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea: And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and the sea:

And did all eat the same spiritual meat {manna}; And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples...

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PROLOGUE

Many readers flip the initial pages of a book right past the preface and introduction to get into the book proper. Thus, another scheme is implored here. This book can only be properly understood in light of what is contained in Appendix I, and since the first chapter of any book hopes to capture the reader's interest, then the message contained in Appendix I could not properly be placed there. With some apology, then, the reader is implored, at the least, to read Appendix I before going on to the main text.

It is hoped that this book will encourage the reader to go to his Bible and to the Spirit who inspired the Bible for greater benefit than he can find in these pages. And I trust that the Spirit will use these pages - as lacking as they are - to open up, dear reader, your inward parts to see the Rock of Ages.

CRJ

GOD'S ROCK PART I

BEGINNINGS

Isaac's son Jacob, grandson of Abraham, became prepared over many years by God's manipulative hand while he was abiding in Haran, Syria. There eleven of his twelve sons were born. At the Brook Jabbok on his way home to his father's ranch¹ in Palestine, he experienced an encounter with his God and became elevated to a 'prince of God', whereupon he received a new name, 'Israel'.² In the course of God's timing a severe famine came upon much of the known world. It descended also upon Palestine where Israel, his sons, their families, and their servants lived as nomadic shepherds in a land populated by various ethnic groups, bedouin tribes, clans, and small kingdom cities.

Abraham's God was Elohim who arranged to maintain and multiply Israel's lineage, one of several lines of the Abrahamic seed, for a particularly chosen purpose. That purpose was often veiled as Elohim manipulated Israel's extended family within God's Plan for the Ages of Adam. Thus, it was Elohim who brought them all into Egypt where He continued working.

We have begun four hundred years before the birth of Moses. Such a span of time hardly seems to fit the title 'Beginnings'. The title, however, is appropriate for the purpose of this book.

This God, Elohim, arranged for Israel and his clan to settle down for an extended stay in Goshen, an Egyptian territory given them by Pharaoh. For the first time the chosen family owned land. After Jacob and his sons had gone onto their reward with Elohim, it became apparent that the intent of the expanding family was to remain amid their blessings and in their blessed land. In Palestine they had been nomadic shepherds. In Goshen they became farmers and businessmen. Goshen was the Hebrew name for their productive land on the east edge of a large district with the Egyptian name of Rameses, which name had anciently originated from the sun god, Ra. This district of Rameses composed the eastern half of Egypt's Delta. Goshen was at the district's easterly edge just east of the River Nile's most easterly tributary.³

A traveler entering the land of the pharaohs from the east and north would find himself in the district of Rameses near lovely Goshen. The district's leading city and ancient capital was Heliopolis located where the Nile begins spreading into its many tributaries. From ancient times Ra was the local deity of Heliopolis and was the predominate god of northern Egypt.

The Egyptians claimed most of western Sinai as their eastern frontier, approximately one third of the Sinai Peninsula. That frontier included the desert west of the Suez region and ex-

¹ Isaac owned great herds and flocks, but did not own the land. Probably he leased the various lands where his livestock grazed at any given time.

² See two chapters about Jacob in GOD'S HOOK, Volume II, by this author.

³ See Map 1 of Appendix IX.

tended easterly to the 'ravine of Egypt' in central Sinai; thus, it served as a buffer to the nations east and north. Forts were situated throughout the frontier to protect Egypt's various interests such as mining and against invasion. Goshen lay between the Delta proper and the beginnings of true wilderness regions; it was a good borderland for livestock and garden produce and was situated on a major trade route in and out of Egypt.

Philistines had the same ancient ancestors as Egypt's long-time ruling and upper classes, and the wilderness that was Egypt's frontier coincided with Philistia's southern frontier. Because many caravans traveled the roads through this frontier, Philistia also had forts in northern Sinai interspersed with Egyptian forts. The Sinai Peninsula was unique in that its west region was greatly influenced by Egypt because of mining and similar industries, whereas its south and east region was greatly influenced by Arabia. However, in its whole the peninsula was considered "eastern", as bedouin bands with flocks and herds roamed throughout.

Nevertheless, the draw of modern industrial Egypt was great. Many peoples including bedouins were migrating into Egypt even as many bedouins from farther east were filling their place in the wildernesses of Sinai. A steady flow existed of eastern peoples moving toward the progressive west. Egypt's Delta with its many opportunities for jobs and higher living conditions beckoned constantly to anyone with a mind to enter.

Two major routes, traveled greatly by traders and such, crossed northern Sinai through the frontier wilderness common to Egypt and Philistia. The sea-route hugged the shore of the Great Sea and was the shortest path to Palestine.⁴ The road south of it traversed Sinai's higher ground northeasterly to strike the Ravine of Sin and down into the Arabah where it passed by the southern edge of the Dead Sea to ascend the slope of Moab and intersect the King's Highway in westernmost Arabia.

The King's Highway was a major caravan route running from Syria in the north to the southern tip of Arabia, interweaving its way among the highlands that existed between the Jordan River and Arabia's great north desert. It continued southerly through Edom and on to Arabia's tip by adhering to the high ridge of land between the Gulf of Aqabah and Arabia's huge south desert.

Another well-used route exited Egypt through the southern Suez region just north of the Gulf of Suez of the Red Sea and ran southeasterly through Sinai's great plateau region. This road would play a major role in the Exodus Epoch, as it ran from Egypt directly to the little oasis village of Kadesh-barnea where existed a major junction. One of the roads out of Kadesh-barnea ran to the Edomite seaport of Elath located on the north tip of the Gulf of Aqabah of the Red Sea where the road intersected the Kings Highway. Another ran north into Palestine. A third and minor road ran south connecting scattered villages along the Gulf of Aqabah and on to the tip of the peninsula.

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Joseph was born the eleventh son of Israel. In his seventeenth year, his brothers sold him to a caravan of Midianite traders having business in Egypt. The Midianites were traveling the road that crossed northern Sinai to enter Egypt proper near the military city of Zoan. The incident of Joseph becoming a slave triggered an important phase of the long and complex Plan of God concerning the Covenant with Father Abraham.

Ancient Zoan had been built to be the first city that a land traveler must encounter when entering Egypt proper from the east and north. It was a stronghold city for defense against eastern invasion.<sup>5</sup> Also its location had been calculated to provide protection for the inland seaports

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<sup>4</sup> This route is described, though in a later period of history, in Appendix III.

<sup>5</sup> See Appendix V.

located on several of the Nile's tributaries in the district of Ramases. Therefore, Egypt's northeast entrance and the important cities near that entrance lay beneath the watchful eye of Pharaoh's special garrison at Zoan. Also 'within the field of Zoan' was Goshen, for Goshen lay in the region of protection assigned to Zoan. [Numbers 13:22 and Psalms 78:12,43]

A few hundred miles to the east was situated another military city in Palestine's southern hill country. That city was Kiriath-arba, the ancient home of the giants that hired out as champion warriors to the various small kingdoms scattered throughout Palestine. Zoan was impressively mighty and sophisticated. Though Kiriath-arba was anything but sophisticated, it also was much feared by the enemies of the land of Canaan.

Other wilderness roads existing entirely within Egypt proper ran east-west from the Nile Valley through Egypt's internal wilderness to the Gulf of Suez of the Red Sea. The most northern of these roads served as a demarcation within Egypt between a desert to its north and wilderness mountains to its south. The road commenced at the Nile (modern Cairo) and ran easterly to join the much used route exiting Suez through Sinai and on to Elath, Edom. Another east-west road began at or near the same point on the Nile, but ran easterly over the wilderness mountains and down to the gulf. Similar road further south connected through those mountains from the Nile to the gulf.

Such roads served dual purposes. Various minerals were mined in the mountains and, though Egypt was not yet a major seafaring nation, several ports were located along the gulf associated with the mines and for trading with Arabia and farther seafaring nations. Located at or near the ports were forts under the central commander in Zoan. Incorporated with the main frontier forts, these forts were an integral part of Egypt's east-facing protective shield. The Egyptian name for this system of forts was "Etham".<sup>6</sup>

Wealthy Egypt was an eagle flying high. Ah, but small hawks, ravens, and many sparrows constantly pester eagles in flight. Sea pirates and caravan marauders lived off the many crumbs they could steal from the eagle. The eagle's mines and other interests had to be protected along her coasts, in her frontiers, and in her foreign possessions. On the other hand, such raiding ventures were dangerous, as the eagle could easily destroy whatever it could catch with a rip of its beak or thrust of a talon. Both the eagle and those harassing her understood the game. Neither dealt with the other in mercy.

The fort overlooking the gulf where the second east-west road ended had been built and was manned by Philistines, not by Egyptians, for on that stretch of shore the Philistines had a sacred mountain to protect, Baal-zephon.<sup>7</sup> A Philistine sea-god having several residences on the southeast shore of the Great Sea also had a mountain on the Gulf of Suez as a residence. The residence-mountains were named for the god abiding in them, in that, he could gaze from their heights over his sea-domains. No Philistine seaport existed on the Gulf of Suez, instead the fort and a small community to support the pilgrims that came to pay homage to Baal-zephon. As there was little for Egypt to protect at this point on her coastline, she was content to let her cousin do the job. Even so, more than a few Egyptians worshipped there; a person cannot have enough gods on his side and a sea-god is handy when one lives near the sea, especially as the abodes of most Egyptian gods were inland along the Great Nile.

The Delta of Egypt was abuzz with people, many foreigners mingling with native Egyptians. Peoples of the wildernesses, outbacks, and small bedouin villages were constantly moving into or visiting the Great Land of the Pharaohs. Much like the wealth of Mesopotamia, the wealth of Egypt drew outsiders like a magnet. The foundation of her wealth was agriculture grown mostly along the great Nile and transported down the Nile to the Delta where it was traded for

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<sup>6</sup> See "Etham" in Appendix VII.

<sup>7</sup> See Appendix VII.

inbound goods from around the Great Sea and from regions east and north by caravan. Nearly all of Egypt's trade business converged in the Delta.

Not only land-peoples were coming to work, but the rich ports of Egypt provided for, even begged for, sea-peoples from around the Great Sea. Though multitudes of freemen were coming in, a heavy and constant slavery trade existed. From all points of the compass, men were capturing other men and women and bringing them in to wealthy Egyptians. Brother often sold brother or sister. All this and much more were percolating in the district of Rameses. The young slave, Joseph, arrived by caravan and was sold. Eventually he came to be owned by Potiphar, a captain in Pharaoh's royal guard in Memphis, a great city that had become Egypt's capital.

Almighty God controls nations and the seasons of their histories, and He positioned thirty year old Joseph at the right hand of Pharaoh to be Vizier over all Egypt. When Israel's clan arrived, Joseph had been Vizier for some eight or nine years. [Genesis 37 through 50]

By God's Plan, the budding nation of Israel would sojourn in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years. [Exodus 12:40] During their first hundred years in Goshen, the small band of Hebrews became the foundation upon which a nation would be built that would be separated unto Yahweh Elohim.

Joseph had arrived in the early years of the reign of a particularly capable king in Egypt's 12th dynasty. He was Senwosret III,<sup>8</sup> the greatest king Egypt had yet experienced. No one would match his greatness for several centuries to come. His capital city was on the east bank of the Nile about twenty-five miles south of Heliopolis (or perhaps in a small administrative center just south of Memphis). So revered was this Pharaoh that he would become worshipped as deity in the southern city of Semna three and a half centuries later when Thutmosis III of the 18th dynasty would build a temple in Semna to the god, Senwosret III. Thutmosis III would come to think of Senwosret III as a god to emulate. Thutmosis III would become Egypt's next great king, surpassing his idol.<sup>9</sup>

Not only had Elohim controlled Joseph's life, He had been controlling the affairs of Egypt and her government. Various districts of Egypt strung along the Nile and in the Delta had been locally governed by magistrates or great landowners. Little unity existed between the districts. Even within districts there was little unity, as local chieftains independently ruled small domains. Hundreds of years of disjointed governance ended when Senwosret III succeed in uniting the land into something of a cohesive realm.

Perhaps for the first time, Egypt reached beyond her borders toward Palestine. While some people there were villagers and townsmen and others dealt in the trade industry, most were shepherds. Egypt's dealing with them was somewhat as a father nation to children tribes of numerous ethnic origins. Ah, but if they were as children, they were as disobedient, self-serving children. Having the new power of a united Egypt and Egypt's ages-old-influence, Senwosret III initiated trading relations in his expanded domain accompanied by new military outposts. Whenever climatic conditions worked hardship on these people it was natural for them to look to Egypt's stability and food supply.

Asiatic bedouins filtering into the great agricultural nations of Egypt and Mesopotamia for work became large and eventually powerful ethnic populations as they merged into a settled lifestyle. Some of them rose to positions of power. Egypt was experiencing such when Joseph arrived. Joseph would never have been noticed had not the hand of Elohim been on him controlling his circumstances and that of Egypt.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Probably. See Appendix VI.

<sup>9</sup> See Reference I, page 40.

<sup>10</sup> As South Florida receives various peoples coming in from the Caribbean and South America in our day, so Egypt's Delta was experiencing a flood of Mediterraneanites and Near Easterners. See Appendix IV.

By the time Joseph became readied by his God to be Vizier over Egypt under Senwosret III, God had readied the country for him. Egypt's unification had been completed under this great Pharaoh and the peoples of Sinai and Palestine were friendly with Egypt in trade and were benevolently dominated by her forts. The season was at hand for seven years of uncommonly bountiful crops. Egyptian's idolized their unifying, conquering king; for Pharaoh was entering his mature years, was successful in all of his pursuits, and was mature enough to appreciate his fortunes. He was thankful to his gods.

Therefore, when the king received a unique dream and an Asiatic young man from prison correctly interpreted it Senwosret III was impressed. Also he was impressed that a god foreign to Egypt would so speak to an Egyptian king. He was impressed, too, at how the God, Elohim, had used a particular young Hebrew. And he was impressed with the demeanor, knowledge, and intelligence of the young man. Thus, as Elohim worked His Plan, the wise king seized the moment and at the age of thirty Joseph was moved from prison to the king's house. Joseph became the greatest man in Egypt next to Pharaoh himself.

The great famine to come to Egypt would also come to all the lands in the circle of Egypt's influence. As Elohim would have mercy on Egyptians by saving them through the office of Joseph, their new Vizier, He would save many peoples of other lands by the same Joseph and same Method.

In those days there was much moisture compared to modern times<sup>11</sup> and the greater part of the Delta was a jungle. Some crops were grown here and there, but the Delta had no suitable soil for grain production. Egypt's breadbasket stretched from the south edge of the Delta southward through the Great Nile Valley until it approached higher and drier ground near Ethiopia. Grain production was particularly good in the Nile's middle region and along a tributary that split off from the Nile which flowed into the Faiyum region.<sup>12</sup>

Though the districts were united under the king, individual landowners - chieftains and wealthy businessmen - still owned most of the grain lands. In the seven years before the famine, Joseph's God bountifully blessed the efforts of the landowners. In the Plan devised by Elohim as revealed to Pharaoh in a dream and interpreted by Joseph, farmers would sell to the government for healthy profits. Joseph would see to it that the government was the highest bidder on all the grain produced in Egypt. The new Vizier would build many silos in the land to store the enormous amounts of grain.

Is Pharaoh getting senile in his old age? Is the new foreign Vizier an ambitious young fool? What will the government do with all the grain? Why is the government foregoing the tremendous wealth it could be drawing into the country by trade? Why so much strain placed on the financial resources of the throne in buying the grain? Don't they know that the surplus decreases its value, even as year by year more grain is abundantly produced?

If Pharaoh had not experienced the memorable dream from Joseph's God, he would not have committed himself to what in the bountiful years seemed altogether foolish. In the privacy of homes across the land the aging king and the young Vizier became the brunt of much ridicule. Landowners and businessmen were becoming rich beyond anything they could ever have experienced. Everyone is benefiting from a booming economy at the expense of the government. "Let the fools play their games!" profiteers said about hoarders of food.

The famine has arrived and Egyptians are glad "the fools had played their games". People are buying grain from the government with gold they had received from the government, but before the famine runs its course, their gold runs out. Grain bought in dire need demands a higher price than grain sold in a glutted market. To sustain their lives and the lives of their labor-

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<sup>11</sup> See Appendix III.

<sup>12</sup> Even today the tributary is called Bahr Yusef - the River of Joseph. See Appendix VI.

ers, without whom they could not farm, landowners are signing their lands over to the government for food. Many people are coming into indentured servitude to the government.

When the time of famine is over, farmers must lease land from the royal house. Moreover, farmers must lease workers from the government's pool of indentured servants. Pharaoh and his house own much of the land and many of the people. Joseph's God has made the royal house greater, the land more centrally controlled, and the government stronger...all of which makes Egypt greater and stronger among the nations. Though freedoms of people have significantly decreased, big brother is looking out for them. It is a great comfort in hard times, but as things improve, the new relationship of government to people remains much the same, which comforts some and aggravates others.

In the early years of famine the stage had been set: Joseph's family had arrived and was given the borderland of Goshen and Joseph saw to the needs of his family. (The government's favor would continue upon Joseph's people in Goshen for some two hundred years). While many Egyptians were losing their freedoms and experiencing economic downsizing, in the free and open climate of Goshen, Joseph's brothers and sisters were prospering.

With the famine's beginning, great caravans from far and wide had entered Egypt loaded with riches to leave loaded with grain. God in His mercy had saved many people in the seven-year famine and at the same time had firmly established Egypt's throne in great power for several centuries to come. Joseph became entrenched in the government's bureaucracy over several administrations as he lived to be a hundred and ten years old. [Genesis 50:26]

Along with Egypt's throne having been solidified, a pervasive bureaucratic structure had been established to run the country with a strong authoritative hand. This further empowered and stabilized the government.<sup>13</sup> The bureaucracy endured in Egypt for a very long time and the government fondly remembered Joseph with respect and gratitude for many years following his death. In this, Elohim had secured the future of His people in Egypt. The sons of Israel would prosper greatly under conditions more favorable than those experienced by most Egyptians. Joseph and his brothers became heads of twelve distinct families, which quickly became twelve tribes known collectively as 'Israel' - the elevated and blessed name of Jacob.

Goshen faced directly to its west the easternmost tributary of the Nile, across which was the district of Rameses proper. Directly east of Goshen began Egypt's frontier, and through it ran the well-traveled caravan route 'by way of the Philistines'. It connected on to Palestine and regions beyond.

Eighty years after becoming Vizier of Egypt Joseph died. In their seasons, so did his brothers and their sons. The first generation of Israelites and their servants that had arrived in Egypt, seventy souls, while in Egypt passed on to their reward. The lineage of Jacob continued prosperous and bountifully fruitful. Within several generations it became obvious to all Egyptians that Israel's God, Elohim, was mightily with His people.

Though Israelites lived mostly in Goshen, many moved into Egypt's interior for business purposes. Probably more than a few are among the Asiatics climbing into various governmental positions. Many are in various crafts. Not a few work in the import/export business, since a great caravan route runs by (or through) Goshen. The government and most Egyptians welcome Israel's prosperity, for Elohim's blessings have a way of overflowing onto others roundabout. All are prospering.

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Residence in Goshen for God's people is approaching two hundred years and a new and different dynasty has seized control of the land.

¹³ See Reference I, page 41.

It had happened that the influx of Asiatics over the past several hundred years, their welcome by Egyptians, and their lengthy climb through society into governmental affairs had established conditions to favor an easy takeover by powerful outside Asiatic peoples. Added to that had been the prosperity of the land, which had Egyptians looking inward instead of protectively gazing outward. The people to conquer Egypt had already spent the last fifty to seventy-five years conquering northern Mesopotamia, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria...while Egyptians had continued prospering and ignoring the building, threatening black clouds of empire east of them. The land of Egypt became the final conquest of a powerful and fierce swarming army. The season for the next stage of God's Plan for Israel had arrived.

The Egyptians called their conquerors "Hykos", meaning "rulers of foreign lands" because they were that before entering Egypt. The Hykos were nomads. From ages past they had existed as mere shepherds, which fact did not escape the sophisticated Egyptians who disdainfully referred to their conquerors as "shepherd kings".

The Asiatic hordes that had conquered Mesopotamia and Syria were Horites and Hittites. Not long after, and following the northern pattern, their southern Semite partners accomplished the same in Palestine, Sinai, and finally in Egypt. Various relationships including marriage formed the partnership between the northern and southern conquerors. A confederation of bedouin tribes had vanquished most of the known world. The Hykos would reign in Egypt for a century. They in turn were ruled by a most forceful tribe, a formidable barbarous people whose roots contentiously sprang out of Edom...that is, out of Jacob's brother, Esau. It was at this time, then, that the prophetic blessing (bestowed by Elohim on Esau through his father, Isaac) would come to at least partial fulfillment -

Genesis 27:40

And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother: and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

Even before young Joseph arrived, many Asiatics entering Egypt had been of the varied nomadic tribes of Edom (Esau). Amalekites were surely among them. As Joseph and his brethren (Semites, Asiatics) rose to powerful positions, other Asiatics came under the authoritative yoke of the favored Israelites and many Asiatics became jealous of the Israelites.

God had told Abraham that the promised chosen 'seed' would sojourn in Egypt for four hundred years and then some. It was near the middle of that term that a flood of Hykos conquered the Delta, whereupon they had easily subdued the rest of Egypt. Their leading warriors were Amalekites of East Sinai,¹⁴ the fiercest of the near-east bedouin tribes that roamed far and wide. For centuries, as hawks pester an eagle they had pestered Egypt.

Though Egyptians considered the Hykos barbarians, the foreigners admired the mature civilization and religions of their new possession. The foreign leader set himself up as "Pharaoh". Succeeding Hykos kings would continue taking Egyptian king-titles. Thus the new rulers allowed small local suzerainties to exist as long as they paid homage. One such suzerainty was a small Egyptian governmental and religious center at Thebes. The new pharaohs also developed ties with their Nubian neighbors south of Egypt.¹⁵ Things were going well for the Hykos except for a uniquely troublesome idea that they could not shake. To them it seemed that the only threat to their power was right in their own Delta neighborhood. The Israelites of Goshen had received favored status in previous Egyptian administrations and their population, wealth, and sophistication unnerved the new rulers because Israelites were successful businessmen and many occupied various high positions in Egypt's bureaucracy.

¹⁴ See Appendix IV.

¹⁵ See Reference I, page 42.

Amalekites, sons of Esau, were Semites by race and distant cousins to the Israelites. Yet, in their newly found authority and wealth, the conquerors still looked and acted like country bumpkins compared to the sophisticated, prosperous sons of Jacob. Though they ruled the country, jealousy and fear set in motion the next phase of God's Plan. [Genesis 15:1-14]

For two centuries no one in Egypt had considered the Israelites to be dangerous or an enemy until their vast numbers and the might of their God began bearing in on the minds of some officials in the new government. The conquerors had not experienced the accomplishments of Joseph; thus, the new and very different king, though knowing the history of the Israelites, had no mind to maintain governmental ties with Joseph's people. Also, for many years of jealousy had existed among other Asiatics in the Delta towards the prosperous Israelites. Therefore, quite early in the new dynasty a decision was made to reverse the favored status of God's people. It came to pass that many of the sons of Esau, having been under the yoke of the favored sons of Jacob in Egypt for many years, now would 'break his yoke from off thy neck'. The Israelites became disenfranchised and their enemies cheered as a heavy burden of taxation was placed upon them. The new king proclaimed, "Lo! The Israelites are too many! Come, let us become wise regarding them lest they so multiply in riches and power that in a time of war they join with our enemies and rise out of their place to fight against us." [Exodus 1:9-11]

Moving swiftly, the new pharaoh set up tax governors over the villages in Goshen to siphon off much wealth to weaken the Israelites. That the taxes went into the treasuries of the new royal house was not objectionable either. But in spite of the heavy hand of the Hykos, the Israelites flourished both in population and in wealth even as the Hykos prospered from taxes taken from them. Soon all Egypt lay subdued beneath the new conquerors and the time had arrived to build a new capital city. Robbing the Israelites through governmental action was not enough. Something else must be done. So burdensome had become the taxes on Israel that a new city, which Israelites would call Ra-amases, would serve as a storehouse for Israel's stolen wealth. The succeeding pharaoh decided that further subjugation of Israel would work well with the new city's construction. Let the Israelite dogs build the city that would store their wealth (like a condemned man digging his own grave).

While the southern tribes of the Confederation ruled Egypt, Sinai, and Palestine, the northern partners of the Confederation ruled Syria and Mesopotamia. Therefore, Egypt's new rulers should never have feared the sons of Jacob. Ah, but according to His prewritten script, God's Plan was being worked in the high circles of nations and governments.

The sons of Israel continued as freemen, but subjected to heavy taxation. Though they are not slaves, the taxes placed on them have increased such that they have to sell themselves into indentured servitude to save their homes and lands. Two hundred years earlier amid the Great Famine, the family of Israel had witnessed many Egyptians enter similar bondage to Pharaoh and his royal house. Now it is Israel's turn. The duties of their indentured servitude are in building the Hykos' new capital city. Depending on the taxes owed, each man must work off his debt at so many hours per week. Conveniently, the city is being built directly across the tributary from Goshen.

Groans and prayers by God's people had begun with the taxation. Now it rises to a higher and louder pitch. But the season of trials has only begun, for they are but two hundred years into this aspect of God's Plan. God's people are suffering simply because they are His people, not for sins they had committed against Egypt or against Egypt's new rulers. Though this knowledge is of some comfort early on, time passes and so does the comfort. Only the accumulating pain is remembered and they cease counting it joy to suffer for their God. Repeatedly they ask, "Where is Elohim?!"

The city was erected near the center of the district of Rameses, built directly across the Nile tributary from Goshen because there lived its laborers.¹⁶ The Israelites were robbed and bound to the government by wicked laws directed solely at them. The transfer of wealth of one group to another by the law of the land was bad enough, but jealousy by God's enemies did not stop there. They could not touch the God of Israel, so they sought to inflict pain on His people. Their intent was not to stop until the 'favored ones' were destroyed. During the next very difficult two hundred years, other tormentors would replace these tormentors, as the desire to destroy God's people would continue and grow. When governance would change from the Hykos to the Egyptians again, the Wicked Design would ripen into its conclusion. The sons of Jacob cried to their God when their troubles began. For so many years He had blessed them. Was He angry with them? Why had He allowed their enemies such victory? Will a savior come? Life will become very hard...increasingly so.

Much later in the 19th dynasty, about 1280 BC, Ramesses II built his capital city, a renovation and an extension of Ra-amse (or Avaris). In its new form, the city was expanded northward to entirely fill the land between the tributary near old Goshen and the next tributary where was erected the city's new gate. In keeping with the new Ramesseid dynasty and the ancient Egyptian god, Ra (to which the 19th dynasty returned after they had put down the Thebians and their god, Amon), the renewed city was given a new name, Pi-Raamsese, meaning "Domain of Ramesses".

A unique aspect of these events is a similarity to the patriarch Jacob when as a young man he worked for his Uncle Laban in Haran, Syria about three hundred and fifty years earlier. The financial blessing that came to Laban because of Jacob's relationship to God did not hinder Laban from humiliating Jacob by cheating him.¹⁷

Satan's techniques work well. They are used repeatedly. The financial blessing on Israel in Goshen over many years expanded the Egyptian economy, but it did not hinder the Asiatic pharaohs from cheating and humiliating God's people. It is as if the world fears Elohim, God of the Hebrews, but wishes to seize God's blessings as much as it can... while at the same time it wishes to control under tyranny the channel through which the blessings flow. While it does not wish to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs, it enjoys choking him nigh to death. Albeit, hatred for channels-of-blessing often grow to the point of killing the goose out of pure spite.

Yet, the more the government dumped humiliation on the Israelites, the more their God blessed them and they multiplied and erupted economically even more. Egypt's foreign rulers became ignobly grieved because of God's people [Exodus 1:12] who were not allowed to keep the riches they received from God...even as Father Jacob had been kept from partaking of the riches flowing from God through his hand to Laban. Then, at the end of Jacob's servitude, God greatly blessed him out of the blessings that earlier had gone to Laban. Similarly, out of the riches even now flowing to the government through Israel, God will bless the Israelites at the end of their servitude.

All riches placed in this world by God are controlled by Him, indeed are owned by Him, which escapes the minds of His enemies and seems to avoid more than slight notice by His own people. When Christians own some of it, we think it is ours. When

¹⁶ Modern chroniclers of Egyptian history have indicated that the city's name may have been Avaris in the period of the Hykos. Still, it was Ra-amse to the Hebrews who built it.

¹⁷ See this story in GOD'S HOOK, by this author.

we lack much of it, we spend much time desiring to get or "receive" more of it. Thus, we have the same attitude as the world's people. The fact that God gives, takes away, and gives again as He sees fit should reside in our hearts. Indeed, we, too, are owned by Him, bought with a Price to do with as He sees fit.

A century passed with Egypt under the heel of the "rulers of foreign lands". Finally the Egyptians began efforts to take back their country and eventually the Hykos were pushed into Sinai and Southern Palestine where their people still ruled. It was accomplished under the leadership of the small governmental and religious center at Thebes long tolerated by the Hykos. Ahmose was the Thebian leader under whom the Egyptians finally succeeded; thus, a truly great new Egyptian dynasty began.

The New Egyptian Government

The new Egyptian government so hated the expelled Hykos and all Semites that they, too, were in no mood to restore the Israelites to their former estate. Israelites were Semites, of the same race as the hated Hykos. Their population was huge and the new government thought there was something wickedly magical in the way the Israelites proliferated in the face of adversity. Thus, the new government feared the indentured servants of Goshen as much as had the Hykos...and for similar reasons. Exodus 1:13 indicates that the Egyptians were again in control of their land and made the children of Israel 'serve with rigor'. Israel's servitude remained, but the conditions worsened -

Exodus 1:14

And they {Egyptians} made their {Israelites} lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigor.

Not yet were the Israelites considered slaves by Egypt's new king. But Goshen was essentially a concentration camp and they served in such harsh conditions that they became embittered to the depths of their souls...and they wondered about the God of Blessing. Where was He? Still, they cried to Him. No matter how much God's children stray, when they fathom the depths of despair... often in a hole dug by themselves or in a pigpen eating husks...they turn to The Father. If they do not, it is because another god is their father.

This new dynasty - the 18th - sprang from its roots in Thebes. The rulers declared their city to be the capital of Liberated Egypt. The god of Thebes (a younger god than ancient Ra) was Amon, a god of central Egypt. Egyptians were informed that the victory over the Hykos had been instigated and empowered by Amon and that ancient Ra had been powerless to overthrow the enemy in his own backyard. Therefore, by governmental decree "powerful Amon" became Egypt's national deity.¹⁸

In some fashion or other everything in Egypt was continually tied to her religions. Therefore, it was proclaimed that the heroes of the war were the officers of the army, but also the priests of Amon. Egypt's royal house again had an Egyptian at its head that was a general in the army and, as important, he was a god-man from the mystic loins of Amon. However, the royal family would receive political competition from both the army and the Amon priesthood. Governance is nothing if not a struggle for power.

In due course a boy came to the throne. His father had placed him under the tutelage of the Amon priesthood, the custom of the pharaohs of this dynasty. Though the boy had many

¹⁸ Ra had to step back from center stage until the next dynasty (of the Ramesseid Pharaohs). It is true, governmental administrations each have their deities to whom they credit their successes. And they honor them accordingly.

brothers in training among the priests that were sons by other of the king's wives, when the throne became vacant the priesthood chose this boy as their candidate. He was very young and the intent was to control the throne by their influence over him. The priesthood carried the day in governmental intrigue and the boy became Thutmose III, Pharaoh of Egypt.

Chosen purely for political reasons, the boy could not represent the royal house adequately, as priests and army officers continued pressing for control. In due course, Hatshepsut, a strong woman of the royal house managed to take her seat beside the young god-king. Perhaps with the army's political help she reigned jointly with her young nephew. However, she quickly gained total control, whereupon she did not concern herself with matters external to Egypt. Instead she focused on restoring the glory of the Egyptian State. Perpetrating the royal line and its house was her prime goal.

Therefore, this pharaoh - a female - became the second king to be a *new and very different sort* to take Egypt's throne in the final two hundred years of Israel's sojourn in Egypt. The first Hykos pharaoh and this pharaoh each mark the beginning of two major phases in God's Plan as the Plan winds down toward the Exodus.

In the years of her rule Hatshepsut made a point to eliminate all perceived threats to the throne that might issue from any source within the bounds of Egypt. Included was anything that might remain of the hated Hykos. In her mindset, then, her attention came to rest on all residents of the same race (Asiatic, Semitic) as the Hykos. Especially her attention focused upon the Israelites of Goshen. Joseph's history as Egypt's vizier - head of bureaucracies for several early Egyptian administrations - frighten Hatshepsut. She was already leery of her present bureaucracy, which too often worked its own will. Indeed, too many bureaucrats of past Egyptian administrations had been Asiatics!

In similar but minuscule fashion, the concentration camps of Japanese-Americans during World War II in Wyoming and elsewhere can be compared to what is discussed here. However, the troubles for the Israelites were more like that presently occurring in what was Czechoslovakia, where the most powerful ethnic group is "cleansing the land" of other ethnic peoples.

Under Hatshepsut, Asiatics of any origin by law were declared slaves including Israelites. Many fled the country. Many were worked to death. The intent was to decrease significantly the number of Asiatics in the land. However, Goshen's population continued rising. It was almost magical, like rats breeding out of control. Such a rat population must be curtailed. Nonetheless, many officials cautioned that the slaves were a valuable source of labor. They pointed out that it would be some years before Israel's babies would grow enough to serve under the harsh conditions placed on their fathers; so they proposed that, instead of working the men to death, a thinning process should be undertaken in killing the slaves' newborn sons.

Under the Hykos' tyranny Israelites had been indentured servants with their rights somewhat preserved as freemen. But now they are slaves, property of the state, possessions of the royal house. By law the killing of slave children is no more wrong than the killing of lambs by the owner of a flock.

Little difference exists from that ancient time to our day in the United States. Our government is in the business of killing unborn children. The law, as interpreted by our courts, considers a child (labeled "fetus") to be a component part of the mother instead of a human being. By law the mother legally owns her body and all of its component parts; thus, she has a legal "right" to make live or die the part labeled "fe-

tus". Interestingly, the courts do not at the same time imply that she has the "right" to kill her hand, foot, head, etc.

Yet, there are some differences from ancient Egypt: 1. We do not kill the young of our enemies, rather our own young. 2. We find it more convenient to kill babies before they emerge from the womb. 3. We do not distinguish between boys and girls.

It is curious that what is good, pure, innocent...something to be treasured and nurtured one day...can become by state law a "thing" of so little value to the state that women are allowed, yea encouraged at their discretion, to have their trusting babes killed by profit-oriented professional doctors. Whether or not Hatshepsut initiated the idea, she issued a dangerous edict new in the annals of Egypt. Goshen's governor told Israelite midwives "As you perform duties to the Hebrew women, you will observe the sex of the child. If it is male, you shall kill it. If it is female, it shall live." [Exodus 1:15:22]

The midwives must perform the Wicked Edict and report to Egyptian district managers, but the midwives agreed secretly not to do the bidding of the female pharaoh.¹⁹ When asked why babies were not dying, the midwives lied, "Hebrew women are not as Egyptians. They are vigorous of life. As we travel to help, the babes are birthed and hidden away. We do not understand why our people keep us employed, as we are not needed at all."

The Wicked Edict had to be modified. Periodically searches must be made of Goshenite homes. Egyptians knowing of slave male newborns must report them. Spies were employed. Every new manchild of a Hebrew family must be cast into the Great Nile, a sacrifice to greater Egypt and her gods. It was declared a matter of national security, national honor, national allegiance. (Is there ever anything new under the sun?)

Egypt has entered a New Age: The national god, Amon, has risen...proved by his casting out of the Asiatic Hykos.

History shows that often such movements become anti-Yahweh Elohim. However... Glory to our Lord! it is only for a season. When His people are sufficiently humbled to fit into God's Plan, our Lord changes tragedy to victory. Thus began the next phase of God's Plan.

The Deliverer Is Born

These years are dark as midnight for Jacob's children. Nightly, sometimes all night, cries emerge heavenward through the roofs of Israelite homes scattered over Goshen. Never yet in history have so many Israelites prayed in unison to Elohim. Many have lost hope. Others tell their children and anyone that will listen about the salvation of their forefathers by the hand of Elohim. They tell how He had used Joseph in great leadership over Egypt. Surely God will send another savior...another Joseph.

The Blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant as bestowed by Patriarch Jacob on the fathers of the twelve tribes is remembered. [Genesis 47:28 through 49:28] Albeit, the Blessing to the great Joseph and his sons come to mind more often than the Blessings to Jacob's other sons, for Joseph's blessing had already proved true. Parents tell and retell that Blessing to their children such that a Song of Hope arises in the hearts of many folk -

Yea, his bow abode in strength,
and his arms and hands were made strong

¹⁹ Is it an unspoken law that feminism through the ages must consume its young and the young of people it greatly influences or controls? Is it a malignant form of mother-love that kills her baby whom otherwise she would nurture and even died for?

by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob.
From Elohim came our Shepherd, the Stone of Israel.

From the God of thy father, who shall help thee,
yea, by the Almighty who shall bless thee,
comes blessings of heaven above
and blessings of depths beneath,
even blessings of the breasts and of the womb.

The blessings of thy fathers have prevailed
even above all the blessings at our beginning,
even unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills.

The Blessings shall be upon the head of Joseph...
upon the crown of him who was separated from
his brethren.²⁰

The song is so popular in the desperate quiet of Goshen that Joseph becomes known as the 'Stone of Israel'. Time passes. The situation worsens. Another saying emerges, "This time our savior must be a Rock!"

'The Stone' had established their fathers in Egypt. Shall "the Rock" revive to raise Israel up in Egypt again, perhaps even to greater glory?

Even as 'the Stone' had been separated from his brethren, surely "the Rock" must be separated in also...for the depths of need are great. Surely "the Rock" must become greater than 'the Stone' in the courts of Egypt! God had used Joseph amid the power of the Egyptian throne. Surely God must use the same power, only greater, for such an Evil Day as this!

A particular man of the tribe of Levi has taken unto himself a woman of the same tribe. Amram has taken Jochebed who first bears unto him a daughter, Miriam. Then a son, Aaron. Then arrives the Wicked Edict from the female pharaoh. "Almighty God, look down and have mercy on us!"

Another babe is preconceived in the twinkle of his father's eye as again Amram gazes warmly upon Jochebed. True, the twinkle is not as bright as it had been for Miriam and Aaron. Times are hard. So is knowing that if a babe is male it will bring with it more worries. Yet, the twinkle twinkles. Elohim is answering prayers, working His Plan. The cries of His people over so long a time have not gone unnoticed. The season of the Beginning of Deliverance is at hand. Alas, within Beginnings the eye of man sees little difference.

Conception soon occurs. In its season the child is birthed. Jochebed gazes on her newest son and sees that he is 'goodly'. It is not the "goodly" that all mothers see in their babes, not the "goodly" of a particularly handsome child. It is 'goodly' as viewed through eyes inspired by the mother's 'goodly' God. Jochebed sees important things by the eyes of her God-given faith. By faith, she shall allow her Lord to do all that He will do hereafter.

Risking their lives the midwives help to hide the child as long as possible. Father and mother have not named the babe. Bad enough is the ever-present danger without the intimacy a name brings to aching hearts. Neither has the Lord named the child, which is strange since He had surely led in the naming of Miriam now in her young teens and three-year-old Aaron.

The Wicked Edict had arrived a year earlier. Thank goodness Aaron will be allowed to live with the family without hiding. It seems strange to father and mother that the babe has ar-

²⁰ This song was derived from Genesis 49:23-26.

rived after the Edict. Indeed, they know that, of their children, this one is special in the Lord. Has God made a mistake in His timing? The babe should have been born before the latest infamy. Days pass. Amram looks in agony to his faith to explain the dilemma. No explanation arrives from his faith or from his Lord. Silence from above seems to kill the soul of one who walks by faith.

No matter the techniques of hiding, soon it becomes apparent that they can hide the babe no longer. Spying eyes multiply by night. So the deed must be done by day. Amram hates leaving dangerous duty to his womenfolk, but in faith, the wisdom of the plan is pressed upon him and he leaves.

Taking a reed basket, tears so heavy she could hardly see, and aided by Miriam, Jochebed lines its outside with pitch and inside with hay. Then tenderly she places the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes inside. Mother and daughter carry the babe to a small secluded bay on the tributary of the Nile where royalty bathes.

The royal family owns estates throughout the land. The main capital is Thebes, but this city...long ago capital of the hated Hykos and captured by the Egyptians...is the district capital of the Delta. And so it is one of the favorite abodes for the royal family. Jochebed has heard that Hatshepsut's daughter is staying in the royal residence. The imperial bathing site is distant from Jochebed's home and she must return to little Aaron. Miriam must watch the basket floating among the reeds near the secluded beach. Jochebed prays, "My part is done. Lord it is all in your Hands." She returns to wait on her God.

The precious basket among the reeds is pictured in her heart and mind. Her tears continue. Spies are ever present, seeking evidence of baby boys. Amram prays as he toils in the brickfields. Little Aaron quietly plays in the corner. Jochebed has never felt so lonely. The heavens seem as brass.

It is an eternity. "Lord, waiting on you at times nearly kills me. Please bring me word!" She is thinking of how much longer these hours are than the nine months carrying him, or the nearly unbearable but sweet three months nursing him [Hebrews 11:23] and doing everything to hide him.

Miriam enters nearly ripping the leather hinges from the door!

Having sat in darkness and tears for hours, the sunlight dazzles Jochebed as it cuts across the small square of dirt floor. Miriam strains her eyes to fathom the darkness. "Oh Mother," she cries, nearly running over Jochebed as she rushes in. She responds to her mother's startled exclamation with "He is safe, he is safe! Oh Mother he is OK!"

The faith in Jochebed responds, "I told you so," and her motherly anxiety is easing toward a steady calm. Demanding the same of Miriam, Jochebed asks for the entire story from the beginning. Listening for all he is worth, little Aaron understands very little, only that baby brother is gone!

By the providence of God, it had happened that the first royal party to bathe was Pharaoh's daughter with her maids. It had seemed to Miriam that the basket had floated into the rushes too far to be seen. "Oh, but it was seen right away! Perhaps his crying was louder than the noise of the water. Anyway a maid fetched the basket and the Princess looked inside. I did not hear, but I could tell from the motions and expression of the Princess that she was quite taken with him. Mother, I rushed over and spoke to the Princess and..."

Jochebed exclaimed, "My word, child! Are you mad? You..."

"No Mother, listen! I said, 'I saw you pull that basket from the river, and heard you say it is a Hebrew baby. I can see compassion in your eyes, even a love for the babe already growing. I know several Hebrew women who have had their babies taken from them recently. Would you like me to fetch one as nurse? So many of our babies are lost these days. Surely, a Hebrew nurse will love and take wonderful care of it for you. You'll see!'"

"And Mother...she said 'Yes!' She said 'Yes!' Oh Mother, you are both mother and nurse! Isn't it grand! Oh Mother, isn't Elohim good? Isn't..."

Mother had to shout, "Daughter calm down!" Her thoughts are swirling. Her faith swells in her breast. Again she motions Miriam to silence. Jochebed's jitters are ebbing, "Tell the last part again, about the nursing." So, Miriam takes a deep breath and begins again.

Jochebed resolves to go. Tears of joy dancing down her cheeks replaces tears of despair. She bathes and begins packing. More tears are poised near the surface ready to flow as she prepares the last meal for some time for her precious husband. He is a good man. He will understand. She dares not even wait to tell him the news herself. She cannot even kiss good-bye her wonderfully wise husband. He had told her...the last words from his lips had been, "Elohim is faithful to His own. Is not this His child?"

Amram had been entirely correct and it turns out that he is overjoyed. He does not know if he is happier for prayers answered or sadder for missing his wife and baby. All three in this household and perhaps little Aaron, too, had known that God was working. Amram is proud! Proud of his new son's importance before the Lord. Proud of his wonderful wife. And particularly proud at this moment of his daughter. There is only one problem. He cannot peep a word of it to anyone! "Oh to give witness of the workings of God!"

As it has turned out, Jochebed has been commanded to nurse the babe in her home under the protection of armed guards and to report several times a week to the Princess, bringing the child with her. Thus, a tumult of joy and of jealousy has been produced in Goshen. Also produced is astonishment in the circles of the Egyptian government. The house of Amram marvels at the Ways of God and thanks Him for His continuing Goodness. The Princess had immediately named the child "Moses" because she said, "For out of the waters I drew him." Privately Amram proclaims the name of his new son to be more than adequate even if it is Egyptian.

Yet, love for the child is bearing in on the teenage princess. Odd looks and biting gossip cannot restrain her from having little Moses live with her. A precarious but tremendous bond develops between mother-nurse, child, and princess...whose name is Nefrure.²¹

Quite the unique child in the royal house, little Moses is becoming known in the kingdom, for Nefrure is the only daughter of the female pharaoh and has been chosen as wife for young Thutmosis III when he comes of age. Nefrure's adopted baby has been thrust upon the Egyptian stage.

But the question is "Why?! Why has the Princess been allowed to do such a thing?" Everyone knows it is a slave-baby...and worse, a Semite! Little rats like that are being drown all over the kingdom. "Oh well, if the Princess wants to be compassionate and save one of them...and if Pharaoh allows it...who can argue? If a person can possibly look past the origin of the little thing...well, it is cute. Everyone admits as much. Perhaps it's a joke. You know, to have a little beggar-prince ambling about. However, to laugh at the joke...if it is a joke... is too dangerous to chance."

"But the cute little beggar will grow up! What then?"

Whenever Nefrure stays at the Old Ra-amses estate, which is adjacent to the court of the district-capital, Moses' family can occasionally visit him. But when she resides elsewhere, particularly at Thebes, Jochebed and little Moses are kept close to her side. Perhaps the Princess knows that Jochebed is Moses' mother. If so, she has not mentioned it. Perhaps the well-respected Senemut, tutor and steward of Hatshepsut's daughter, knows, but he will do nothing to hurt Nefrure.

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<sup>21</sup> See Reference I, page 43.

Nefrure died in her latter teen years before her scheduled marriage. But since she was the daughter of the female pharaoh and had become much favored by Thutmosis III, she has left a son that will be maintained in an honored position in the royal court. Even if no one else will, stouthearted Thutmosis will see to it. Therefore, it has come to pass that a 'little stone' has been plucked from the divided waters of the Great Nile...has been separated from his people...and has become established in Egypt's royal house...even in the royal family. The 'little stone' continues as the adopted grandson of the female pharaoh who hates all Semites. Only Elohim could have accomplished such a thing.

Does any in Goshen know? More than a few are speculating.

Some say, "It is way too early to be definite about it, but..."

"Ridiculous!" say others. "It would be entirely too long to wait for that child to grow up. By then we will all be dead. God help us!"

Prayers continued day and night, "Oh Elohim where are you?"